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EuroIMPACT — Informing and Improving Communication on EU Cohesion Policy in Romania



The cohesion policy, specific to the European Union and its Member States, has the best results in terms of improving the lives of the population and should be more visible. In the efforts to make life easier for European citizens, the bodies involved have not

communicated enough. Over 70% of the EU population is not really aware of the fact that hospitals, schools and institutions whose services they use are largely built through European solidarity. These are just a few of the conclusions presented by Mrs **Corina Crețu**, European Commissioner for Regional Policy, in the opening of the EuroIMPACT conference, a substantial communication event on the European Union’s cohesion policy in Romania.

Between **29-31 October 2018**, a high-level conference was held in Bucharest, together with two days of workshops and a projects fair. The activity took place within the framework of the project “*Informing and improving communication on EU Cohesion Policy in Romania*”, carried out by European Institute of Romania in partnership with HotNews, and funded by the European Commission, through the Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy ...

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event _____

Strengthening the European Union in troubled times. German and Romanian views

The sixth edition of EURT (the Romanian-German roundtable on European affairs) was held in Berlin during 15 - 16 November 2018. This year’s topic was the “*Strengthening of the European Union in troubled times. German and Romanian views*” ...

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



... The conference and workshops pursued *three objectives*:

- to facilitate the debate on how cohesion policy is implemented in Romania, to identify some lessons from the experience so far and the challenges that need to be answered in the future; particular attention has been paid to the institutional and legislative framework specific to cohesion policy over the period 2021-2027;
- to present to the public successful projects, good practices, lessons learnt and opportunities related to the implementation of EU cohesion policy in Romania;
- to support the exchange of good practices and ideas between institutions and specialists interested in project implementation, in the private sector, public administration, academia and civil society.

Conference and workshops participants were among government and experts involved in cohesion policy at European, national, regional and local level, representatives of the business environment, academia and civil society, journalists.

The first day of the event was attended by Ms Corina Crețu, European Commissioner for Regional Policy, Mr Victor Negrescu, Minister delegate for European Affairs at the time, Ms Gabriela Crețu, President of the Committee on European Affairs, Romanian Senate, Ms Mihaela Toader, Secretary of State at the Ministry of European Funds, Mr Virgil-Alin Chirilă, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration and numerous public and private sector officials and decision-makers. The first session of the event was moderated by Mrs Gabriela Drăgan, EIR Director General.

The conference focused on presenting and debating upon the lessons learnt and challenges for the future, regarding the EU Cohesion Policy in Romania. Among the topics covered were accessing funds and implementing projects funded in the fields of Human Capital, Regional Development, Competitiveness and Large Infrastructure.

The **workshops** on 30 and 31 October 2018 approached a wide range of topics. They aimed at better informing the population, both on the progress made in improving the regulation of accessing the funding, in preparing and launching funding lines and on good practices and achievements in promoting innovation and competitiveness, or providing services of general interest. Among these were European level achievements, such as the ELI-NP project in Măgurele, a premiere of funding from structural funds in the European Union, as well as at local level, as the activities that led to the change of Alba Iulia, by attracting and investing about 200 million euros, or the 8 social assistance projects implemented in Galați. The public aspects of European fundraising and project implementation have been complemented by discussions on administrative barriers to absorption, the role of banking and financial institutions in accessing European funds for the SME sector and agriculture, or the involvement of civil society and academia in the reform of the post 2020 cohesion policy.

The series of communication events has enjoyed a large audience, attending the conference either physically, in the halls of the Intercontinental Hotel in Bucharest, or online, through the StartupCafe.ro and Facebook websites.

Debates served the public interest. The direct dialogue between the event's participants, as well as the answers to online questions through SLIDO, allowed the contributors to highlight, through concrete facts and data, the benefits people have gained, to provide information on priorities and funding lines, and respond to specific requests or proposals, such as the need for simultaneous access to different funding lines, to allow an integrated approach to the society's needs.

