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Multi-Europe Europe

Alina Bârgăoanu



A famous author in the field of globalisation once wrote that, had she received a dollar each time that term had been used, she would have become a rich woman. The same reasoning stands for the word “Brexit”, which was used for the first time in 2012 by *Euractiv* journalist Peter Wilding. The term, together with the reality to which it refers, entertains an unwonted circulation and currently lies at the forefront of all European debates. Peter Wilding would definitely

deserve to be a millionaire for inspiringly coining this term.

Coming up with new ideas about Brexit is not a risk-free operation, given the prominence of the subject. However, I would dare emphasize two aspects that have been touched upon only lightly in the public debate.

First of all, Brexit - no matter when and how it will eventually happen - is by far the most important recent geopolitical event for the Union and its neighbourhood. In the recent history of European integration, I would place it next to the reunification of Germany. Why this and what is the connection between these two events? When we talk about the history of the European integration, we naturally refer to the Franco-German engine ... [p.2](#)

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The European Institute of Romania supports the *Promoters for European democracy*

On **7 April 2017**, Mrs **Gabriela Drăgan**, PhD, Director General of the European Institute of Romania, participated at the workshop organized by the European Parliament Information Office (BIPE) within the third edition of the project “Promoters for European democracy” ... [p.3](#)



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But we fail to emphasize that “half” of this engine included only “half” of Germany, the Federal Republic of Germany. After the German reunification, the founding EU engine became a rather different geopolitical entity. Geopolitically speaking, the Union “moved” eastwards, and thus acquired more obvious continental-like features. This process was amplified by the two waves of Eastward enlargement, 2004 and 2007. The only power that has been left to provide for some kind of balance between continental and maritime features was Great Britain. Great Britain is the only European power that “pulls” the Union towards the Transatlantic World and it represents a true geographical and geopolitical bridge between the European continent and the power across the Atlantic. Great Britain absent, the already powerful continental features of the European Union are reinforced. If the major premises of geopolitics hold, the Union will be naturally drawn into the Eastern part of the continent. This is what the 27 remaining leaders of the EU acknowledged at the end of the Rome Anniversary Summit, most likely unintentionally: “without Great Britain, the Union will move in the same direction”. For the sake of my argument, let me emphasize unilaterally the interpretation of the term “direction” as referring only to the cardinal points: the only plausible direction is arguably the eastward one, since the westward direction is exhausted (this is precisely what I have just referred to), the Northward leads to the North Pole, and the Southward direction (meaning Maghreb, the Middle East and Africa) is unlikely or, by any measure, hardly comparable with the Western, Atlantic one.

Leaving aside this explicitly unilateral interpretation of the word “direction” only in geographical overtones, Brexit is such a sea changing event also due to the fact that Great Britain is no ordinary member of the European Union; one that you can easily get upset with, one that you can teach a harsh “life lesson” in a rare instance of European unity. Let me put forth some extra arguments that can only add to the strict geopolitical perspective that I opened up above. Great Britain is a member of the UN Security Council, holds prominent positions in other international organisations that encapsulate the post-WWII liberal global order. It is a genuine global hub of financial, cultural and creative industries, a hub of global services in general. It has achieved excellence

in higher education and research and it is a true player in the security and intelligence fields. London is the capital of the advertising, fashion and music industry. And let’s not forget that the Beatles were British after all, no matter how global or “Western” we have come to perceive them. So, why all the anger towards the British, while a genuine reflection upon what happened is largely missing? Let me make my point extremely clear in order not to leave room for misinterpretations. The main loser of this “never-ending exit” is Great Britain itself. I am rather sceptical about the likelihood for success of the “Global Britain” programme. And the scenario of a Scotland secession and, therefore, of Great Britain disintegrating in the aftermath of Brexit is one worth looking into. So, the dangers for Great Britain are real. Still, I consider that we all have rushed unilaterally into throwing harsh accusations against the British, without taking a moment to reflect upon the underlying reasons for Brexit, upon the economic and social factors that put this process into motion, upon the consequences of this decision that are already felt across the continent, at its core and at its periphery.

