



# EIR newsletter

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in focus \_\_\_\_\_

## The Netherlands Presidency of the Council of the European Union



On 11 January 2016, a press conference was held at the Representation of the European Commission in Romania, marking the launch of the 12<sup>th</sup> Netherlands Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The event was attended by H.E. Mrs. **Stella Ronner-Grubačić**, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Romania, Mr. **Lazăr Comănescu**, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mr. **Cristian Buchiu**, Deputy Head of the Representation of the European Commission in Romania. Representatives of other EU Member States were also in attendance.

Mr. **Cristian Buchiu** opened the press conference by noting that the objectives of the Netherlands Presidency perfectly meld with the Commission’s priorities, sharing the same EU vision: ‘*big on the big things and smaller on smaller things*’. Reaffirming the Commission’s commitment to institutional collaboration, Mr. **Buchiu** briefly outlined these goals: the implementation of the 2030 programme, in the wake of the Paris Climate Conference (COP21); a revision of the Common Asylum Policy along with a new approach to legal migration; and the creation of a European border control guard.

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During certainly turbulent times, the stated goal of the Dutch Presidency is to help the European Union find common solutions, remaining focused on important long-term issues, even when faced with current events that appear to be more pressing. In this vein, H.E. Ambassador **Ronner-Grubačić** noted that during its presidency, the Netherlands hopes to build compromises between the 28 Member States ... **p.2**

EIR \_\_\_\_\_

## Communication in European Affairs

In 2015, as in previous years, the communication in European affairs events organized by the European Institute of Romania (EIR) brought to the attention of the public European topics perceived as priority at both national and European Union level.

On 19 March, the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, in partnership with EIR, GrupRomania Bruxelles, Center for EU Communication Studies, the Institute for European Research Cluj-Napoca and InfoEuropa, organized the conference entitled “*How to grow the Romanian influence in European policies?*” ... **p.3**



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... *'We need to start delivering on what we promised by implementing it. We look to our partners to achieve our goals. Romania is clearly a partner country and a strong supporter for our Presidency'*<sup>1</sup>.

Basing its priorities on three principles, a Union that focuses on the essentials, a Union that creates innovative growth and jobs, and a Union that connects with society<sup>2</sup>, the Dutch Presidency's main focus will not be the creation of new policies, but the implementation of existing ones. In this, the Netherlands will turn its attention on four main priorities, as presented by H.E. Ambassador Ronner-Grubačić:

### **Migration and international security**

The challenge of migration, refugees and international security continues to remain high on the agenda, and it is one that requires an integral approach to solve. The Dutch agenda will include the future development of the Common European Asylum System, work on relocation, resettlement, return and readmission, and developing measures related to legal migration<sup>3</sup>. *'We are very glad to see that Romania has created the National Council for Refugees'*. Moreover, as the December European Council underlined, steps must also be urgently taken to strengthen the EU's external borders.

### **Europe as an innovator and a job creator**

In order to successfully deliver sustainable economic growth and job creation, the Netherlands envisages a further deepening of the single market, particularly regarding services and the digital agenda, expressing its belief in the still-untapped potential of these areas. Encouraging a climate of entrepreneurship, as well as working on the forthcoming Labour Mobility Package remain high on the list of priorities in this field.

### **Sound finances and a robust Eurozone**

*'We are now better able to withstand financial shocks'*; the Dutch wish to advance this priority by implementing agreements that have been made within the European Monetary Union, as well as continue working towards new treaties such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The Netherlands has also expressed a wish to start a debate on a new and reformed multiannual budget in order to ensure healthy public finances.

### **Forward-looking climate and energy policy**

Following the COP21 conference, the Netherlands emphasises the implementation of the 2030 energy and climate package, including the Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) proposal. Moreover, the Dutch Presidency will also focus its attention on the ways in which Europe can achieve its economic goals utilizing raw materials and energy wisely. *'We want to transition to a circular economy'*, which entails the use and re-use of natural resources and raw materials, through calls for improved resource management and creation of new green jobs.