Iulian Oneașcă
Projects Unit

Strengthening the European Union in troubled times. German and Romanian views

... The event was organised by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES), in cooperation with the German Institute for International Politics and Security (SWP) and the European Institute of Romania, with the support of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the two countries and the Romanian Embassy in Germany. The Romanian delegation was made up of Mr George Ciamba, Minister Delegate for European Affairs, Ambassador Lazăr Comănescu, Advisor for International Relations to the President of the Romanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mrs Gabriela Drăgan, Director General of the European Institute of Romania, as well as experts in European affairs and international relations.

The debate was an opportunity to tackle some topical issues on the European agenda, relevant to the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2019. Thus, the Romanian delegation presented

the priority themes and the key elements of the programme of the Romanian Presidency of the EU Council. Moreover, Romania's interest in ensuring a successful mandate, in close cooperation with the Member States and the European institutions, was reiterated, as well as Romania's commitment to play an active part in the efforts to strengthen the European project. In terms of the future financial perspectives, discussions underlined the importance of the topic for the further development of the European project, the Romanian side advocating for an equally modern and balanced EU budget, able to help tackle current challenges and meet EU's development and convergence objectives.

Aspects related to the EU further enlargement in the Western Balkans were also discussed, highlighting the importance of the topic for the Romanian Presidency of the EU Council and the need to keep EU's commitment to peacebuilding, security, prosperity and stability in the area.

Florentina Costache
Communication and Marketing Unit

Machine Translation presented in Bucharest in the second European Language Resource Coordination (ELRC) workshop

On 1 November 2018, a date marking the 25th anniversary since the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty, the European Commission Representation in Romania hosted the **second European Language Resource Coordination (ELRC) workshop**.

The workshop was organised by the ELRC Consortium and the European Institute of Romania (EIR), with the support of the Romanian Academy. The participants were experts from the European Commission, from the language technology field and national public institutions.

The ELRC was initiated in April 2015 by the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) of the European Commission. The main purpose of ELRC is collecting language resources relevant for public services, administrations and institutions across all countries participating in the CEF Programme, i.e. all EU Member States, Iceland and Norway. These language resources are used for adapting eTranslation, which is the machine translation service within the CEF Automated Translation Platform of the European Commission.

The 1 November workshop aimed to: spread information on the CEF building blocks, promote eTranslation and raise awareness on the importance of sharing language resources in Romanian, in order to improve the quality, scope and performance of eTranslation in the current and future framework of CEF digital services.

The event was opened by the representatives of the Romanian organisers: the European Commission Representation, the Research Institute for Artificial Intelligence "Mihai Drăgănescu" - Romanian Academy and the European Institute of Romania.

The workshop had two sessions, followed by Questions & Answers and Conclusions.

Session 1. *Connecting a multilingual Europe: European context and local needs* included presentations on various aspects and perspectives of communication among public services in the CEF framework. The views of the DG Communications Networks, Content and Technology, European Commission were expressed in a presentation titled "Connecting public services across Europe: ambition



and results so far". For the case of Romania, there were two presentations: "National initiatives for digital public services and (open) data" and "CEF in Romania: an outlook into current and future challenges". The panel sessions addressed issues such as open data and the functioning of Solvit, e-Justice and Europeana. The current progress in terms of quality of the machine translation was presented under the title "The CEF eTranslation platform @ work".

Session 2. *Engage: hands-on data* included presentations on various aspects of ELRC, how to register with and to use eTranslation, the legal and technical requirements for sharing language resources, etc. The titles speak for themselves: "The European Language Resource Coordination (ELRC) action"; "ELRC in Romania"; "Can language data be shared and how? National and European legal framework"; "Preparing and sharing data with the ELRC repository - and what happens next".

The connectivity and interoperability in public services can significantly improve not only public services, but businesses and citizens' everyday life as well.

Donating language resources for eTranslation enables multilingual communication within and between public services and enables citizens to access Digital Service Infrastructures in their language, anytime, anywhere.

The quality and quantity of these resources have a decisive

impact on how eTranslation adapts to the needs of national public services and how fast digital service become multilingual as well.

