

interview _____

Ulrike Guérot

Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations



The European Union is often perceived as a soft power, yet with considerable global influence. In your opinion, especially given the effects of the current crisis in the euro zone, what are the chances for the Union to maintain its global player status?

Yes, the EU has indeed a great soft-power impact in international relations, for instance through policing missions or through legal or product standards and regulatory policies in trade issues. However, the notion of soft-power is a little bit out of fashion. It was strongly linked to the Bush II era in the US, when the US and the EU had an intellectual dispute over hard and soft-power in order to rule the world. Today, it is clear that the two powers cannot be separated. If the EU wants to defend its values and interests, it ultimately needs the capacity to sanction its policies. It is fair to assess that the EU is still weak in doing so and has not yet emerged as a powerful foreign policy actor, despite the fusion between the Council and the Commission that resulted in the creation of a new position, that of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, currently mandated to Lady Ashton.

The euro crisis has proven that the EU is not yet able to combine money and strategy, or economy and policy; thus, it is not able to use its single currency as a strategic tool like the US has done for decades. With respect to the euro, the EU has become a problem for the rest of the world and is no longer a model of soft-power ... **p. 2**

in this issue _____

- 3 *Lobbying in the EU: where do you stand?*
- 4 *The European Institute of Romania participated at the research seminar "The European Union and Crisis Management Operations: Towards More Strategic Thinking"*
- 6 *European Council Meeting: 18 - 19 October 2012*
- 7 *The Single Market Week Brussels - 15-20 October 2012*
- 7 *The annual conference of the RO+ Network*
- 8 *The Black Sea NGO Forum 24-25 October, Bucharest*
- 10 *EP Plenary Session October 2012, Strasbourg*

EU _____

The European Commission has adopted its enlargement package

On 10 October 2012, the European Commission adopted an important package of documents concerning its enlargement policy. Among them there is the EU Enlargement Strategy Paper and the Progress Reports for the last year of the candidate or potential candidate states. The Strategy Paper is accompanied by the multi-annual indicative financial framework for the pre-accession assistance, revised for 2013 ... **p.5**



Source: <http://ec.europa.eu>

... In an ideal world, the EU would consider the euro zone as one aggregate economy, and would use its economic power as a lever for its political radiation, for creating international standards or for enforcing good governance, multilateral agreements, international law etc. Hopefully, once the euro crisis is over, a revised political system of the EU will be strengthened in such a way as to allow the combination of the economic and the political - and ultimately the strategic power of the EU.

As regards the EU's relations with its Eastern and Southern neighbours, what vision or policies would be necessary, in your opinion, to ensure that Europe has concerted interests in these areas?

The East-South split of the EU is a very old one. Already at the European Council in Essen in 1994, when the enlargement was looming in the horizon, the Council decided that countries with a vocation to join the EU should be financially favoured over countries with no vocation. After the enlargement, the EU neighbourhood policies and association agreements tried to level out the South and the East, but the distinction made between the Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean in 2008 brought again more divergence than convergence between the EU's interests with respect to the South and the East. The question is whether this is necessarily a structurally bad thing or whether the EU can indeed move towards something which would come close to the division of labour. The essential element for success seems to be that neighbourhood relations are developed in the South as much as in the East in such a way that borders remain permeable and open, that trade can function and that exchange - of business, youth or culture - can be enhanced. It is crucial to construct lasting networks of mutual exchange and even dependence between the EU and its neighbours, e.g. the Desertec project which seeks to provide the EU with the solar energy of the South.

How do you see the evolution of the EU - US relations, in light of the significant geopolitical challenges brought about by the "Arab Spring"?

"The role of European think-tanks in shaping the EU's foreign policy is huge, precisely because the EU foreign policy is still in progress and these are difficult times for transnational projects."

Ulrike Guérot joined the European Council on Foreign Relations in July 2007 as a **Senior Policy Fellow** and Representative for Germany. Previously she was Senior Transatlantic Fellow with the German Marshall Fund (2004-2007), and prior to that she headed the European Union unit at the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP) in Berlin (2000-2003).

Ms Guérot has also worked as an Assistant Professor on European studies at Johns Hopkins University, as a Senior Research Fellow at Notre Europe in Paris, and as a staff member of the German Bundestag's Commission on External Affairs.

She has been publishing widely on European and transatlantic issues in various journals and newspapers, and is frequently invited to comment on several EU issues in the media. She has been awarded the prestigious "Ordre pour le Merite" for her engagement on European integration.