The Ambassador noted that the success of a Presidency is also dependant on its reaction to what she referred to as *'known unknowns'*, unexpected outcomes of events taking place during the Presidency. One such concern is the outcome of the British Referendum, intended to take place during the Dutch presidency of the EU Council. On this, the Netherlands has expressed a willingness to negotiate, reiterating its guiding principles:

Firstly, an EU where things are done the European way only when needed and otherwise solved at a national level; secondly, an EU that successfully connects to its citizens - reducing regulations when deemed unnecessary and increasing parliamentary sovereignty. There are, however, red lines. The Dutch Presidency will not accept negotiation on points that infringe on the treaties of Europe, such as freedom of movement.

*'A very tough job ahead, no quick fix and no easy solutions, an EU that only works when we cooperate'*, she warned. The Dutch Presidency will therefore endeavour to focus on the essentials, keeping the Council on course in implementing the Agenda.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. **Lazăr Comănescu**, saluted<sup>4</sup> the launch of the Netherlands Presidency, expressing his confidence in its ability to tackle the challenges on the Dutch agenda and transforming them into opportunities, but reminding that this requires cooperation among the Member States, especially in the current European context, complicated by unprecedented internal and external challenges.

*'Romania supports, during the Dutch Presidency, all measures aimed at deepening the single market, particularly boosting growth and employment, as a stronger and more competitive Union is our common aim'*, the Minister stated<sup>5</sup>, pointing out

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.mae.ro/node/35245>

<sup>2</sup> <http://english.eu2016.nl/documents/publications/2016/01/07/programme-of-the-netherlands-presidency-of-the-council-of-the>

<sup>3</sup> <http://english.eu2016.nl/documents/press-releases/2015/12/30/persbericht-trioprogramma>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.mae.ro/node/35256>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.mae.ro/node/35256>

that common support for the single market should also mean support for the undistorted implementation of the freedom of movement, embedded in the treaties and therefore, intangible. In the same vein, the Minister noted that Romania is in full agreement on the need to strengthen the EMU and to develop a fully-fledged internal energy market.

The chief of Romanian diplomacy welcomed Dutch commitment to migration and international security as a major priority, expressing that Romania will continue to be part of EU efforts to address the phenomenon and welcomes a European Neighbourhood Policy that takes into account individual needs and profiles of the partner states.

At the end of his intervention, the Minister wished success to the Dutch Presidency, stating his confidence that *'the Dutch Presidency, with its well-known pragmatism, will guide us well this semester'*.

Ioana Panaite, Studies and Analyses intern

EIR

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## Communication in European Affairs

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On 19 March, the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, in partnership with the EIR, GrupRomania Bruxelles, Center for EU Communication Studies, the Institute for European Research Cluj-Napoca and InfoEuropa, organized the conference entitled *"How to grow the Romanian influence in European policies?"*

The studies conducted in the *SPOS 2014* project were launched at the conference organized on 24 March. Among the guests at the event were Mr. Leonard Orban, Presidential Advisor for European Affairs, Mr. George Ciamba, State Secretary for European Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Alina Bârgăoanu, President of the EIR Board of Administration and Mrs. Gabriela Drăgan, Director General of the EIR. The conference was also attended by the coordinators of the research teams for *SPOS 2014*, as well as prestigious experts and analysts in economy, finance and energy security.

On 31 March, the EIR, in partnership with the Ministry of Justice, organized the launch conference of the study *Lobby in Romania vs. lobby in the EU* (according to the service contract concluded with the Romanian Lobby Registry Association).

Two events were organized in April, a conference entitled *Poland and Romania - strengthening a strategic partnership* (2 April), organized by EIR in partnership with the Embassy of the Republic of Poland and the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, and the debate *The great deadlock in Europe. What can Romania do?* (3 April), organized by EIR in partnership with the European Parliament Information Bureau.

On 17 April, the EIR launched a *series of debates* entitled *Discussions on current developments within the European Union*, the first event having as special guest Mr. Nikolaus Meyer-Landrut, Advisor of the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany for European affairs. The second event

of this series of debates was held on 13 October, with Mr. Simon Hix, Professor at the London School of Economics and Political Science and Member of the British Academy, as guest speaker.

In the beginning of May EIR took part in the European Congress of Local Governments (4-5 May, Kraków). Thus, the EIR was a partner of the Institute for Eastern Studies (IES, Poland) in organizing a panel on *The Rural Development Program 2014 - 2020: who will gain, who will lose?*. In addition, the partnership with IES is a good example of continuity in promotion and visibility, the EIR being present again in 2015 as an institutional partner of the *Krynica Economic Forum* (8-10 September). The debate was entitled *Europe 2020 Strategy: an interim evaluation of key targets from the ECE countries perspectives* and was included in the forum's agenda for 10 September.