Moreover, the sheer volume of donated data improves the quality of translations and makes a significant contribution to the language equality in the digital age, an objective of the European Parliament Resolution of 11 September 2018.

The feedback forms for this event indicate that participants

consider that the workshop was a success and that such events need to be more frequent in Romania.

Further details on the event are available on the websites of both [ELRC](#) and [EIR](#).

Laura Mihăilescu
Translation Coordination Unit
ELRC - Public Services National Anchor Point

Book presentation: "Current Challenges in the Field of Cybersecurity – The Impact and Romania’s Contribution to the Field" – Permanent Representation of Romania to the European Union, Brussels, 7 November 2018

Security incidents may undermine our economies, societies, freedom and prosperity, the consumers’ confidence and the viability of the digital services and ICT networks. A common European effort is needed for strengthening the cybersecurity and the cyber resilience, simultaneously with enhancing the awareness and protection of our citizens, companies and governments.

A prosperous, innovative and competitive European economy cannot exist without digital economy, but digital economy cannot exist without cyber security.

Given the aforementioned issues, at the headquarters of the Permanent Representation of Romania to the EU, on **7 November 2018** took place the presentation of the study “Current Challenges in the Field of Cybersecurity - the Impact and Romania’s Contribution to the Field,” elaborated under the aegis of the European Institute of Romania within the project of Strategy and Policies Studies 2017.

The event, titled „*A cyber perspective for the future Digital Europe beyond 2020*”, brought together European and national officials, experts, representatives of the academic and economic sector as well as other interested professional categories.

The four topics of interest of Romania’s Presidency of the Council of the European Union are „Europe of Convergence: Growth, Competitiveness, Connectivity”, „Europe of Safety”, „Europe, a Global Player” and „Europe of Shared Values”. Thus one of the themes of interest that Romania would promote in the first semester of 2019 concerns **the culture of cybersecurity** in the European Union.

During the debates, speakers considered that, in a world of accelerated digitalisation, the cybersecurity is not an option anymore. Romania is interested in working on the topic of citizens’ safety in the virtual space, since the cyber-attacks have become more and more frequent and complex. Therefore, since Romania has been so far a supplier of competent human resources in the IT and cybersecurity areas, it can also become a solution provider for the future public policies at the European level.

The research team was represented by Mr **Ioan-Cosmin Mihai** (coordinator) and Mr **Costel Ciuchi** (co-author). The two experts presented the main elements of interest for the study and launched with this occasion the English version of the publication.

Creating a cybersecurity culture alongside strengthening the national and international cooperation are key elements, mentioned also in the conclusions of the study.

„Research and education in the field of cybersecurity must be priorities for public policies. Strengthening information security research, improving education and developing trained workforce are essential to achieving the overall cybersecurity policy objectives. [...]

International cooperation plays a key role in this area, as cybersecurity challenges go beyond boundaries, extending to global interconnected systems. Collaboration with European and International entities is absolutely necessary, whether





it is educational establishments, research centres, private companies or government institutions. [...]

The opening of communication channels, the creation of working groups and public consultation, the involvement of civil society and the public-private partnership are key directions that public policies should focus on.”

The study was developed by a research team made up of the above mentioned authors [Mr **Ioan-Cosmin Mihai** (coordinator), Mr **Costel Ciuchi**] and Mr **Gabriel-Marius Petrică** and is available online in English on the website of the European Institute of Romania within the section **Publications**.

