

# **CONFERENCE IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

**14 March 2005**



## **Will Romania avoid the safeguard clause?**

What can Romania do to become an effective  
EU-Member State in 2007

# **Club RO-UE**

Organised by Club Romania - UE  
With the support of Heide Rühle MEP



## **Will Romania avoid the safeguard clause?**

What can Romania do to become an effective EU-Member State in 2007?

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#### **Introduction**

The event will debate the topic of Romania's entry into the European Union. On 25 April 2005, Romania is expected to sign the accession treaty. Considering the existence of the so-called "safeguard clause", a question arises: what needs to be done in Romania in order to fully comply with the accession criteria by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007, the target date for accession, and thus avoid the imposition of the safeguard clause. It must be said that both the political class and the civil society are determined to prove that Romania is capable of meeting the demands by this target date.

#### **Motivation:**

To have a balanced discussion and present different opinions we intend to invite speakers from different backgrounds: European Institutions but also Romanian institutions, the international press and NGOs. The objectives of the seminar are:

- to initiate a cross-domain debate about Romania;
- to identify main lines of action and the potential contribution of our Club;
- to raise the profile of the Club within the European affairs environment.

#### **Time and place:**

The event will take place on **14<sup>th</sup> March 2005, starting at 17h00 in conference room P7C50** of the European Parliament in Brussels.

#### **Target Audience:**

- Delegation to the EU – Romania Joint Parliamentary Committee
- DG Enlargement
- Committee of the Regions
- Our contacts in press/media
- Our contacts in other federations and NGOs
- The general public (international and Romanian).

#### **Proposed event:**

- A conference organised for an audience of about 100 participants followed by a cocktail where the public and speakers can continue networking.



## Will Romania avoid the safeguard clause?

### Agenda

- 17:00 Opening by the moderator – Radu Cioponea, President Club Romania – UE
- 17:10 Welcome Speech – Heide Rühle MEP
- 17:20 What should Romania do in order to become an effective EU Member State? –  
Kristian Hedberg, DG Enlargement
- 17:40 Implementing the Acquis -Joost Lagendijk MEP
- 18:00 The Romanian Point of View – His Excellency Mr.Lazar Comanescu,  
Ambassador of the Romanian Mission to the EU
- 18:20 The Consequences for Democracy of Romania's deepening Engagement with  
the EU Since 2000 – Tom Gallagher, University of Bradford
- 18:40 Break
- 19:10 Corruption in Romania – Nicolas van Helden, Independent Consultant of Law  
Enforcement
- 19:30 Freedom of the Press in Romania – Mihaela Gherghisan, Radio France
- 19:50 Conclusions by the co-moderator – Willy de Backer, Editor-in-chief, EurActiv
- 20:10 Cocktail

Each speaker will have a presentation of 15 minutes. This will be followed by an interactive session of five minutes for questions and answers.

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## Romania and Its Accession: Brief Overview of Recent Developments and Remaining Steps

Romania will be signing the Treaty of Accession to the European Union on 25 April this year. The actual accession is envisioned for 1 January 2007. However, should Romania's reforms not proceed according to expectations, especially in the fields of Justice and Home Affairs and Competition, the European Council may apply a so-called safeguard clause and postpone accession by one year.

On 17 of December, acting upon the recommendation of the European Commission, the Member States reunited during the European Council in Brussels considered that Romania will be able to assume all the obligations of membership by January 2007, provided it continues its reform efforts in a successful and timely way. The general focus should be on all areas of the acquis, but in particular on the important commitments regarding Justice and Home Affairs, Competition and Environment.

Safeguard clauses will be built into the Accession Treaty, providing for measures to address serious problems that may arise before accession or in the three years after accession. The main areas of concern lie with the last two chapters closed by Romania, namely Justice and Home Affairs and Competition, as well as Environment.