Moreover, the EIR has developed partnerships with other organizations, among which the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) in Romania, by organizing two events (*Four scenarios: EU and the East in 2030. Future relations between the EU, the Russian Federation and the Eastern Partnership countries*, 14 May; *What are Intelligence Services allowed to do? Security and Freedom in the Digital Era*, 24 June) and the *third edition of the Romanian-German forum EURT* (Bucharest, 25 November), with the participation of numerous officials, such as political and economic analysts from Romania and Germany.

Also in the partnership sphere, it is worth noting the collaboration with the Jagiellonian Club, Poland (*Romanian-Polish cooperation, value for Central and Eastern Europe*, expert seminary, Bucharest, 15 May), RAYS - Romanian Association of Young Scholars (first edition of the *RAYS international conference*, 25-26 September, Bucharest; EIR was a *partner in the Economy and Accounting section*, where the Director General of EIR was a *keynote speaker*), the Institute for Popular Studies (the debate *The importance of regional development for Romania's future*, 19 November), EuROcentrica (the launch conference of the study *Positive aspects of migration: Roma women as change agents*, 8 December).





The annual conference of the EIR, an event with tradition in the panoply of communication activities, also marked the anniversary moment IER@15. The event, entitled *Adoption of the euro in Romania: challenges and perspectives*, was organized with the help of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Romania on 9 December. The conference also hosted the 6th edition of the EIR Excellence Awards. This edition's winners were *projects and initiatives supporting the promotion and development of the Cultural and Creative Industries sector in Romania*, in the spirit of European values.

It results from the above that an important element in the process of promotion and creation of the institutional image are partnerships. Thus, over the course of 2015, the EIR strengthened its existing partnerships and identified new opportunities of collaboration in order to develop its specific activities.

As for *promotion and visibility*, the EIR was represented by the President of the Board of Administration and/or the Director General at numerous national or international events. Moreover, the events organized by the EIR were reported in the *media*, especially *on-line*, by *articles* published on *Caleaeuropeana.ro* (including *live stream*), *Euractiv.ro* (*live text*), *EpochTimes*, *Agerpress*, *Argumentpress.ro*, *Economica.net*, *Privesc.eu* (*live stream*), among others. Media monitoring can be accessed online on [www.ier.ro](http://www.ier.ro) in the archive of each event organized by the institute.

On 23 March, the Director General of the EIR participated in the radio program "Probleme la zi" ["Daily issues"] of *Radio România Actualități*, to discuss with other guests Romania's involvement in the European policies and the initiative to establish the European Strategic Investments Fund. Furthermore, the issue 37/2015 of *REGIO review* published an interview with the Director General of the EIR on the new financial perspective concerning the cohesion policy.

The IER@15 anniversary conference was reported in detail in an article published in the issue 49-50 of the weekly *Economistul*: "At the anniversary of 15 years of activity, the European Institute of Romania offered a sequence of the continuity of activities, the essence of which is found in the debate of ideas and the support of values, with the objective of maintaining the two-way communication between us and the continental environment we are part of. The central element was the conference "Adoption of the euro in Romania: challenges and perspectives", organized with the support of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Bucharest. The expertise base on analysis and research in European affairs, finances and economy interacted with the governmental authority, with reception including at the diplomatic level. The outcome was an image of today's Economic and Monetary Union, with a necessary look back and outlooks towards what might or (probably) will be in the future. Landmarks were envisioned for Romania's place, by reference to hopes, conditioning, and doubts related to the adoption of Europe's single currency" (<http://www.economistul.ro/ier15-euro-provocari-si-perspective-a8350/>).

*The promotion activities* for the EIR's services and products (training courses, events, publications, internships etc.) were achieved by information and promotion materials being distributed during training courses or communication events. Moreover, the information was published on the EIR's webpage and *Facebook* page (<http://www.facebook.com/institutuleuropeandinromania>), a useful instrument in the promotion of specific activities and products.

For further information regarding the activities and instruments for communication in European affairs, please visit [www.ier.ro](http://www.ier.ro).