Mihai Sebe
Studies and Analyses Unit

Book Launch in Copenhagen: “Direct Democracy in the European Union – The Myth of a Citizens’ Union”

The national research teams which are partners in the project “**Towards a Citizens’ Union**”, the European Institute of Romania included, met in Copenhagen during 15 - 16 November 2018. The project covers a whole series of research papers presenting the national perspectives on the following topics: direct democracy, representative democracy and democratic accountability. Further to the research activities of the national experts involved in the project, **the first collective volume dedicated to direct democracy in the European Union was launched**. The first meeting day focused on the main conclusions drawn from the preparation work of the book on direct democracy. Here are the main ideas pointed out:



- The same paradox can be found in several research contexts - there is a high demand for direct democracy, even if it is sometimes highly criticised;
- Although the instruments of direct democracy are clearly expanding, their use is not the best way to strengthen the European Union;
- Many times, the most fervent supporters of direct democracy are the extremists, therefore, when using direct democracy, we need to firstly prepare the ground for debates, then organise referendums;
- There is an upsurge in the number of citizens’ initiatives, but this is not a magical solution to democratic deficit, despite of the significant increase.

The book launch was part of an integrated event that took place on **16 November 2018**, with the participation of representatives from the Danish political, research and non-governmental fields, as well as from other Member States of the European Union. This was a real opportunity to hold a series of speeches on the features of both direct and representative democracy. Amongst the main ideas voiced, we can mention:

- There is a need for increased power of the European Parliament (EP); over time, EP has leveraged the ambiguities of the Treaties in order to enhance its own powers and to play a more active part in the co-decision procedure;
- The European Parliament elections in 2019 will most probably lead to a stronger presence of populists in the EP, which might increase the internal fragmentation of the Parliament;
- Underlying reasons: 1) populists have learnt their lessons from the past mistakes (one cannot win votes by promoting exit from EU). They rely on the European citizens’ fears (globalization and impact on their social status; refugee crisis); 2) they feel very comfortable about deploying campaigns at European level.

The collective volume, to which the experts **Mihai Sebe** and **Eliza Vaş** from the Studies and Analyses Unit also contributed, is available on CEPS website, under the Publications tab, and can be downloaded free of charge: https://www.ceps.eu/system/files/EU_Direct_Democracy_CEPS_RLI_paperback_Blockmans_Russack.pdf. It consists of 21 chapters, grouped in four parts: EU-level Mechanisms, Transversal Aspects and Thematic Issues, Country Reports, and Conclusions.

Chapter 17, called „*The Untapped Potential of Direct Democracy in Romania*”, (pp. 340 - 362), covers the use of direct democracy instruments in Romania from 2003 to present (referendums, citizens’ initiatives, civic movements, petitions addressed to public institutions etc.). Moreover, this chapter tackles the European dimension of the theme, making reference to a series of topical issues at European level and to their impact on the national agenda. The authors’ main findings are: political representatives frequently use the instruments of direct democracy to push forward their own agenda, rather than to stir up a constructive debate in society; citizens have started to increasingly use the instruments of participative democracy in the last years (for instance, come up with citizens’ initiatives) and we can notice an increase in their openness to get further involved in the decision-making procedure.



Eliza Vaş and Mihai Sebe
Studies and Analyses Unit

Romanian Journal of European Affairs – Winter Issue 2018



In the **December issue** of the Romanian Journal of European Affairs, the contributors bring to the readers’ attention topics such as: the economic development and innovation at local level, Romania-China relations and their political and economic challenges, the imbalances of the post-crisis world and the transformations in liberal international order, Macedonia’s stalled bid for EU

membership, EU in international investment governance, the domestic constraints in negotiating the transatlantic deal and also *three book reviews* on emerging Europe, narratives of European integration, trust and crisis management in EU.

The article *Economic Development and Innovation at Local Level*, written by **Clara Volintiru** (Associate Professor at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies- ASE), **Mihai Volintiru** is (PhD candidate at ASE) and **George Ştefan** (Assistant Professor at ASE) presents an original dataset and methodology for evaluating the economic attractiveness of the main municipalities in Romania. This novel method for assessing economic activity at local level (Local Business Environment Index) explores a large set of variables that are disaggregated at municipal level for the case study of Romania. The authors propose four major axes of assessment: entrepreneurship, innovation, investment financing, and public authorities’ support. They present the overall ranking of the level of attractiveness of the local business environment in the Romanian municipalities, among which the highest scores belong to cities of various sizes: Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Timișoara, Alba-Iulia and Sibiu.