Keeping that broad geopolitical perspective, let me make the second point of my position. The whole European Union is suffering in the aftermath of Brexit, but the first zone incurring the costs is Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), that territory on the European continent that can be simply described as “that compact landmass between Germany and Russia”. If one defines CEE as the landmass between Germany and Russia, one can also imagine it to be a battlefield, a disputed territory where the ambitions and the interests of the two powers meet, sometimes even collide. Paradoxically or not, I believe that the concept of “two-, multi-speed Europe” would have never acquired the current quasi-official recognition without Brexit. Whether we like it or not, this scenario of two or multiple speeds may represent, among other things, an implicit acknowledgement of the fact that the core of the Union (be it geographical, political, or decisional) is distancing itself from the Eastern periphery. Central and Eastern Europe, Romania included, may have rushed too quickly into this “clash of the titans”, expressed too harsh a message compared to its fragile geopolitical position overall. At the same time, different

exuberant scenarios are entertained, according to which Great Britain can be replaced by Ukraine, or Poland by Albania. It is very possible that such strong messages and alternative scenarios are put forth for the sake of negotiation or, to be more comprehensive, for the sake of communication. One could dismiss them as “merely” a communication exercise. But we, as communication experts, are well acquainted with what the French sociologist Jean Baudrillard once said: “once communicated, a message can never be entirely withdrawn”. The Europeans have decided to unite in communicating the British a message. It is true that the British have decided to communicate the Europeans a message, too. I know by personal experience that, whenever the British speakers started to talk at an EU-related event, chances that all discussions would block increased exponentially. But still, I think that all of us have let ourselves contaminated by this communication, or rather non-communication, fever, the fever of “teaching” the other a lesson, preferably the hard way. All the while, the rifts between Great Britain and the rest of the EU are

as deep as those cutting across the Union and sometimes cutting inside its countries.

One of the few common sense, yet extremely insightful, statements that I have recently read about Brexit came from the Flemish MEP from the European Conservatives and Reformists Group: “Britain is an island, not a boat. It will remain where it is”. I hope the “fever of emotions” that has overwhelmingly caught both contending parts will soon end and will be replaced by the “fever of reason”. I hope that Europeans - minus the British, for the sake of this discussion - will realise that “Britain will remain where it is”; just as the British will hopefully realise that they cannot “take their country back” and swim with it across the oceans of the world. I do believe that, as things stand right now, Brexit is real and irreversible, the living proof being that we already live through its consequences. But I equally believe that Europe can still avoid the scenario of a “multi-Europe Europe”, the cosy version of a Union made “in our own image, in our likeness”.

The European Institute of Romania supports the Promoters for European democracy

On **7 April 2017**, Mrs **Gabriela Drăgan**, PhD, Director General of the European Institute of Romania, participated in the workshop organized by the European Parliament Information Office (BIPE) within the third edition of the project “Promoters for European democracy”.

The workshop took place from 5 to 7 April 2017 and aimed at establishing a network of multipliers among the project participants who will in turn organize at least one communication action in the community of young people they come from. The purpose of these communication activities is to convey in a creative and original manner the information about how the European Parliament works and how important it is to the European democratic process (building on the knowledge gained in the seminars organized by BIPE). The themes around which the local communication events were organized were “May 9 - Europe Day” and “The European Parliament, close to young people”.

The European Institute of Romania had the pleasure of being partner in organizing or participating in four events under the aegis of this project, which we present below:

6-7 May // Hackaton

From 6 to 7 May 2017, Danube Youth Alliance organized the Hackathon¹ - *Young Citizens for Europe*, and the European Institute of Romania (EIR) participated as institutional partner. On this occasion, Mrs. **Gabriela Drăgan**, EIR Director General, gave a speech on the theme «European citizenship - rights and obligations». The main topics addressed during the presentation were: the principles of democracy, the characteristics of European citizenship, the participation in the decision-making process and the representation among the European institutions, the European Citizens' Initiative - examples, the open-data portal of the EU and a couple of remarks concerning the EIR Report - *Romania - 10 years in the European Union*.