Areas of expertise: EU integration process; EU institutions; Franco-German relations; EU-US relations.

Source: <http://ecfr.eu/content/profile/C21/>

The EU-US relationship has profoundly changed; but this change was not triggered only by the Arab Spring. Both powers are struggling with the tectonic shift of the world's focus away from the West to the East, both experience problems conceptualising this process and what it means for their position in the world system and for their populations; and both powers have not really managed to find common answers. The US has given up on Europe and its integration to a great extent; and Europe looks more to Asia as the US does. The usual transatlantic rhetoric "if only the US and Europe worked together, the world would be a better place" has vanished; even the former iron-tie of NATO becomes increasingly weaker. The future development will much depend on the ability of the US and Europe to forge a new civic, economic and strategic alliance of a different kind, including the re-animation of longstanding projects such as a transatlantic market place, which would allow them ultimately to pool their resources and capacities in order to shape the world, rather than competing for the pole-position in the Asian race.

In your opinion, what role will think-tanks and research centres play in the ongoing debate on the future of trans-Atlantic relations and European foreign policy?

The role of European think-tanks in shaping the EU's foreign policy is huge, precisely because the EU foreign policy is still in progress and these are difficult times for transnational projects. It will be crucial for them to identify and to place the EU in the global trends which will be determinant during the 21st century, also with respect to technology development, e.g. the impact of the internet on trade and foreign policy, which may make regional block building less obvious.

Further, history is moving back to sovereign and national approaches, if one looks at the behaviour of other big international players, such as Russia, China, India or Brazil. In other words: power tops law again, when it comes

to issues such as nuclear proliferation or the rush on energy or water resources. The 21st century will be about global wealth distribution. There are two on-going meta-trends: one is whether the European commitment to multilateralism

and to the primacy of international law can be kept; or whether the systems shift back to more national approaches based on power games and fights over resources. The other meta-trend is the world-wide struggle between democracy and efficiency. In Europe, some have started a discourse that democracy reduces the planning and steering capacity (e.g. when it comes to big projects) and makes countries “fall behind” the efficiency of countries such as China. These discussions are obviously dangerous.

Think-tanks should therefore focus on the structural functioning of foreign policy in the future beyond country-to-country relations and seek to obtain Europe’s intellectual leadership in the socio-economic sphere, by designing concepts such as “inclusive growth”, and explore what methods of forming coalitions are best to defend Europe’s values and interests, e.g. through reaching out to the often forgotten continents like Latin America or Africa.

Interview by [Agnes Nicolescu](#)

analysis | opinion

Lobbying in the EU: where do you stand?

Take a look at the elaboration of a public policy in the EU and you will soon find that member states and EU institutions are no longer the only influential actors in this policy-making process. A new category made up of multiple actors also emerges at different times and places. Lawyers, consultants, multinational companies or pan-European trade associations are just a few examples of players pursuing one objective: maintaining a favorable regulatory environment for customers or organizations they represent, through lobbying.



“Lobby” is one of those words that can spark up passionate debates and that are often subject of a *qui pro quo*, mainly for two reasons: systematic lack of conceptual clarity surrounding the phenomenon in social sciences (as noted by Jordan & Offerlé, 2004) and a negative perception of the practice by the public opinion, being associated with an obscure, difficult to understand process, usually held behind closed doors or in unusual places, such as restaurants, tennis courts or golf courses. Indeed, those informed when it comes to lobbying or who consider it as a legitimate part of democracy are relatively rare.

One of the main issues would be to understand how organized interests emerged within a framework that has not been taken into account or anticipated by the first treaties providing for the establishment and the functioning of the European institutions. For some elements of history, suffice it to say that the shift of power between European institutions, deepened integration and expansion of the competences of the EU have led to the proliferation of interest groups at a European level and gave Brussels another nickname, as the “European capital-city of lobbying”.

Neither does this article wish to retrace the history of lobbying in the European Union, nor to dwell on lobbying practices, but it aims to cast a new light on a contemporary debate. It wishes to argue that lobby is neither necessarily bad, nor necessarily good. It sometimes proves to be just necessary, providing a useful insight regarding policies.

Pieter Bouwen (2002) talks about exchange theory and resource dependence theory. This shows that the interaction between interest groups and EU institutions is not unilateral. According to him, information is crucial in the EU policy-making process and is subject to a supply-and-demand scheme, constituting a sort of access asset, allowing doors to be opened in Brussels. It is on the basis of this information exchange that interest groups gain access to EU institutions.