Liliana Popescu (professor and Vice-Rector for International Relations at the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration - SNSPA) and **Andreea Brînză**

(PhD student at the same University and Vice-President of the Romanian Institute for the Study of the Asia-Pacific) explore in their paper the relations between Romania and China and the political and economic challenges in the Belt and Road initiative era. Although Romania’s pursuit of EU membership contributed to a diminished attention paid to other parts of the world in the 2000s, the situation is continuously changing. The EU membership enrolled Romania in common EU policies, including trade policy. The EU-China relations developed visibly, particularly after 2009 and again in 2013. Romania’s renewed interest and opening towards China coincides with the year when the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was launched. The authors talk about the good prospects for improved cooperation relations.

The next article focuses on the transforming path of the current international order. Professor **Paul Dobrescu** (PhD advisor at the doctoral school in Communication sciences, SNSPA) and **Mălina Ciocea** (Reader at the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations, SNSPA) tackle upon the causes of the imbalance that characterises the post-crisis world by looking at manufacturing capacities, public debt and trade deficit. The authors analyse the transformations taking place nowadays in liberal international order: rapid changes in the structure of global power and in the hierarchy of various countries and regions in international economy and trade. The article shows that, while historically the hegemonic power defended the order it had instituted, in today’s world the US encourages bilateralism, and not multilateralism (one of the fundamental traits of globalization). The authors also state some priorities for Romania’s development.

In her paper, **Olivera Kostoska** (Associate Professor at the Faculty of Economics - Prilep, Macedonia) speaks about Macedonia’s stalled bid for EU membership. Although the European Commission has recommended starting accession talks for several years in a row, Greek objections blocked progress. In June 2018, following the withdrawal of the Greek veto as a part of the agreement to change the

country's name to the Republic of North Macedonia, the European ministers have decided that Macedonia's EU accession talks will start in June 2019, provided a string of conditions are met. While some Member States expressed concerns about corruption and the rule of law in Macedonia (and Albania), the others have decided to support expansion for geopolitical reasons and to counter the rising Russian and Chinese influence in the Western Balkans. The aim of the paper is to critically evaluate the credibility of the EU enlargement process and the overall state of play in the formal accession of Macedonia including, for example, the progress in resolving a decades-old name dispute, and other indicators in alignment with the overall acquis and performance in terms of trade integration.

Beatriz Pérez de las Heras (Professor of European Union Law at the University of Deusto, Spain) tackles the subject of EU in International Investment Governance. As a leading actor in the international investment landscape, the European Union has proposed replacing traditional arbitration with a specific court system for each bilateral agreement containing investment arrangements. However, the proposed system retains key aspects of classic arbitration whilst posing as yet unresolved issues in relation to the interaction with the EU Court of Justice and the current institutions of international arbitration. Nevertheless, the EU's initiative is intended merely as a transitional remedy, ultimately leading to a multilateral judicial institution that would bring greater consistency to the resolution of investment disputes. The EU's proposal has faced criticism for some crucial deficits. Therefore, if the EU's project is to prosper, it must first be discussed and agreed upon as part of a broader agenda of investment governance reform at a global level.

Alina Petronela Alexoaei (Professor Assistant at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies) and **Valentin Cojanu** (Professor in the field of international economics at

the same University) speak about the domestic constraints in negotiating the transatlantic deal. Progress towards a final agreement between the European Union and the US for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) stalled indefinitely in 2016. The negotiation process has been influenced by a wide and complex set of factors stemming from interdependent factors (mainly geopolitical), dependent factors that originate in global economic integration, and independent factors coming from domestic socio-economic, political and institutional constraints. The authors conclude that, even though currently talks over the transatlantic agreement are in the wait-and-see status, the initiation of a comprehensive agreement between the EU and the US might be considered a turning point in the way future liberalization is to be shaped.

The December issue of the Journal also includes three **book reviews** (*Emerging Europe and the Great Recession*, Daniel Dăianu; *Why Europe? Narratives and counter-narratives of European integration*, Alina Bârgăoanu, Raluca Buturoiu and Loredana Radu (eds.); *Trust and Crisis Management in the European Union. An Institutional Account of Success and Failure in Program Countries*, Dóra Györffy).