In the 2nd day of the event, high school and university students worked for developing apps and online games meant to increase the awareness on European themes and to trigger the civic involvement of young people. Thus, alongside their mentors (**Oana Tălparu** - Dieu Design, **Codrin Nisioiu**



¹ See more details at: <http://hackathon-demos.eu>.

- Bucharest University of Economic Studies, **Dan Nechita** and **Diana Popp** - Smart Everything Everywhere, **Eliza Vaş** - European Institute of Romania), the participants created three IT solutions as follows:

1. **Euro Quiz** - a quiz about all EU member states, that has questions related to European general knowledge; the organizing team motivated the choice to produce this game by affirming that - *The general problem is not the lack of information, but the lack of interest in learning new things, and in this sense, we thought that we can help the young people to learn through a game, having in mind their desire for competition;*
2. **EU Buddy** - a Facebook page where you can address questions about studies, locating embassies and the rights of European citizens, automatized answers being offered; the needs taken into consideration when developing the page were: *The European students are misinformed, disoriented, busy and always rushing;*
3. **EU Choose** - represents a game for simulating the activity of a MEP - the users can vote on bills, and according to the vote expressed (YES or NO), they will receive a situation of the consequences (the acceptability among the citizens, the cohesion between the Member States, the economic situation); the idea behind this game was - *Through gamification, the young people will better understand the principles of participatory democracy that the define the EU, and the fact that every person, through personal involvement, can change the future.*

In the end, each of the three teams was invited to present the IT solution proposed and following them as mentors, we could come up with feedback and recommendations. High school and university students spent several days in order to make apps and online games for promoting the EU in a friendlier way. And if they managed to form a straight opinion about what EU really is, it means that other young people can also be promoters for democracy, by being involved directly in creating communication instruments and not just by promoting towards them the same old messages. After all, the European Commission promoted 2017 as the *Year of Listening* (during the European Youth Week), and solutions as the ones presented earlier come to remind us how much potential lies within the young people all around us if we give them the opportunity to express themselves.



12 May // The Conference on Foreign Affairs within the European Union



The Conference on Foreign Affairs within the European Union, event included in the project “European Week - Simulation of the European Parliament” implemented by NLS (Network International Law Students) Bucharest. The event took place in the EIR conference room and was attended by Mrs **Gabriela Drăgan**, Director General of the EIR, who presented to the participants (BA and MA students, law graduates from universities in Bucharest) the theoretical and practical aspects related to the work of the European Parliament, in general, and the Foreign Affairs Committee (AFET), in particular.

12 May // Union Society of Europe

Also, under the aegis of the project “Promoters for European democracy”, within the Faculty of Law of the University of Bucharest took place the event the “Union Society of Europe” (9-12 May).

The Europe Direct Information Center (EDIC) Bucharest, hosted by the European Institute of Romania, was invited to attend the final session of this event. As such, Mrs. **Loredana Licuța**, coordinator of EDIC Bucharest, had the opportunity to join the discussion alongside Mrs. **Monica Macovei** and Mr. **Victor Negrescu**, members of the European Parliament.



The “Union Society of Europe” project aimed at and succeeded in promoting European values among students, informing them about the organization and functioning of the EU institutions, youth policy, and encouraging them to initiate a balanced debate on these aspects.

15 May // EU-27: Future after Brexit



The “EU-27: Future after Brexit” conference, an event organized by the Students of History Association “Dacia” (ASID), included in the project “EU’s future in debate”, aimed to get young students accustomed with European values by debating current issues within the EU. During the meeting which Mrs **Gabriela Drăgan**, Director General of the EIR, had with the students of the Faculty of History at the University of Bucharest, she raised issues related to Brexit (calendar, negotiations, etc.), the future of the EU and, at the same time, she presented the EIR’s Report *Romania -10 years in the European Union*, inviting young people to actively participate in the dialogue on the future of the EU.