The good exchanged here, the information, comes in different forms and can exert an influence at different stages of the policy-making process, according to the formal powers of each institution and their intervention in the legislative process. Some public actors are thus more likely to be subject to lobbying than others. To offer a brief overview, the main institution predisposed to lobbying is the Commission, since it plays a central role in the EU legislative process. The Commission offers special attention to accurate, unbiased information that will provide officials with the technical expertise in drafting legislation oriented at promoting European interests. The second institution targeted by interest groups is the European Parliament. Since the EP’s main role is to make amendments to the already drafted legislation, it requires information which will allow it to assess legislative proposals. In this European institutional framework, the least prone to lobbying on behalf of EU interest groups is the Council of Ministers, the most intergovernmental actor in the EU legislative process. However, the Council sometimes requires information about domestic interests, in order to make the final assessment of the public policy.

To sum up, it is time to remind that a good vs. evil dichotomous debate on lobbying is not the main purpose of this article. We have shown that information provided by lobbyists can prove to be crucial in making the policy-system work, but it needs to be tailored appropriately, according to each institution, which has a particular need for resources in order to function properly. In addition, interest groups only gain access to European institutions if both conditions for demand and supply are met.

Interest groups were not given a place by the first treaties of the '50s. They had to find a place to fit in. However, based on this model of information exchange, interaction between public actors and private ones becomes predictable. To reduce debates on lobbying as a bad phenomenon, the EU could adopt more measures and set guidelines for practice, in order to increase transparency and integrate interest groups in the democratic decision-making.

Ana-Maria Nia, intern

event

The European Institute of Romania participated at the research seminar **'The European Union and Crisis Management Operations: Towards More Strategic Thinking'** Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP)

The Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) organized, from the 24th to the 26th of September 2012 in Geneva, Switzerland, a research seminar with the topic *The European Union and Crisis Management Operations: Towards More Strategic Thinking*. EIR's representative, Agnes Nicolescu, expert in the Studies and Analyses Unit, was invited to attend the seminar after elaborating the research paper „EU levels of engagement with Regional Partners in Crisis Management Strategies. A Case Study of Turkey's Regional Potential for Cooperation in the Near Middle East”.

The event was funded by the EU COST program, under the coordination of GRIP (Group for Research on Information and Peace - Brussels) within a network of 25 institutes from the EU. The seminar was conducted in an interactive format, the participants having the opportunity to address comments and questions after each session of presentations, in the spirit of the Chatham House Rule. In the framework of a thematic panel, the presentation of each participant was moderated by another fellow participant. The event was attended by officials and experts from European institutions and research centres in the field such as: **Timothy Clarke**, Head of the European Security and Defence Policy Division of the European External Action Service, **Sven Biscop**, Senior Research Fellow, Egmont-the Royal Institute for International Relations- Brussels, **Thierry Tardy** and **Gustav Lindstrom**, training directors at GCSP.

The topics discussed brought into attention the complex external challenges to European security since the Lisbon Treaty, among which we mention the "Arab Spring", the shifting focus of U.S foreign policy from Europe to the Asia-Pacific region, as well as the complexity of the ongoing EU missions. Moreover, the European efforts to establish strategic partnerships with countries such as Russia, China and India were addressed. Another topic which was tackled concerned the context and prospects of the European Security Strategy, the noticeable differences between various Member States



regarding the adoption of a common security strategy being mentioned.

In this context, it was noted that a better correlation of the foreign and security policy of European states is needed, so that they could manage the complex challenges faced by their security and welfare in a more efficient manner. It is also necessary to redefine the interests of European countries by prioritizing situations that require a prompt and coherent response from the EU. The situation in North Africa and Syria remains an indisputable priority to which member states must find answers, given that the EU has vital interests in this region. The most difficult task for decision-makers at both EU and national level is to convince citizens of the need to allocate appropriate resources.

The "Arab Spring" has been widely regarded as the major geopolitical challenge the EU needs to cope with on medium and long term, through a proper allocation of resources to the European Neighbourhood Policy. Moreover, Europe remains the most suited continent for projecting a „big governance" model, through the promotion of democracy, rule of law and

market economy standards, despite the setbacks manifested in time. It was also pointed out that the EU needs to develop and promote concerted interests in several areas: territorial security, migration control, climate change, and ensuring member states' decision-making autonomy in relation to other international actors.