The European Union will continue to monitor closely Romania's preparations and achievements, including the effective implementation of the commitments undertaken in all areas of the acquis. To this end, the Commission continues to submit annual reports on Romania's progress towards accession, together with recommendations if appropriate. The European Parliament will be asked to give its assent to Romania on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April, potentially sealing its signature of the Accession Treaty on 25 April, on the occasion of the General Affairs and External Relations Council.

## Historical Milestones of the relations between ROMANIA and the EU

- Romania was the first country of Central and Eastern Europe to have official relations with the European Community. In 1974, an agreement included Romania in the Community's Generalised System of Preferences and an Agreement on Industrial Products was signed in 1980.
- Romania's diplomatic relations with the European Union date from 1990, and a Trade and Co-operation Agreement was signed in 1991. The Europe Agreement entered into force in February 1995. Trade provisions had entered into force in 1993 through an "Interim Agreement".
- Romania submitted its application for EU membership on 22 June 1995.
- In July 1997, the Commission published an "Opinion on Romania's Application for Membership of the European Union". In the following year, a Regular Report on Romania's Progress Towards Accession" was produced. In its second "Regular Report" on Romania published in October 1999, the Commission recommended starting accession negotiations with Romania (conditional on the improvement of the situation of children in institutional care and the drafting of a medium-term economic strategy).
- Following the Helsinki European Council's decision in December 1999, accession negotiations started with Romania on 15 February 2000.
- Romania's objective is EU membership in 2007. The Thessaloniki Summit Conclusions in 2003 stated that the EU supports this objective.

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The Consequences for Democracy of Romania's  
deepening Engagement with the EU Since 2000

Conference organized by Club Romania – EU

With the support of Heide Rühle MEP

*Brussels, 14 March 2005*

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## Synopsis

*The EU played a vital role in strengthening Romanian democracy in the 1990s when a return to some form of authoritarian could never be altogether ruled out. However, growing evidence from the 2001-04 period that it was willing to admit Romania to full membership on flexible terms has undermined the democratisation process. There is evidence that key players in the EU became too close to the then ruling party and embraced parts of its agenda without thinking through what the consequences of this might be. This has made its relations with the government that took office at the end of 2004 uncomfortable since it now faces demands from Brussels that may weaken the democratisation process. The good news is that encouraging evidence exists that the momentum behind strengthening democracy is no longer mainly external but has a strong internal component. However, despite its deepening engagement with Romania since 2000, the EU has not effectively interacted with domestic social groups most committed to the consolidation of democracy in Romania.*

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It is worth being reminded of the political strides Romania has made since 1989. On three occasions there have been peaceful substitutions of power at the level of the Presidency and the government (1996, 2000, 2004). Political violence is not a normal problem-solving device. The Romanian electorate has become accustomed to political competition (which large sections initially feared in the first post-communist elections of 1990). Individuals are less and less reticent about challenging unresponsive officialdom in order to try and secure their rights. A probing independent print media tries to hold government to account so that there is decreasing secrecy in political life, a feature which used to encourage conspiracy theories upon which anti-democratic forces thrived. In particular, the manipulation of nationalism by politicians is far less obvious than it was in the first half of the 1990s. Indeed, it is possible to even argue that Romania is revealing itself to be one of the least nationalist societies in Europe in terms of political culture. Reinforcing that claim is the fact that it has generally been a stabilising influence in the politics of South-East and Central Europe since at least 1999.

A generation has grown up which hardly remembers the communist era of 1946-89 or the harsh dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu which dominated its second half. But the effects of such a social system continue to be felt and will not disappear until well into the future. It left legacies which have impaired the democratisation process. The state intruded deeply into people's lives and reserved brutal punishments for anyone challenging its authority. Those committed to civic engagement or economic self-reliance had little chance of withstanding its totalitarian approach. To consolidate its authority, a new class of officials was created in a vastly expanded bureaucracy who were selected

and promoted on ideological criteria. Their purpose was not primarily to acquire legitimacy by governing efficiently but to implant an ideological model and latterly to enforce the decisions of the ruling couple who turned Romania into a communist monarchy in the 1980s.

Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu were executed by underlings on Christmas day 1989.

Romania ceased to be a dictatorship but for a long time it was difficult to conclude that it had become a democracy recognisable to outsiders who came from pluralist states. The state machine which the Ceausescus had relied on, continued in existence. Indeed, it became the power-base of the post-communist leadership of Ion Iliescu. The old political forces whose champion he became were locked in conflict with weaker newer forces committed to a radical transformation of the country along the line being seen in Poland, Hungary, and what became the Czech Republic. Iliescu's National Salvation Front (FSN) won this power-struggle. It created a new Constitution in 1991 and a range of political institutions largely around its agenda of very gradual and limited change. Definite steps were taken towards political pluralism provided the status and privileges of the forces which had regrouped after the upheavals of 1989 were not threatened. Perhaps the civil society movement which sprang up in Timisoara, Bucharest and elsewhere in early 1990 compelled the post-communists to make more concessions to democracy than Iliescu would like to have made. He certainly showed himself at times to be a very uncomfortable operator in the democratic system which had been created to enable the FSN and its successors to remain the dominant political force. But the civic and party-based opposition was too weak to prevent the emergence of an oligarchy drawn from the

FSN and its satellites in the bureaucracy, major industries and the intelligence world which grew wealthy by distributing the most lucrative state assets among its members.

Systematic misuse of state resources, fierce enmity between the FSN and its opponents, and the emergence of a system of rule where leaders enjoyed a lot of discretionary power over the state combined to slow the pace of the democratic transition. But the momentum behind genuine change quickened as the Atlantic democracies launched a process from around 1994 that would enable the former Warsaw Pact states (excepting the Soviet Union and its main successor) to join NATO and the European Union within a decade (EU). In the last years of Iliescu's first period in office, Romania took part in the process of Euro-Atlantic integration. Western economic and diplomatic support was seen as vital to stabilise a hybrid political and economic system where striking continuity was noticeable as well as undeniable change. It would have been understandable if Iliescu and his allies hoped to acquire international legitimacy while persisting with their own specific interpretation of how a democratic system and the free market ought to work in Romania. This certainly seems to have been their approach when negotiations for EU membership began after 2000.

Arguably, most of the foundations for the close relationship with the EU were laid during the Presidency of Emil Constantinescu and the multi-party governments comprising all elected parties except Iliescu's and the ultra-nationalists. This coalition failed to enjoy much success on the reform front or preserve its popularity. But core EU states were convinced of its genuineness in wishing to break with the totalitarian past and moving

Romania fully into the Western democratic orbit. It would have been difficult to exclude Romania when the decision was taken at the Luxemburg summit of the EU in December 1997 to extend the EU to the former communist bloc (excepting the successors of the Soviet Union and most of former Yugoslavia which had been affected by internal conflict).

Strategic and geopolitical concerns primarily motivated the EU in its relationship with Romania during the Cold War and these have been the driving forces behind the deepening relationship in the last 6 years.<sup>1</sup>

Disintegrating Yugoslavia was the scene of the world's first extended post-Cold war crisis in the 1990s. Arguably, Western efforts to contain the crisis emanating from unrestrained warfare first in Croatia and later in Bosnia contributed to the decision by NATO and the EU to adopt a more purposeful and welcoming approach to the former satellites in the communist bloc. In 1999, the ten week military confrontation between NATO and Serbia over Belgrade's mistreatment of the Albanian population of Kosovo, increased Romania's importance in the eyes of key western states. The EU threw its weight behind NATO's risky effort to halt the 'ethnic cleansing' of Kosovan Albanians. Romania (and Bulgaria) closed ranks to assist NATO. The British Prime Minister Tony Blair, while addressing the Romanian Parliament on 4 May, referred to Romania as 'an

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<sup>1</sup> Romania first made official contact with the European Union in 1973 when it managed to obtain preferential trading status from the European Economic Community. This was long before Brussels established any formal ties with other 'Peoples Democracies' of Eastern Europe and arguably it stemmed from the wish to reward a maverick communist regime for its show of independence towards the Soviet Union.