Florentina Costache, Communication and Marketing Unit and **Eliza Vaș**, Studies and Analyses Unit

Conference: 10 years since Romania’s accession to EU

Mrs. Gabriela Drăgan, PhD, Director General of the European Institute of Romania, participated on 27 April 2017 at the Anniversary Conference “10 Years since Romania’s Accession to the European Union” organized by the Faculty of European Studies / Babeș-Bolyai University, in partnership with the West University of Timișoara. The conference was organized on several levels, including an inaugural session, two thematic sessions, a book launch and a festive moment for Professor Marius Jucan, who received the Professor Emeritus title. The event was attended by representatives of the European Commission in Romania, the Romanian Government and the central and local government, as well as representatives of the academic environment, civil society and the media. During the conference, Mrs. Drăgan presented an overview on *Romania and the future of the EU. Opportunities and Challenges*, which was included in the session *Romania, actor on the European Single Market*.



Florentina Costache
Communication and Marketing Unit

Romanian Presidency of the EU Council in 2019 – Together for a stronger European project

On 3 May 2017, at the Palace of the Parliament, the conference “Romanian Presidency of the EU Council in 2019 - Together for a stronger European project” took place, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under the coordination of the Minister Delegate for European Affairs. The event benefited from the participation of important figures of the Romanian political life such as the President of the Senate, Mr. **Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu**, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. **Teodor Meleșcanu**, and the Minister Delegate for European Affairs, Mrs. **Ana Birchall**.

The politicians present had engaged in a fruitful debate and exchange of ideas with reputed journalists, opinion leaders, representatives of the diplomatic corps and members of the civil society and the epistemic community.

The conference, where the European Institute of Romania was represented by a delegation led by Director General Gabriela Drăgan, consisted of an opening session, entitled “Romanian Presidency of the EU Council - the most important post-accession project of Romania”, followed by two dedicated working sessions touching upon the main topics



Photo source: <https://www.mae.ro>

of “EU Council Presidency: Responsibilities, challenges, opportunities” and “Presiding the EU Council in a complex international context”, respectively.

In their speeches and interventions, the various representatives of the Romanian Government and the Parliament have explicitly underlined that the perspective of Romania’s first ever presidency of the Council of the EU poses a major challenge for the nation at large, but, at the same time, provides an excellent opportunity which our country ought to fully fructify. According to the speakers, a key aspect in view of ensuring a successful presidency relates to boosting the administrative capacity, through a smart infusion of fresh blood of EU policy and decision-making specialists.

Consecutive allocutions have analysed the difficult context in which our country will exercise its mandate at the helm of one of the seven EU institutions, marked by the next

European Parliament election, the final steps of *Brexit*, the negotiation process revolving around the Multiannual Financial Framework, and, last but not least, the fact that Romanians will be expected to cast their ballots in the Presidential Election of 2019. The distinguished speakers highlighted that we will have to keep a cool head in a timespan characterized by all these challenges and others, which will have to be dealt with in an efficient and pragmatic manner, having at heart the best interests of the EU citizens and of the European project as a whole. As such, the Romanian officials did not miss the opportunity to express their utmost support for the integration process.

In trying to sum up all the relevant aspects discussed, the most important areas of interest and major themes in view of our future presidency of the EU Council feature: the EU’s external relations, the Eastern Partnership, the enlargement process, the security of the Black Sea region, the Danube Strategy, migration in Europe, the Common Security and Defence Policy, and the prospect for Romania to be as near as it can to the “core EU” (the Schengen, euro zone and common defence), in defiance of the so-called variable geometry. As a corollary, it was estimated that Romania’s responsibility of handling some major European dossiers will be complemented by the country’s golden opportunity to fully display its European vision, by acting as an “honest broker”, with an honesty embedded in boldness rather than humbleness.

Bogdan Mureşan
Studies and Analyses Unit

EIR Report “Romania – 10 years in the European Union”

Ten years after Romania’s accession to the European Union, the European Institute of Romania proposes to the general audience a consistent paper concerning the main benefits of Romania’s integration in the European Community area. The current report, with the topic “*Romania - 10 years in the European Union*”, is part of the EIR microstudies series and was coordinated by Professor **Gabriela Drăgan**, Director General of the European Institute of Romania, and elaborated the Studies and Analyses Unit: **Oana Mocanu**, **Bogdan Mureşan**, **Eliza Vaş** and **Mihai Sebe**.