Among the other participants there were representatives of reputed research institutes and universities from the EU and beyond, such as: GRIP (Group of Research and Information on Peace and Security) - Brussels, FIIA (The Finnish Institute of

International Affairs), Clingendael - Netherlands, Cambridge University, the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the National Institute of Strategic Studies - Ukraine, Free University of Berlin, DCAF (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces). The event represented a great opportunity for the participating institutes to share ideas on the current debates concerning EU's foreign policy future, but also for strengthening inter-institutional contacts.

Agnes Nicolescu

EU

The European Commission has adopted its enlargement package

On 10 October 2012, the European Commission adopted an important package of documents concerning its enlargement policy¹. Among them there is the EU Enlargement Strategy Paper and the Progress Reports for the last year of the candidate or potential candidate states. The Strategy Paper is accompanied by the multi-annual indicative financial framework for the pre-accession assistance, revised for 2013.

The EU enlargement policy, promoted for more than four decades, answers to some legitimate aspirations of the European peoples. The successive enlargement waves have enriched the EU, prompting its evolution by diversity dynamism. Today, more than three quarters of the Member States are former enlargement countries. The continuation of this policy contributes to the strengthening of European peace, security and prosperity.

The Commission's Communication on the EU enlargement comes in a moment of respite in the global uncertainty, generated by a new momentum for the economic, financial and political integration. Within a framework of cooperation, the prospect of accession drives political and economic reforms, transforming societies and creating new opportunities for citizens and business. The adopted report assesses the current situation of the enlargement agenda. Starting from the country analyses, the document takes note of the accomplishments in the enlargement preparation of the Western Balkans, Iceland and Turkey, established their current stage, assesses the perspectives for the next years and, in that respect, makes a series of recommendations.

The enlargement policy strategy highlights the following particular challenges: the positioning of the rule of law in the middle of the enlargement policy, the regional cooperation and the reconciliation in the Western Balkans, as well as the economic and social situation. They are granted a special attention, just like during the previous years, and also the EU support which includes the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).

The strengthening of the rule of law in the enlargement countries is aimed at the *judicial system*, which must be efficient, independent, impartial, responsible and capable of ensuring fair trials; the fight against *corruption* remains prevalent and needs to have more transparent public bodies and use of public funds; *the fight against organised crime* is a major problem which requires a strong cooperation between law enforcement and judicial bodies in the region, of the EU Member States and at the international level; *public administration reform*, a key-priority under the political criteria, depends on broad national strategies which will receive help in establishing the planning priorities and in their implementation; *the fundamental rights*, especially those belonging to national minorities, need institutional and legislative strengthening; *the freedom of expression* remains a serious concern in a number of countries, due to political interference, economic pressure, self-censorship and insufficient protection of journalists.

Regional cooperation and reconciliation in the Western Balkans has achieved further progress during the last year. Disputes related to inter-ethnic or status issues, notably in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, continue to hinder the functioning of institutions and the reform process. New results were reached in the *Belgrade - Pristina dialogue*, with agreements in the areas of regional cooperation and representation. The agreement on integrated management of the border is to be implemented. The call for *reconciliation* is resonating more deeply among the population at large, laying strong foundations for dealing with legacy issues, such as war crimes, refugees and inter-ethnic tensions. Initiatives by civil society play an important role in enhancing reconciliation among the citizens of the region and should be supported. Nonetheless, vigilance will still be required in the years to come to guard against nationalist reflexes.

The economic and social challenges of the enlargement countries are strengthening their economic recovery while maintaining the overall macro-economic stability, although the fiscal risks have increased significantly in a number of them. The impact of the economic crisis is felt throughout the region. The Western Balkans is falling back into recession in the context of low levels of competitiveness, income and investment and of high and rising unemployment. EU is committed to continue assisting the

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

countries with policy advice and financial assistance and works closely with the international financial institutions to channel favourable loans towards priority areas. The Commission will continue to support the common reform efforts and the regional monitoring approach, including with IPA funds. At the same time, in the spirit of EU's consolidated economic governance, the political and economic bilateral dialogue will be continued, as well as the multilateral economic dialogue between the Commission, EU Member States and the enlargement countries.

The countries' situation is the following: *Croatia* still has to fulfill a few more conditions by 1 July 2013, when it will be a part of EU; accession negotiations with *Iceland* are progressing well; *Turkey* must consolidate its efforts as concerns the requirements in the field of political and fundamental rights and regarding the improvement of the relations with the *Republic of Cyprus*; the *Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* waits for the EU governments' decision on the Commission's recommendation for opening negotiations; *Albania* can become a candidate country after accomplishing certain key-reforms; *Bosnia-Herzegovina* has made limited progress in accomplishing the EU initial conditions; *Montenegro* began the accession negotiations; *Serbia* is a candidate country; *Kosovo* has to accomplish a series of essential conditions in order to start negotiations for a commercial and financial assistance agreement.