exemplary partner and future ally'.<sup>2</sup> He also promised that: 'At the meeting of the European Council in Helsinki in December, Great Britain is going to support an invitation being extended to Romania to begin negotiations to join the EU'.<sup>3</sup> At Helsinki Romania and Bulgaria were both invited to join negotiations for full membership. Britain and Germany, hitherto unenthusiastic about supporting their entry because of the impediments they faced in meeting EU conditions, dropped these reservations. This was widely viewed as a reward for the high-level support they had extended to the West over the Kosovo crisis.

Already, in October 1999 Guenther Verheugen, the EU Commissioner For Enlargement, proposed a medium-term economy strategy to be implemented over the next seven years that would smooth Romania's path to membership.<sup>4</sup> Both the government and the opposition, still led by Iliescu, agreed the establishment of a working group composed of representatives from the EU, the IMF, and the World Bank, as well as other financial institutions and Romanian experts, that would shape economic policy. A large amount of EU funding was promised to enable Romania to modernise so as to be in a position to withstand competition once it belonged to the EU single market.

It is interesting to compare the response in the EU to the return to office of the opposition in 2000 and to the same occurrence in 2004. There was ambiguity and uncertainty in

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<sup>2</sup> *Ziua*, 5 May 1999 (Bucharest daily newspaper).

On returning home Blair told MPs: 'It is essential that we begin work as soon as possible on a regeneration programme for the Balkans, because many of the front-line states – such as Bulgaria, Romania, Macedonia and Albania – have given us support in circumstances of intense internal difficulty'. *Hansard*, (record of the proceedings of the House of Commons), 8 June 1999, p. 468.

<sup>3</sup> *Ziua*, 5 May 1999.

<sup>4</sup> *Monitorul*, (Romanian daily newspaper), 1 November 1999.

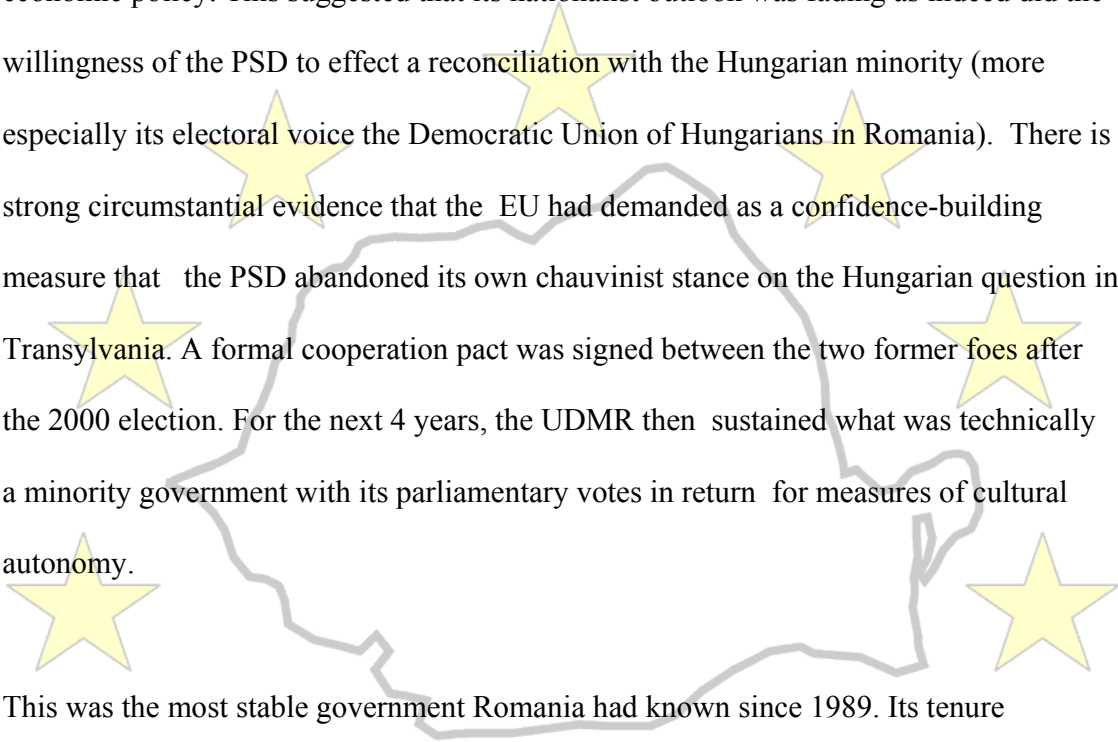
Brussels about the opposition's victory at the end of 2004 after 4 years of sometimes frustrating but ultimately strengthening contacts with the Social Democratic Party (PSD). Its leader Prime Minister Adrian Năstase appeared to be in full control of the state whereas the governing capacities of the mainstream opposition appeared uncertain. In November 2000, concern about the electoral victory of Iliescu's party on account of its controversial past was lessened by the fact that it stood in the way of the extremist Greater Romania Party (PRM) which was in a strong second position electorally. Moreover, the defeated coalition had often proven to be an unreliable negotiating partner; its performance improved during the premiership of Mugur Isărescu (December 1999-December 2000) but its shortcomings, particularly its weak control over the state, caused numerous frustrations in Brussels.