**Florentina Costache**

## EIR Studies and Analyses in 2015

2015 started in a very active way for the new team of the Studies and Analyses Unit. Following a series of research proposals drawn from the European agenda, the 2015 Government's working programme and as a result of the priorities expressed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 5 research themes have been chosen within the SPOS 2015 project, as follows: *The fight against Euroscepticism and extremism/radicalisation, and the consolidation of trust in European values (especially among citizens, but also inside national political parties); The cross-border cooperation between Romania and Ukraine, and between Romania and the Republic of Moldova. Opportunities and challenges over the 2014-2020 period; Creative industries: the development potential in Romania and at European level; The Juncker Commission Investment Plan and its potential impact on the Romanian economy; The impact of the new measures against terrorism, proposed at European level, on the freedom of movement*. During the selection process, 45 individual and team applications were received from interested researchers. The actual research process lasted from June to December 2015.



Concurrently with the team of authors' administrative coordination process (including the organization of working groups in order to bring at the same table representatives of the beneficiary institutions and researchers for each study), the Unit's members were in charge of the Newsletter, the publication of the academic journal and of conducting micro-studies and writing articles on European themes. Moreover they participated at various events relevant for their research activity at the EIR.

As for the editorial activity, 6 numbers of the Newsletter were published, comprising mostly promotion articles for the EIR activities and opinion papers on European Year for Development, the crisis in Ukraine, the European security strategy, the geostrategic in Black Sea Area etc.

Regarding the academic journal "Romanian Journal of European Affairs", 23 materials were published, in the 4 issues. The journal was disseminated among the beneficiaries, including the main international databases where RJEI is indexed (e.g. EBSCO, ProQuest, SCOPUS, HeinOnline etc). Starting with 2015, RJEI was included in Infobase Index and CiteFactor databases. During the last year, the journal hosted articles on various topics such as: the institutional model of the EU-Ukraine association agreement; the labour market restrictions and migration into the EU (with focus on Ukraine); Crimea and the Russian-Ukrainian conflict; the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership; the European Union's civilian missions in Georgia and Kosovo; the EU emergency aid granted to the countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region; rethinking the European Union - from unity in diversity to diversity in unity; a comparative analysis of guaranteed minimum income schemes within the member states of the European Union; the changing nature of security in Europe; the assessment of the European Parliament's democratic credentials; a brief account of the negotiations in Greece during the first half of 2015; the future of private equity in Europe, and book reviews.

In November 2015, the Working Paper No. 32 entitled *The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership: Negotiations Status Quo and the Relevance for the Romanian Public Debate* was published. The paper, authored by Oana-Antonia Colibășanu (coord.), Victor-Vlad Grigorescu and Eliza Vaș, was written in English and was presented during the a debate on the same topic that took place on November 23, 2015, at EIR. 35 guests - representatives of the academia, public institutions, civil society and students - attended the event.

It is also worth mentioning the contributions of the Unit's members for the magazine *Europe's World*, the requests received from the Romanian Ministries and Parliament, for which a sum of viewpoints were prepared, and the presentations delivered during various domestic and international events.

Another essential part of our activity was to consolidate the partnerships with similar institutes and organisations from abroad, such as CEPS (Centre for European Policy Studies) - Bruxelles, Notre Europe - Paris, IFRI (Institut Francais des Relations Internationales) and Economic Policy Institute in Sofia.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my colleagues Eliza Vaș, Bogdan Mureșan and Mihai Sebe for their enthusiasm as well as for their meaningful contribution to the Studies and Analyses Unit's activities development.

Oana Mocanu

## Training at EIR

The year 2015 was one marked by changes, as the activity of the Training Unit (TU) saw a widening of the range of courses, all the while maintaining the traditional training programmes on European affairs.

Traditional programmes, aimed at an in-depth approach to issues specific to European affairs (*Specialisation in European affairs*) designed for the personnel of specialised public institutions, received as much interest as in 2014.

A very successful pilot programme turned out to be the course entitled *The Protection of Personal Data in the European Union*. The course was particularly intended for legal experts and specialised personnel from public institutions (ministries, government agencies and local public authorities) and/or from private companies who are required, by virtue of their professional activity, to be informed on specialised notions of personal data protection.