The Commission's message is that, essentially, the countries must firmly remain on the path of reform, especially in Western Balkans, leaving the legacy of the past behind and investing in their European future. EU shares an interest in the successful implementation of reforms, as enlargement is a joint endeavour. Maintaining the momentum for enlargement as well as for reforms are two sides of the same coin.

In December 2012, the EU Member States governments will analyze the recommendations and will take the necessary decisions.

Lulian Oneașcă

European Council Meeting: 18 - 19 October 2012

During 18 - 19 October 2012, the European Council met in Brussels, chaired by the President Herman Van Rompuy. On this occasion, the Council reiterated its commitment to take firm measures for tackling financial market tensions, restoring confidence and stimulating economic growth and jobs. In particular, EU leaders focused on the proposals expressed during a several bilateral meetings that took place in September, in all EU Member States. As the creation of a genuine **Economic and Monetary Union** is highly expected, the completion of EMU was presented as a necessary step to take in order to ensure socio-economic welfare, stability and sustained prosperity.

In this regard, the best path to follow is to ensure transparency towards the non-euro Member States, as well as observing the integrity of the Single Market. The Council takes into consideration the possibility that the euro zone members will conclude individual arrangements of a contractual nature with EU institutions regarding the reforms they plan to make and implement.

Moreover, EU leaders welcomed the significant progress in implementing the **Compact for Growth and Jobs** and asked for further measures that would complete this process. **Syria** was also brought into the discussion, as its situation is constantly downgrading. In order to show support for Lakdar Bahrim's efforts in finding a solution to Syria's political crisis, the European Council endorsed the conclusions adopted on 15 October as well as the additional restrictive measures against the Syrian regime and its supporters.

The European Council strongly opposed the bombardment of Turkish territories by Syrian forces, and urged Syrian authorities to fully respect the integrity and sovereignty of all neighbouring states. Those who breach human rights should be



Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/europeancouncil_meetings/

held accountable as it is necessary to end violence in all its forms.

As the EU was recently awarded the **Peace Nobel Prize**, the leaders of the Council manifested their gratitude as the prize honours all the EU Institutions, Member States and citizens: "The conclusions of the reunion stated that [...] *the members of the European Council regard it as their personal responsibility to ensure Europe remains a continent of progress and prosperity*"¹.

Laura Mateescu, intern

¹ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/133004.pdf

The Single Market Week

Brussels – 15-20 October 2012

The 20th anniversary of the **European Single Market** was marked by the European Commission and the European Parliament through several events dedicated to the **Single Market Week**, during 15 - 20 October, 2012, the event being celebrated in all 27 Member States.

The stated purpose of the *Single Market Week* was to gather European citizens, businessmen, Members of the European Parliament, the European Commission and the EU Council, alongside the Member States to discuss and reflect on the past, present and future of the Single Market. By bringing together all relevant actors, it was hoped that everyone will have the opportunity to analyse the main achievements of the Single Market in the last 20 years, but also to share their personal vision on the future and the challenges of the Single Market.

The Launch Event of the *Single Market Week* took place on Monday, 15 October in the European Parliament in Brussels. In the launching speech „Together for the Single Market”, Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the EC, highlighted the importance of the Common Market at regional and global level, as it is the world’s largest trade and industry area. Moreover, it was mentioned that the Single Market is not limited in scope to the global aspect, as it has a significant contribution to the launching and consolidation of a stronger Europe.

The achievements, the problems, the future challenges of the Single Market as well as those of the *Generation 1992* were all subjects brought into discussion. Two interactive panels were organized, offering to the participants the opportunity of discussing and exposing different points of view.

The first two decades of Single Market existence were the topic of the first panel discussion: *Achievements of the Single Market:*



What are the benefits for European citizens & business? As the Single Market is designed to progress constantly, the theme of the second panel made reference to the future: Challenges of the Single Market: How to improve the economic and social environment for citizens and businesses and generate growth?

The two panels were followed by an award ceremony for the 20 prize-winning 20-year olds that won the competition Generation 1992.

The whole event in video format and the messages of EC President Barroso and Jacques Delors are available online on the Commission’s web site: http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/barnier/headlines/news/2012/10/20121011_en.htm

Single Market Week dedicated website: <http://www.singlemarket20.eu/single-market-week/overview>

Daniela Stoian, intern

In Focus

The annual conference of the RO+ Network

On 19 October 2012 the third annual conference of the Linguistic Network of Excellence for Institutional Romanian (Network RO+) took place in Bucharest.