The paper benefited from the overall support of Romania’s Foreign Affairs Ministry and the topic-based contributions EIR has received from the line ministries in the last quarter of 2016.

The importance of the report is underlined by Mrs. Gabriela Drăgan that states the fact that: “*10 years after our accession, the European integration projects remains a strategic one for Romania and linked intrinsically to the internal project of long term development. In this framework, assuring the EU Council Presidency in the first semester of 2019 represents a test that Romania has the capacity to well prepare and finish with a «very well» grade*”.

Starting with the historical component represented by the **first steps towards Romania’s accession to the European Union** we move on to the **regional and global context and the Romanian citizens’ perception as regards the European Union**.



We notice, on a general basis, that between the 2007 accession and the current moment, few disturbing events have diminished Romanians' trust in the European Union, their enthusiasm to support an accelerated European integration having both a social-economic motivation and one based on the feeling of belonging to the European community of values. Ten years after accession, Romanians' trust in the European Union continues to be above the European average (52% vs. 36%).

Romania's membership in the European Union has meant, above all, a series of **mutual advantages**, both for the new Member State and for the community it has joined. **Romania's benefits of the European Union** accession are obvious as the EU accession contributed to the increase of trade flows with the European partners, the rise in the direct foreign investments and the stimulation of entrepreneurship.

Romania as a Member State is directly interested in the **future of the European Union**. It is essential to maintain the European Union and the major projects of integration with a defining character (Single Market with the four liberties, Euro, Schengen) and the ongoing integration in a pragmatic manner, in regards with the European citizens' and the society as a whole expectations.

Romania wishes to substantially contribute to the talks regarding the future of the EU. We must ensure that, no matter what the envisaged solutions are, they correspond to Romania's objectives, that its major interests - economic growth, convergence, cohesion, etc. - are well reflected at the EU level.

The report is fully available at <http://ier.ro/stiri/raport-ier-romania---10-ani-in-uniunea-europeana.html> (only in Romanian language).

Mihai Sebe
Studies and Analyses Unit

Romanian Journal of European Affairs – Summer Issue 2017



In the Summer issue of the Romanian Journal of European Affairs, the contributors bring to our attention several topics such as: Romania - ten years of EU membership; the influence of holding EU Council presidency on the national coordination mechanism for European affairs; the associate statehood option for Scotland, after Brexit; the EU and US export control regimes for dual use goods; the future between geopolitics and technology and the implications for Romania; the EU as a potential democracy promoter in Turkey and the sensitive issue of the future possible EU integration of Ukraine.

The guest article on Romania's ten years of EU membership comes from **Gábor Hunya**, senior economist at the Vienna

Institute for International Economic Studies. Providing an overall view on a "story of mixed success", on the advantages and challenges of EU membership, Dr. Hunya has underlined the economic path and considerable endeavours Romania has made, but also the delays in some fiscal and legal actions that resulted in missed opportunities. The analysis reveals the strong points, but also the weak points of Romania's economic, political and social path to deeper integration and it provides good recommendations on how to become more active in the European arena, given the target of maximising the benefits from the cohesion policy beyond 2020. Dr. Hunya perfectly states that going beyond the position of a policy-taker is especially necessary for Romania under the current lack of orientation in the EU as a whole.

Johana Galušková, PhD student in European studies at Faculty of Social Studies at Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic, examines in her article the influence of the EU Council Presidency on national coordination mechanisms for European affairs. She points out the significance of the Presidency not only on European level, but particularly on national level, drawing a parallel among the cases of the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovenia, Hungary and Lithuania. The article focuses on the technical tools, the personnel component and on the potential of the Presidency to be a critical juncture for national coordination systems.