Continuing the series of innovative training programmes, the TU held in 2015 a pilot programme called *Rules for Drawing Up Legal Acts*. Highly appreciated by the attendants, the programme was directed in particular at public servants (from central and local administration), but also at people seeking a general and updated training. As a result of the training course, the attendants became able to understand and define or describe the main aspects of drawing up legal acts, and respectively to understand and appropriately use the specific terminology used in the field of drawing up legal acts.

In respect of own revenue-generating activities, others than the courses organised by the EIR, the TU experts also take part in implementing the *Citi-rights Europe!* project, which focuses on increasing the awareness and training of young

people aged between 16 and 25 with regard to European citizenship, the rights and responsibilities corresponding to the European identity, and the obstacles to exercising such rights.

Under this project, a TU expert attended the meeting in Rome, where the timetable and activities to be implemented were established. Following agreement over the agenda, in February - March 2015 the TU prepared the *Estonia's Non-Citizens, Citizens of the European Union?* study, publication pending. In the fourth quarter of 2015, a number of meetings with the teachers involved in the training/information process took place, and several monitoring visits were organised in correlation with demonstration courses.

In 2016, the Training Unit intends to continue to organise the programmes set in the agenda, aimed at ensuring a high level of specialisation among public servants, as well as to initiate other programmes equally in line with the current needs in terms of training (such as the *Expert-specialist in the Public Private Partnership* or *Expert in information for business courses* - both authorised by the National Qualifications Authority).

For further details, please visit the Training Unit webpage (<http://ier.ro/activit%C4%83%C8%9Bi/formare-%C3%AEnafaceri-europene.html>) on the European Institute of Romania website ([www.ier.ro](http://www.ier.ro)).

EIR Training Unit

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## EIR Projects in 2015

In 2015, the Projects Unit mainly implemented two projects, *Citi-Rights Europe!*, and *Eurofound Network of Correspondents: Romania*.

The activities in the *Citi-Rights Europe!* framework were implemented in collaboration with Training Unit, as follows:

**In regard to Workstream 1 - Scientific research and management:** in accordance with the implementation plan, the main activities were the collection of relevant legal materials and the analysis of specific literature; a meeting with the partners involved was held to evaluate the collected material and plan subsequent steps; the website of the project was periodically updated and interaction with organizations representing the civil society was intensified.

**Workstream 2 - Schools classes and outreach** involved the organization of training sessions in five national colleges from Bucharest: "Spiru Haret" National College, "Gheorghe Lazăr" National College, "Matei Basarab" National College, "Ion Luca Caragiale" National College and "Aurel Vlaicu" National College, between 25 November and 11 December 2015.

Concerning **Workstream 4 - Communication and outreach**, a website dedicated to the project was launched, with a section available in Romanian (<https://citizenrights.euroalter.com/?lang=ro>), besides which the campaign "Claim your rights" was launched in the schools involved into the project.

As for the *Eurofound Network of Correspondents: Romania* project (further details available in a separate article), during 2015, twenty-two deliverables were elaborated (13 scheduled and 9 on-request), with 90 factsheets being uploaded on the Eurofound platform.

The deliverables (study cases, quarterly reports etc.) were elaborated by senior researchers hired by the European Institute of Romania and by junior researchers hired by the partners involved into the project. During 2015, a number of new senior researchers were hired in the national team of Eurofound correspondents. The researchers' activity was supported by the European Institute of Romania, which ensured the monitoring of the preparation of the deliverables and responded to the revision requests from Eurofound according to the contractual provisions.





Also, the EIR and its partners - Euractiv Network and Freedom House Romania - were involved in the dissemination process, by publishing on their websites information about the Eurofound publications.

Additionally, the Projects Unit was also focused upon submitting project proposals. During 2015, ten such project proposals were submitted, five still currently in the evaluation process.

The main funding opportunities targeted by the Projects Unit were: the Europe for Citizens programme; the Erasmus + programme - Jean Monnet Projects, Jean Monnet Networks and Key Action 3 Civil Society Cooperation in the field of Education and Training and Youth; Action grants to support European judicial training of the Justice Directorate General; Horizon 2020 - The young as a driver of social change scheme; the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs - RoAid - Romania's Development Cooperation Programme; the German Marshall Fund - the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation Programme. Through the projects submitted for review, if approved for financing, the European Institute of Romania engages to continue to run activities that are closely linked with the expertise it has in European affairs.