The EU had to decide whether upon its return to office, Iliescu's party (which was renamed the Social Democratic Party: PSD in 2001) would be an acceptable negotiating partner. Would it respect the broad conditions for entry first agreed at a 1993 EU summit in Denmark and ever since known as the Copenhagen Criteria? They emphasised 1) the stability of institutions, guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, and human rights; 2) a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU; and 3) the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.

The picture was mixed. In opposition the PSD had failed to undergo a process of internal reform. It remained the vehicle of Ion Iliescu who regularly interfered in its affairs even

after his re-election as President in 2000 (the Constitution stipulates that the President must resign all party offices). In 1999, the PSD had opposed NATO's intervention in Kosovo. Indeed, during Iliescu's previous tenure, top officials had defied international sanctions imposed on Serbia and had profited enormously. But the PSD had backed the 1999 Verhuegen initiative which gave external forces important leverage over domestic economic policy. This suggested that its nationalist outlook was fading as indeed did the willingness of the PSD to effect a reconciliation with the Hungarian minority (more especially its electoral voice the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania). There is strong circumstantial evidence that the EU had demanded as a confidence-building measure that the PSD abandoned its own chauvinist stance on the Hungarian question in Transylvania. A formal cooperation pact was signed between the two former foes after the 2000 election. For the next 4 years, the UDMR then sustained what was technically a minority government with its parliamentary votes in return for measures of cultural autonomy.

This was the most stable government Romania had known since 1989. Its tenure coincided with impressive-looking growth rates after years of economic contraction. Parties closer to the European norm which had hailed the EU as being the main salvation for Romania seemed destined to endure years in the political wilderness. So circumstances threw together the PSD and Brussels officials struggling to assist the Romanian state to absorb the entire body of regulations of the EU which have been accumulated and revised over the last 45 years: the *acquis communautaire*.



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In government, the PSD would not be long in reasserting its authoritarian ways and proprietorial attitude to state resources. From 2002, its second full year in office, the government faced a barrage of accusations that it was trying to muzzle the media and hound independent prosecutors serious in their approach to dealing with corruption cases involving PSD notables, and disable those parts of the opposition most ready to energetically challenge it. It was unable, until three months before entry negotiations were concluded in 2004, to obtain the endorsement of the EU that it possessed all the characteristics of 'a functioning market economy' a status granted to Bulgaria in 2002. Despite being the second-biggest recipient of pre-accession assistance (of any post-1999 candidate state), it had major difficulties closing the main chapters of the *acquis communautaire*.