The conference tackled the following issues: the Romanian terminologies; the users’ degree of satisfaction, the evolution of specialised languages, as well as strengthening the cooperation in the field of terminological activity.

The conference was opened by Mr Nicolae Idu, Head of the Representation of the European Commission in Romania, Acad. Dr. Marius Sala, Vice-President of the Romanian Academy and Honorary President of the RO+ Network, as well as Mr Viorel Şerbănescu, Head of the Romanian Language Department, Directorate-General for Translation.

In the first part of the conference, moderated by Mr Viorel Şerbănescu, the activity report on the RO+ Network was presented. Other subjects on the agenda were the future issue of the *Dictionary of terms in the current Romanian legislation (Dicţionarul termenilor oficializaţi prin legislaţia românească actuală)* - Prof. dr. Ioana Vintilă-Rădulescu, "Iorgu Iordan - Al. Rosetti" Institute of Linguistics), the terminological activity in Romania in the context of international and European associations and networks on terminology, as well as the Department of Applied Modern Languages in the Babeş-Bolyai University, as compared to other universities.

The second part of the conference, moderated by Ms Ileana Busuioc, was dedicated to the round table with the title "Do we have coherent and functional terminologies in Romania? What should be done to create a unified framework to develop specialised languages?"

Some of the difficulties that both translators and experts have to deal with are the existence of several terms for the same concept in texts with legal value (examples were taken from the field of heating installations), differences of opinion among experts in the same field (examples from the insurance field), the danger of doing translations without checking with experts (examples on investment funds), as well as the fact that in Romania there is no authority to validate at national level the terminology of a certain field.

The speakers also mentioned examples of good practice in universities and between translators and experts, as well as the steps to be taken in order to make an occupational standard for terminologists, standard that was seen by some participants as a means to harmonize and unify at national level the competencies, abilities and knowledge needed in order to practice the terminological activity.

During the conference, appeal was made for a stronger cooperation both between translators and experts and between universities and potential employers of future graduates.

Laura Mihăilescu

event

The Black Sea NGO Forum 24-25 October, Bucharest

During 24-25 October 2012, the fifth edition of a landmark event in the Black Sea Region, **The Black Sea NGO Forum**, took place in Bucharest. The forum brought together non-governmental organizations from the Black Sea area with the aim of debating topics of interest for the region.

The event was organized by the Federation of Romanian NGOs for Development - FOND, with the help of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Representation of the European Commission in Romania.

Since its launch in 2008, the Forum aimed at contributing to the strengthening of NGOs capacity of influencing the regional and national policies, as well as increasing the number and quality of regional projects and partnerships. The topic of this year's edition was "**Participation and inclusion for responsible development**", the debates being centred around three sub-themes:

- Social entrepreneurship and community development
- Transparency and anti-corruption
- Youth policies

Among the participants there were representatives from the wider Black Sea region such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, the Republic of Moldova, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Romania, as well as other EU states, governmental representatives and regional experts.

On this occasion, the importance of the Black Sea as a strategic region was reaffirmed, the necessity for a deeper regional cooperation being highlighted, in spite of the existent differences and bureaucratic difficulties.

For more details please visit <http://www.blackseango.org/forum/>



AidWatch National Report Romanian Performances as a Donor State of Official Development Assistance

Within the NGO Forum, the first national AidWatch report dedicated to the official development assistance (ODA) provided by Romania was launched on 17 October 2012.

The Report presents the progress of ODA Romania as well as the challenges faced during the five years in which the state has been a donor (in the legislative field, funding mechanisms, transparency and collaboration with the civil society field), reflecting the main changes that occurred within the cooperation for development policy. Throughout the report, special attention was given to the situation of the Republic of Moldova, Romania's main partner in this field.

The report was conducted by FOND, with CONCORD's financial support.

For more details please visit: http://issuu.com/adrianaionela/docs/raport_aidwatch_210mm_297mm_15.10.2012_tipar

Mihai Sebe

“European Perspectives” Debate Series - Strengthening the Single Market and Stimulating Economic Growth – Progress, Obstacles and Priorities

The Representation of the European Commission in Romania organized, on 30 October 2012, a round table entitled **Strengthening the Single Market and Stimulating Economic Growth - Progress, Obstacles and Priorities**. The debate is part of the European Perspectives monthly series, launched by the Representation of the European Commission in 2009, with the aim of stimulating debate on EU's priorities and reflecting Romania's national public agenda. **The event was logistically prepared by the European Institute of Romania**, the winner of this summer's tender for providing technical assistance for the organisation of two national conferences and ten monthly round tables for the Representation of the European Commission (REC) in Romania. This project will be implemented over the course of one year.