Also in 2015, new institutional partnerships were concluded with public institutions and non-governmental organizations from Romania and other European countries, as follows: from Romania - the National Institute for Training of Lawyers, the National Association of Romanian Bars, Eurocentrica and the Institute for Public Policies; from France - the European Human Rights Association and Stras' Diplomacy; from Bulgaria - Bulgarian Lawyers for Human Rights; from Italy - Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini and "Aldo Moro" University; from Serbia - the Media Education Centre; from Cyprus - the Centre for Social and Economic Change and from the Republic of Moldova - the Ministry of Justice and the Centre for Legal Approximation.

Loredana Licuța

## Retrospective and Perspective: the Eurofound Project – Network of National Correspondents: Romania

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) is a tripartite European Union Agency established in 1975; its role is to provide information relevant for social and work-related policies. This role is carried out in partnership with governments, employers, trade unions and European Union institutions.

The Eurofound is managed by a director and deputy director, who in turn report to the Governing Board. The two directors are appointed by the European Commission from a list provided by the Governing Board. The Board is made up of representatives of the governments and social partners (the employers and trade unions), and is responsible for the development of the agency's work programme.

The role of Eurofound in the European institutional framework is to monitor the latest developments in living and working conditions, as well as to provide governments and social partners with timely, in-depth analyses and information in the area of social and work-related policies<sup>1</sup>. Considering the importance of implementing the Europe 2020 strategy between 2013 and 2016, the Eurofound's strategic objective is to provide relevant, timely and useful knowledge for designing policies in four priority areas: 1. increasing labour market participation and combating unemployment; 2. improving working conditions and making work sustainable throughout the life course; 3. developing industrial relations to ensure equitable and productive solutions in a changing policy context; 4. improving living standards and promoting social cohesion in the face of economic disparities and social inequalities<sup>2</sup>.



Eurofound

<sup>1</sup> Eurofound, *Towards better living and working conditions*, August 2014, p. 3: [http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef\\_files/pub-docs/2014/35/en/1/EF1435EN.pdf](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_files/pub-docs/2014/35/en/1/EF1435EN.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 4.

At the beginning of 2013, Eurofound launched a call for tender for establishing a network of national (and European-level) correspondents to provide expert national inputs of key importance for the European debate that allow for comparisons of developments and contextualising information. To this end, the selected research centres provide Eurofound with research and information services that are used by the European Observatory of Working Life and the European Monitoring Centre on Change in the area of employment and company restructuring, serving to other social policy topics as well.

The Romanian network of correspondents provides Eurofound with information through a consortium consisting of the European Institute of Romania, Euractiv Network and Freedom House Romania. Under the Eurofound Project, the *Network of National Correspondents: Romania*, on the one hand, carries out reporting services as scheduled and as requested by the funder; on the other hand, through the Romanian network, we help Eurofound to reach the key actors in its areas of activity and interest.

In 2014 and 2015, the Romanian consortium was involved in surveying the current national situation, drew up case studies and reports, analysed the findings and helped provide a comparative perspective at EU-28 level. The fields covered by the Romanian network are industrial relations, working conditions, employment, industrial restructuring and national social policy.

In view of the above, it is worth mentioning one of the Eurofound publications in 2015, *Developments in working life in Europe: EurWORK annual review 2014*<sup>3</sup>, which collects information based on reports from Eurofound’s network of national correspondents complemented by recent research findings.

Regarding the importance of the project *Network of national correspondents: Romania* for the European Institute of Romania, it should be emphasised that the EIR supports, through its activities, the drafting and implementing of Government policies ensuing from Romania’s membership of the European Union. It also contributes to enhancing the visibility and importance of the partnership between the Government and social actors for drafting and implementing social policies at national level and it consolidates the think tank status of the European Institute of Romania through its contribution to developing social policies.

In this context, in 2016 we will continue, through the network of national correspondents, to collect data and to provide expertise; the European Institute of Romania together with the Euractiv Network and Freedom House Romania will hold a number of debates on current themes of interest and research for both Eurofound and the Romanian labour market.

The consortium intends to hold quarterly debates, where the guests invited to present their views will include national correspondents involved in the project, representatives of the Romanian Government, representatives of trade unions and employers, and the members of the Eurofound Governing Board Romania.