Hakan Kolcak, PhD candidate at the Human Rights Centre, University of Essex, speaks in his article about a

constitutional crisis in Britain, as an outcome of Brexit. Given the large share of the "Remain" vote in Scotland, the article brings into attention the topic of associate statehood, as a constitutional option that would allow Scotland to stay in UK and in the EU. The article uses the example of the confederal relationship between Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

In their article, **Hamed Alavi**, researcher in the field of International Business and International Business Law, currently pursuing his PhD in Law at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and **Tatsiana Khamichunak**, LLM Candidate at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam speak of EU and US export control regimes for dual use goods. Tackling the different approaches taken by EU Member States to implementing export controls and the overall complexity of the US system, the article seeks to draw the changing export control frameworks in both jurisdictions and evaluate their interactions from a business perspective.

Florin Bonciu, PhD, University Professor at the Romanian-American University and Senior Researcher with the Institute for World Economy, identifies in his paper two processes that take place in contemporary world economy, the historical process of redefinition of the balance of power and spheres of influence, which is characterised by the *geopolitical dimension*, and the process of profound technological change determined by the fourth industrial revolution, which is characterised by the *technological dimension*. The research identifies a race between the implications of their outcomes. Depending on which of the two processes will succeed in redefining the architecture and predominant type of relations in the world economy, the reality of the period from 2020 to 2030-2050 might be very different. Based on the conclusions of this research, the final part of his paper analyses the implications of

these possible outcomes for Romania, given its current features which are the result of 27 years of transition.

Çiğdem Üstün, Associate Professor in EU Studies in Turkey, analyses in her article the democratisation demand and supply in Turkey-EU Relations. The EU's role to assist Turkey in its democratisation efforts has been long debated during Turkey's candidacy. Later on, this role of the EU lost its visibility while Turkey seemed to lose its interest in reform movements. This paper defines the EU as a supplier of democratisation mechanisms and Turkey as an actor in need. The research aims to demonstrate that there are differences between the governing and the opposition actors' views on the EU and its role in the democratisation of Turkey.

Oleh Poshedin, Colonel (rtd) and **Maryna Chulaievska**, both Associate Professors at the National Academy of Public Administration, Office of the President of Ukraine, offer an overview of the context of the EU's relations with Ukraine and tackle the question of the European integration of Ukraine from three points of view: as a possible tool for internal reform, a source of problems or merely a pass ticket to EU membership, taking into account the general regional context and tensions, the neighbourhood financial package and the difficulties encountered on the way to political and economic reforms.

Full articles will be available at <http://rjea.ier.ro>.

Our readers are also invited to access RJEa's Facebook page, at: <https://www.facebook.com/romanian.journal.of.european.affairs/>.

Oana Mocanu
Studies and Analyses Unit

event

Celebrating Europe Day - "Fall in love with Europe!"



The Europe Direct Information Centre (EDIC) Bucharest and the European Institute of Romania organized on 9 May the artistic event dedicated to Europe Day - "Fall in love with Europe!", celebrating the values of the European Union, unity and diversity, through multiculturalism represented by artistic moments and craft workshops.

The speakers of this event were Mrs. Corina Crețu, European Commissioner for Regional Policy, Mr. Marius Alexandru Dunca, Minister of Youth and Sports, Mrs. Gabriela Firea, General Mayor of Bucharest, Mr. Ștefan Popescu, Counsellor of the Delegated Minister for European Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Alina Bârgăoanu, Dean of the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations within SNSPA, Mrs. Gabriela Drăgan, Director General of the European Institute of Romania and Mrs. Loredana Licuța, Coordinator of the Europe Direct Information Centre Bucharest.

The event started with a **debate entitled “Happy Birthday EU - Happy Birthday Romania!”**, in which the aforementioned guests interacted with the young representatives of several student associations, showing their concern for the problems of young people involved in the civic life. The discussion panel was moderated by Dan Cărbunaru, Manager at Caleaeuropeană.ro.

Although the weather was cloudy, the general atmosphere was brightened by the **artistic moments** that underscored the European common identity in all its diversity with the title **“European Traditions and Customs”**. The public was delighted to watch specific songs and dances from different European Union countries.