Full articles are 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/>.

Editors' note: Starting June 2017, Romanian Journal of European Affairs has been selected for coverage in **Clarivate Analytics** (former Thomson Reuters) products and service. Consequently, the journal is now indexed and abstracted in **Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)**.

Oana Mocanu
Studies and Analyses Unit

Working Paper: The Future of Eastern Europeans in Post-BREXIT United Kingdom



The European Institute of Romania gladly announces the publication of a new addition in its Working Papers series. The author, **Jessica Reed**, highlights British attitudes towards immigration in these turbulent times and focuses on a group of so-called “migrants” that was heavily implicated throughout the Brexit referendum: Eastern Europeans. The paper examines EU mobility in the UK and how the issue has been featured in media and political discourse.

The full text of the publication can be accessed [here](#).

About the author: Jessica Reed is a graduate student at Sciences Po Paris, specialising in International Security and Global Health. She holds a BA in International Relations from the University of Leeds. Her research interests include European Affairs, Eastern Europe, global health and human rights. Jessica was an intern within the EIR Studies and Analyses Unit, in the Autumn of 2018.

Studies and Analyses Unit

Translations from the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights: Factsheets

Since the end of 2012, the Translation Coordination Unit of the European Institute of Romania has translated the factsheets published by the European Court of Human Rights on its website. Recently, all 65 factsheets have been fully translated into Romanian, most of them updated in the meantime, and have also been published on the Institute’s webpage (the factsheets can be accessed [here](#)).

The factsheets aim to contribute to increasing the dissemination and knowledge of the Court’s judgments among journalists, national authorities and the public in the Member States of the Council of Europe in order to improve the implementation of the *European Convention on Human Rights* at national level. One of the key demands of the reform to increase the effectiveness of the Convention system is for Member States to guarantee the implementation of the Convention and the Court’s case-law at national level.

Thus, the factsheets are an overview of the Court’s case-law on various topics and provide summaries of the Court’s most relevant decisions and judgments, as well as pending cases. The Translation Coordination Unit regularly updates the contents, the extension at the end of the factsheet name indicating the latest update.

Examples of themes:

1. Criminal law issues (police arrest and assistance of a lawyer; the *non bis in idem* principle; protection of minors; terrorism; domestic violence, etc.)
2. Children and parents (parental rights; reproductive rights; gestational surrogacy; unaccompanied migrant minors in detention; protection of minors, etc.)

3. Detention (detention conditions and treatment of prisoners; prisoners’ right to vote; prisoners’ health-related rights, etc.)
4. Right to free elections
5. Right to life (death penalty abolition, etc.)
6. Expulsion / Extradition (“Dublin” cases; collective expulsions of aliens; interim measures, etc.)
7. Non-discrimination (gender equality; homosexuality; gender identity, etc.)
8. Freedom of expression (access to Internet; protection of reputation; protection of journalistic sources, etc.)
9. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (freedom of religion; conscientious objection, etc.)
10. Freedom of assembly and association (trade union rights, etc.)
11. Work and business (work-related rights; taxation, etc.)
12. Health (detention and mental health; persons with disabilities, etc.)
13. The European Union (case-law concerning the European Union, etc.)
14. Private life (right to the protection of one’s image; protection of personal data; legal professional privilege; surveillance at workplace, etc.)
15. Others (derogation in time of emergency; pilot-judgments; extra-territorial jurisdiction, etc.).

Translation Coordination Unit

promo



The European Institute of Romania will organise its annual Conference “*Unity in diversity. Quo vadis EU?*” on 14 December 2018.

The event is organised with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under the aegis of the Romanian Presidency of the EU Council, and aims to bring into focus a series of issues of common interest both for Romania and the EU as a whole. Moreover, as tradition has it, the Conference will close with the **9th edition of the EIR Excellence Awards ceremony**.

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