Nicoleta Voicu

## Translation Coordination at EIR

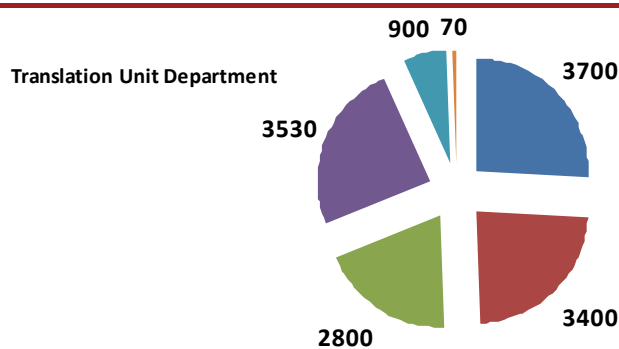
In 2015, the team of the Translation Coordination Unit translated and/or revised more than 7000 pages, representing over 130 documents.

As in previous years, most of our activity was related to European Court of Human Rights jurisprudence, the translation into Romanian of ECHR cases and related documents being carried out under a Protocol concluded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Superior Council of Magistracy and the European Institute of Romania.

With the support of the Superior Council of Magistracy, the cases are uploaded to the online database of the European Court of Human Rights. The cases are indexed, being classified according to the articles relied upon and the keywords utilised.

Another activity, related to translation, is terminological research, the terminology database being also available on our website.

In 2015 our colleagues continued to provide interpretation services during the events organised by the European Institute of Romania.



We continued and will continue to pay special attention to the activity of training interns involved in the computer assisted translation and revision of texts.

Translation Coordination Unit

<sup>3</sup> The publication *Developments in working life in Europe: EurWORK annual review 2014* and further information are available at <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/2015/working-conditions-industrial-relations/developments-in-working-life-in-europe-eurwork-annual-review-2014>



# Europe Direct Bucharest – Review of Activities during the 2015 European Year for Development

The European Union of 2015 was marked by several extremely important events within the Community framework: a new European Commission and a new European Parliament took office, the implementation of reforms proposed in the Europe 2020 Strategy continued to take place, and especially the assessment of the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Thus, in its third year of activity, the Europe Direct Information Centre (EDIC) Bucharest of the European Institute of Romania (EIR) continued the European communication activities in the framework of the 2015 European Year for Development - the year of stories, during which we tried to boost active participation in development, seeking to give another tone to communication, to bring to the forefront of the discussion the actions of ordinary people, who are often the most dynamic and important factors for change in the communities they are part of.



The activities in the working plan for 2015 took into consideration both the needs and specificities of the local and regional communities, as well as the priorities of the European Commission and the European Parliament set in the agenda of the year that just ended. To this end, the *Gala of Interns and Scholarship Holders of Europe Direct Bucharest* launched the EDIC Bucharest's agenda, full of events, information activities and online communication actions. The EDIC team, together with the interns working alongside them, carried out in secondary schools a series of information events focused on the importance of education on the EU, titled *Interactive Europe: learn and apply!*, ending with the competition *Active and Creative Europeans!*. The open air events *Children - Europe's Future* and *Let's Be ... Green!* were animated by the attending children and marked the World Environment Day and the International Children's Day, respectively.

As we accumulated more courage and more positive experience with organising non-formal activities, leading to added value for the people in Bucharest and Ilfov who interacted with Europe Direct, the youngsters involved in Europe Direct Bucharest activities enjoyed the participation in the information and communication seminar *Europe teaches us, we pass it on!* (a mini-summer school designed to further develop their skills for communication on European topics and more). Under the same framework of active and informal involvement there have been several practical meetings under the umbrella of the *Europe Direct Club*, such as the creative workshops *The European 1<sup>st</sup> of March* and *Easter in the European Family*.

The European Year for Development ended with an emphasis on the European Commission's highest priority, *i.e.* job creation for young people; to this end, the series of information and debate sessions titled *Young European, job seeking!* were held, with activities taking place at private universities in Bucharest, in cooperation with the European information network Eures. The European communication activities also included the celebration of Europe Day on 9 May through the *EuropART: Gala of Child and Adult Artists*, a show designed to promote talent and creativity among young people.

In addition to the multiple events, our team tries to ensure that European news are communicated on a daily basis to the virtual community of the Bucharest-Ilfov region, as well as to reply to the queries made by telephone or email, in addition to the citizens who visit the Centre. The [Europe Direct Bucharest website](#), the [social networks](#), the [electronic newsletter](#) and the [publications](#) we elaborate are the other communication means ensuring European information reaches the public.