The young people had the opportunity to test their knowledge about the EU through a **European Union - based Quiz**. This quiz included questions from the following areas: Romania and the European Union, Culture and Civilization, EU Institutions, European personalities, Symbols, History of the European Integration, Citizenship and Geography.

The artistic moments continued with a **Karaoke contest**, attended by high school students. The young competitors performed songs from different countries of the European Union, in the official languages of the respective states.

Throughout the event there were **craft workshops**, where students had the opportunity to try their craftsmanship in the following European crafts: pottery, weaving, bookmarks, icons on glass, textiles, traditional shoemaking, popular ornaments and wooden toys for children.

The event was organized with the support of the Bucharest City Hall through the Youth Centre of Bucharest, in partnership with the Agency for Regional Development Bucharest - Ilfov, the Agency for Community Programmes in the Field of Education and Vocational Training, the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations within SNSPA Bucharest, Caleaeuropeană.ro and The National Village Museum “Dimitrie Gusti”.

We thank our partners for their support and all the people who attended this exciting and colourful event! From the youngest to the eldest, all the participants demonstrated their love for Europe!

Loredana Licuța, EDIC Bucharest coordinator
Cezara Panait, EDIC trainee

The Report “Romania - 10 years in the European Union” was presented in Baia Mare



On 9 May 2017, the Maramureș Prefecture together with Maramureș County Council organized the 10th edition of the Symposium «**Prezențe maramureșene în Europa**», and on this occasion, the European Institute of Romania (EIR) was invited to give a key note speech on the **“Romania - 10 years in the European Union”** report. EIR was represented by Eliza Vaș, expert within the Studies and Analyses Unit, who spoke along with: Mr. Sebastian Mihai Lupuț (Maramureș county prefect), Mr. Doru Ioan Dăncuș (vice-president of Maramureș County Council) and Mr. Marinel Rob (*ad-interim* mayor of Baia Mare).

In the opening session, Mr. Lupuț said that Romania’s accession to the European Union meant an option for a better life, and represented at the same time the choice of rule of law and democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, a fair justice system, corruption eradication, and entailed efforts for achieving economic prosperity. Moreover, according to him, the EU embodied the positive direction for Romania at a time when we were rediscovering our recent past, with all the trauma and obscurities. And the Romanian people remained relatively constant in their choices, even though different Member States began to face challenges and redefinitions of their own identities.

Coming next, the EIR Report was presented, and topics such as the following were pointed out: the history of relations between Romania and the European Community (European Union); the regional and global context of Romania’s accession to EU (macroeconomic developments, the citizens’ trust in the EU, the institutional representation); the future of the EU as an outcome of the 5 scenarios developed in the Juncker White Paper and the arrangements done by Romania in view of its future Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first semester of 2019.

Nevertheless, the symposium represented a moment of proof concerning the way EU funds are being used in Maramureş county, several successful projects being presented as good case practice. The **Fortress Square** restoration was mentioned in this context. Also, representatives of different schools brought into discussion the partnerships established with other educational institutions from abroad, which benefited from the financial support of the Erasmus+ program.

Eliza Vaş
Studies and Analyses Unit

Scientific session “Romania in the European Union”



Photo credit: Alina Bianca Bălan

On 7 April 2017, the Romanian Academy - the Economic, Legal Sciences and Sociology Section - organized the scientific session “Romania in the European Union” in the auditorium of the Romanian Academy. The event was organised following the presentation of the study *Romania and the accession to the Eurozone: the question is IN WHICH CONDITIONS!*, elaborated under the supervision of Professor **Daniel Dăianu**, member of the Romanian Academy.

Mugur Isărescu, President of the Economic, Legal Sciences and Sociology Section, gave an opening speech about the importance of consolidation of the European Union and implicitly of the Romanian economy. He noticed the efforts undertaken by the Romanian authorities and the importance of the nominal convergence, adding that the Romanian economy “fulfils on a cumulative basis the Maastricht criteria without interruption starting from July 2015”.

He reaffirmed the importance of the real convergence underlining that it matters not just how fast the economy grows, but especially how it grows. The adoption of the Euro without having a high convergence is a risky process. In the end we must not abandon the idea of accession to the Eurozone, but we must approach this process on a prudent and responsible manner.