The event was moderated by Mr. **Daniel Apostol**, journalist and general director of Money TV and was attended by Ms. **Alice Arșinel**, director in the Ministry of European Affairs, Mr. **Aurelian Dochia**, economic analyst and managing partner Concept, Mr. **Florin Bonciu**, pro-rector, the Romanian-American University and **Vlad Căldăraru**, student, one of the prize-winners of the *Generation 1992: European Single Market Creative Competition*.

We will further present some of the topics discussed during the debate (all of the subjects tackled by the speakers can be found in the event synthesis, which will be available soon on the EIR website, under the **Communication and Marketing/Communication** projects section.

The discussion was launched by Mr. **Apostol**, who made references to the two decades Anniversary of the Single Market. The moderator brought into discussion the increased interest for the common market topic, in terms of its advantages and opportunities, among the young generation.

Mr. **Florin Bonciu** addressed the challenges that the last decade has brought in terms of the shifting political and economic focus from the EU towards Asia. The transformation of the global system into a multipolar one brings into attention, more and more frequently, states such as China, India, Russia or Brazil, in the context of the decreased weight and influence of Europe in the global economy. The guest made references to a series of studies elaborated on this topic, such as „Global Europe 2050”, studies that put Europe in front of some scenarios of alternative actions. The speaker underlined the fact that unlimited economic growth is not sustainable and it could eventually lead to stagnation, thus making it necessary to opt for growth within default limits.

During his speech, Mr. **Aurelian Dochia** highlighted that the only viable option for the European Union is the continuation of its political and economic integration, despite current tensions. The success and uniqueness of the European construction should not be forgotten, the Single Market remaining one of the most important international markets, gathering 27 states, approximately 500 millions of consumers and 22 million companies which carry out their activity on its territory. The framework of the Common Market should be constantly enriched, especially though the development of the services sector, which requires increased harmonisation. In this context, it is worth mentioning that since 1992 when the SM was launched, the intra-communitarian exchanges increased 3.5 times.

Ms. **Alice Arșinel** presented the recent regulations and evolutions in the EU services fields, insisting upon the instruments dedicated to the good functioning of the Single Market. In this context, Romania's issues and the concerns of the Ministry of European as a national coordinator were exposed. The main European regulation, the Services Directive 2006/123/CE, promotes structural reforms in a domain that represents 45% form EU's GDP. The last communication issued by the Commission, *A partnership for new growth in services. 2012-2015*, brings into discussion a series of ambitious measures meant to contribute to the full implementation of the Services Directive. Among these measures, various policy elements can be identified, such as monitoring the transparency of national actions related to the Directive, which will be transposed in the European Semester, the *inter pares* evaluation of national regulations, consumers protection through the harmonization of specific regulation. In an ample framework of consultation, the Ministry of European Affairs aims to highlight the progress requirements, under the re-examination of national legislation. For promoting the Services Directive, three specific instruments are used: SOLVIT, an informal system for preventing litigation, specifically meant for the citizens and the business environment; IMI, an information framework that facilitates the administrative cooperation of Member States in the scope of the Directive and PCU, the electronic single point of contact, that comprises e-governance elements.

At the end of the session, Mr. **Vlad Căldăraru**, as one of the winners of the creation contest *Generation 1992* European Single Market Competition, briefly presented the framework of the contest. The competition was part of a series of manifestations dedicated to the two decades anniversary of the Common Market and enjoyed a large participation among the younger generation, especially as it was promoted through online social networks. Vlad Căldăraru was awarded within the *smart application* section, meant to promote the opportunities of the Single Market in the virtual environment.

More information on the event can be accessed on the web page of the European Commission Representation in Romania: http://ec.europa.eu/romania/news/agenda/29102012_perspective_europene_ro.htm

Studies and Analyses Unit, EIR

EP Plenary Session, Strasbourg: 22 – 23 and 25 - 26 October 2012

In the first part of the session, several reports on current subjects were briefly presented and were followed by debates. Thus, the report of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, *SMEs: competitiveness and business opportunities*, recommends the Commission to examine new initiatives to gather funding destined to entrepreneurs and recently established enterprises. They can support crowd funding. The Commission will also have to estimate how the funding could bring profit to the SMEs. The report points out the necessity to evaluate the creation of a legislative framework in order to establish these practices at the level of the EU.