Diana Filip, EDIC Bucharest Coordinator

# Participation of EIR Experts at the "Exploring Solutions to Combat Rising Political Radicalism in Europe" International Conference

On 15 January 2016, the National University of Political Science and Public Administration (SNSPA) held the international conference on „Exploring Solutions to Combat Rising Political Radicalism in Europe”. The event was organised under the *European Citizens Initiative to Combat Political Extremism and Euroscepticism*, a transnational project implemented by the Republikon Foundation of Hungary and financed under the European Commission’s programme *Europe for Citizens*. The Romanian partners were the **Department for International Relations and European Integration** of the SNSPA and the **Romanian Association for International Relations and European Integration** (*Asociația Română pentru Relații Internaționale și Integrare Europeană*), represented by Mrs. Miruna Troncotă, the conference’s host and moderator.

The conference aimed to develop a dialogue and cooperation platform for academia, young activists, social entrepreneurs, NGO representatives, professionals with international experience and public servants in charge of European affairs. The conference sought to reflect and exchange opinions on the complex causes and consequences of the rising political radicalization in the recent years, which has become a direct threat to European stability. The risks of political extremism in the EU were debated during two panels, which addressed both the analysis of the internal context and the overall European scene, focusing mainly on identifying solutions. Another theme under discussion was that of the possible sources of Euroscepticism and the consequences of the recent elections in Poland and France.

**Mihai Sebe**, EIR expert, took part in the first panel, titled “**Factors of Political Radicalization in the context of the Refugee Crisis**”, as speaker. His intervention was a political analysis regarding **Romania’s stance in the refugee crisis**.

One of the first elements of the speech concerned the definition of the context in which the refugee issue was debated in Romania, i.e. the **very low number of refugees in the last 25 years**. Thus, according to UN official data, Romania has the **lowest percentage of immigrants in the total population, a percentage that rose from 0.6% (1990) to just 0.9% (2013)**, with **25 100 asylum applications** registered between 1991 and 2013 (according to UNHCR data).

On this occasion, the absence of any xenophobe remarks in the official speech was noted - while Romania is opposed to compulsory quotas of refugees, the official political speech firmly condemns any xenophobic attitude and reaffirms Romania’s solidarity with the European Union (be it a conditional solidarity).

On this occasion, Mr. Sebe identified the key elements of the official stance as they appear in public statements; which are, to summarize, the following:

- 1) The short-term solution is to support Syria’s neighbours, which received a large number of refugees in their national territories, especially Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey;
- 2) The long-term solution is to make Syria secure, to eliminate the radical elements and to reconstruct the state;
- 3) Consolidating the European Union’s external borders and establishing an effective European mechanism to manage migration;
- 4) The need to take into consideration the security, economic and social aspects of the refugee crisis, not just the humanitarian ones;
- 5) The refugee crisis should not deflect attention away from the Ukrainian problem and from the ongoing crisis in this country.

During a brief intervention, during the “**Exploring Solutions to combat Radicalization - for both Citizens and Policy-makers**” panel, **Bogdan Mureșan**, EIR expert, pointed out that the prevailing attitude in Romania is a pro-European one, without the alarming Eurosceptic tendency that is noticeable in neighbouring countries. This aspect was also confirmed by the European Parliament elections of 2014, the Romanian public opinion being one of the most favourable to continuing the European integration process. On the other hand, it should be noted that Romanian citizens’ trust in the European Union and European institutions has to do with the chronic disillusionment towards the domestic political class. In this context, the EIR expert announced the launch, in the first quarter of 2016, of the strategy and policy study (SPOS) on “**Combating Euroscepticism, Extremism/Radicalization and Strengthening Confidence in European Values**” under the auspices of the EIR.

Further information on the SNSPA conference is available on the Facebook page of the event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1104983156179225/>.

**Mihai Sebe’s** paper on “**Romania’s Stance in the Issue of the Refugee Crisis. Preliminary Observations**” is fully available online, at <http://www.iedonline.eu/download/2015/IED-Mihai-Sebe-Working-Paper-2015-final.pdf> (English only).

**Bogdan Mureșan, Mihai Sebe**

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