In his intervention, Professor Daniel Dăianu made a short presentation of the main elements of the study.

“If Romania would have a sustainable economic growth of 5% average per year, we could reach the Eurozone average in 18 years. The 75% level of the Eurozone average could be reached in 9 years, meaning in 2024”. If Romania would keep

its recorded average growth in the period 2000-2015, then it would reach the Eurozone average in approx. 27 years, while the 75% of the Eurozone average could be reached in 13 years.

Mr. Dăianu underlined that in order to adopt the Euro currency, we must fulfil certain structural conditions such as the development of the infrastructure, the increase of fiscal revenues that would enlarge the “fiscal area”, the consolidation of the public finances in a sustainable way, the increase of the competitiveness degree through a better production structure, not through low wages and an adequate financing of education and health.

In accordance with the NBR chief economist, Mr. Valentin Lazea, the Monetary Union accession is the only real alternative in order to avoid to remain at the periphery of the European Union. “Does Romania have real alternatives to the Eurozone? No. We can stay like we are now, at the periphery of the European Union. There is the risk of being cast away”.

There are important differences between the economic growth models for the Balkan area states, of which Romania is a part, and the countries from Western Europe. “In the Balkans area, the economic growth is based, on a regular basis, on fiscal stimulus. In the Western states, this is based on productivity”. He paid attention to several criteria that must be fulfilled by Romania in order to integrate in the Eurozone, related to nominal convergence, the increase of energy efficiency, the development of agriculture and cultural convergence.

The study is available online at http://ier.ro/sites/default/files/pdf/SPOS_2016_Romania_si_aderarea_la_zona_euro.pdf. (only in the Romanian language).

Mr. Mugur Isărescu's speech is available online at <http://www.bnr.ro/Cuvant-de-deschidere-la-sesiunea-stiintifica-%E2%80%9ERomania-in-Uniunea-Europeana%E2%80%9D-organizata-de-Academia-Romana-15653.aspx>. (only in the Romanian language).

The audio-video recording is available online at <http://www.caleaeuropeana.ro/live-video-7-aprilie-ora-11-00-academia-romana-organizeaza-sesiunea-stiintifica-romania-in-uniunea-europeana/> (only in the Romanian language).

Mihai Sebe
Studies and Analyses Unit

Good Governance Summit - Bucharest, 4-5 May 2017



Photo source: https://www.facebook.com/pg/strategikonthinktank/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1926350740931823.

organizations and the impact of environmental factors such as climate change. The end intention was to provide possible solutions for the political and economical leaders and for their teams as governance performance makes the difference in a global context that is complex and uncertain.

“Good governance is an umbrella concept with an impact on all the domestic and external instruments any modern state uses in order to meet an increasing number of global challenges. We can say that in such a complex and uncertain context governance performance is what makes the difference; there lies the key that makes the difference between a functional and a failed state. Both the capability of drawing foreign funds, for instance, and resilience to security threats depend on good governance,” says Strategikon honorary Chairman, MEP **Ioan Mircea Pașcu**.

The European Institute of Romania was represented at the Summit by **Mihai Sebe**, expert, Studies and Analyses Unit. Mr. Sebe moderated on Friday, 5 May, the breakout session **Governance in the Age of Pandemics: Protecting the People** which brought together Col. **Laszlo Fazekas**, Director NATO MILMED COE, and Dr. **Alexandru Rafila**, President of the Romanian Society of Microbiology. The session addressed a hot topic not yet fully discussed in Romania - how good governance can help prevent or reduce the effects of viral outbreaks.

Pandemics require both advance planning and the management of the unavoidable and the constant modification of existing plans to suit the evolving circumstances. The potential for the global spread of pandemics is a combination of biological and social factors and stopping them requires a very high level of cooperation. Yet there are several obstacles to overcome such as national pride and interests or the risk associated to the fact that sharing information may have negative effects on the specific countries.

See more details at <https://www.ggsummit.ro/>.

Mihai Sebe
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