Trade and economic relations with the United States was the subject of another intensely debated report. Other debates were focused on *Trade negotiations between EU and Japan*.

The financial norms applicable to EU's annual budget were presented in reports followed by debates, under the item General budget - all sections. The MEPs emphasised that the new regulation is more modern, more straightforward in funds management and that it is provided with more efficient norms to cope with the challenges of the current crisis.

The MEPs reunited in plenary session gave a negative vote for the proposal to appoint a member of the European Court of Auditors (Leonard Orban).

As sign of the crisis, six requests formulated for the *Mobilisation of the European Fund for Adjustment to Globalisation* were analysed.

The session's agenda was extremely diverse, comprising subjects of current interest, such as the *Single Market* and the *Procedures for applying the EC-Serbia Stabilisation and Association Agreement and the EC-Serbia Interim Agreement*.

In the report on the EP draft resolution regarding the *Innovative financial instruments in the context of the next Multi-annual Financial Framework*, the EP Committee on Budgets was welcoming since May, the current year, the observations of the European Court of Auditors (ECA) in a special report from 2011 on the Guarantee Fund for SMEs and was requesting the European Investment Fund - manager of the fund on behalf of the Commission - to address the recommendations of the ECA as soon as possible. Taking note of ECA's observations published in its special report of 2011 on auditing the Guarantee Fund for SMEs (SMEG), regarding certain deficiencies and unclear objectives of the plan, lack of specific targets etc., the EP Committee welcomes the achievements identified by ECA, including the establishment of an adequate management framework, as well as of the well designed beneficiary selection framework, due to the introduction of clear and reasonable requirements for reporting which do not place excessive burden on the SMEs.

The Annual Report on the European Ombudsman's Activities in 2011 mentioned that the complaints against Member States'



Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/european_parliament/

public authorities do not fall under the European Ombudsman's competences, even if they regard aspects related to the application of EU legislation. There is a European Network of Ombudsmen, a member of which is the EP Committee on Petitions and many of these complaints fall under the competence of the national and regional ombudsmen. The main types of deficient administration investigated by the Ombudsman in 2011 concerned aspects referring to *lawfulness* (28% of inquiries), *requests of information* (16.2%), *correctness* (13.6%), *motivation* of decisions and availability of *recourse* (8.1%), reasonable terms for taking *decisions* (7.3%), requests regarding *public access to documents* (7.1%), *discrimination* (6.8 %), as well as the obligation to answer letters in *the language of the citizens* and to indicate the competent official (5.8%).

For further details, please visit: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ro/>

Mariana Bara

TRAINING IN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AT EIR – December 2012 –

EU'S NORMATIVE SYSTEM

10 - 11 December

Contact: Cornelia Predoiu, cornelia.predoiu@ier.ro

Registration for this session being already completed, we invite you to register to this course in 2013.

The course is held by Professor **Simina-Elena Tănăsescu**, vice dean of the Faculty of Law, University of Bucharest, trainer with extensive experience in law and European affairs, head of PhD theses in Law. Ms. Elena Simina-Tănăsescu held courses in universities throughout Romania and abroad, research and training institutes. She is also the author of numerous constitutional and parliamentary law books and studies. Her experience includes the activities as a judge and expert advisor in Phare-funded programs. She collaborated with the Delegation of the European Commission in Bucharest for monitoring EU-funded programs in public administration and justice.

Advantages of our courses:

- **rich and up to date information content** centred on the development of concrete competences
- **trainers with solid knowledge and experience** in the subject matters of the program, as well as in delivering training sessions
- **moderate training fees**
- **central location.**

For other details (dates, registration), please visit the website www.ier.ro, section *Training in European Affairs*.

Editor-in-Chief: Oana Mocanu
Editors: Mariana Bara, Mihai Sebe
Graphics & DTP: Monica Dumitrescu
English version: Raluca Brad, Mihaela Papa, Alexandra Pop (intern),
Mona Răus

* The texts published in this Newsletter express the authors' opinion and do not represent the official position of the European Institute of Romania.

ISSN 2065 - 457X

In order to receive future issues of the EIR Newsletter, you can subscribe accessing the following link: www.ier.ro.



European Institute of Romania
7-9, Regina Elisabeta Bvd., RO - 030016, Bucharest, Romania
Phone: (+4021) 314 26 96 / 133 / Fax: (+4021) 314 26 66
Contact: newsletter@ier.ro
Web: www.ier.ro