In February 2004, the European Parliament endorsed a report highly critical of its record. Drawn up by Baroness Emma Nicholson, then the European Parliament's Rapporteur for Romania, it warned that 'Romania faces serious difficulties fulfilling the [membership] requirements...and becoming a member in 2007 is impossible' unless Romania implements anti-corruption measures, ensures the independence of the justice system, and also the freedom of the press.<sup>5</sup>

Such a critical report was unprecedented when negotiations with a candidate country were so advanced. In 2000, at the Laeken summit, it had been agreed that the target date for Romanian entry would be 2007. But even though the authority of the European

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<sup>5</sup> Mediafax (Bucharest), 19 February 2004; for the plenum debate, see *Ziarul de Iasi*, 11 and 12 March 2004.

Parliament had grown after 2000, its concerns about the prospect of a substantially unreformed Romania joining as a full member did not result in a sterner attitude to the Năstase government from the Council of Ministers or the Commission. The EU initially declared that it was re-orientating its strategy towards Romania, but by the summer of 2004, candid EU officials were admitting that 're-orientation' was simply a device to pacify the redoubtable author of the report, Baroness Nicholson.

Public requests for the Năstase government to respect democratic norms continued to be made by top Brussels officials but by 2004 it was clear that there was little force behind them. The nature of the EU relationship with Romania had not resulted in a transformation of governing practices. This would perhaps have only been possible under the method adopted for preparing Romania for entry, if the Commission had received strong backing from the core nations of the EU to ensure that Romania complied fully with the reform agenda it had agreed to implement. But, by 2004, there was compelling evidence that the Council of Ministers was prepared to grant Romania full membership rights on flexible terms.

Against a background of a concerted lobbying offensive in Brussels by Năstase and his Foreign Minister, Mircea Geoana, powerful national players became convinced for different reasons that Romania must join on schedule even though it was finding it difficult to complete the entry roads-map. Italy, along with Germany, had important investments in Romania and benefited from preferential trading links. France hoped that Romania would be a powerful ally within the EU because of its traditional Francophone

outlook while Britain, under Tony Blair, remained influenced by Năstase's strong support for Anglo-American security interests in the Middle East. Romania's close identification with a high-risk Middle East policy at a time of unprecedented transatlantic friction failed to damage its standing in Brussels. Countries like France and Germany, critical of the Bush administration's high-risk policy, were dependent on Middle East oil supplies for their economic viability. An exasperated Fritz Bolkestein, the outgoing competition commissioner, even complained in December 2004 of 'the grand deception practised on the EU by 'persistent Romanian diplomacy' that 'is based on nothing'.<sup>6</sup>

The importance of Germany by 2004 cannot be over-estimated. Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's close ally, Guenther Verheugen was EU commissioner for enlargement. The German economy had been in recession since at least 2002 and newly-available markets like Romania, with its 22 million consumers, were more important than in normal times. Nastase has also found allies among West European companies benefiting from the opening up of the Romanian economy. They face declining profit margins at home and the spectre of the German economy remaining in recession. Many of these companies exercise a growing hold over ruling parties like the German SPD, with its declining membership.

In the summer of 2004 there was still some lingering uncertainty about whether the EU Council of Ministers might choose to act on the critical Nicholson report. But it was finally banished when Nastase signed a 1 billion contract with the German-led EADS group to secure the country's borders. No public tender was organized and the European

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<sup>6</sup> Reuters, 4 December 2004.

Commission was obliged to investigate if EU regulations had been violated. But its controversial character did not prevent Schroeder arriving in person to sign the deal on 1 August. His attitude to Romanian entry had changed from June 2001 when he had told Năstase that Romania was still a long way from joining the EU<sup>7</sup> to October 2003 when he referred to the impressive rate of reforms in Romania.<sup>8</sup>

It is hard to see what the criteria were which prompted the European Commission, in October 2004, to decide that Romania had become a functioning market economy. The state continued to subsidise favoured private firms, writing off debts and obtaining reciprocal benefits, flagrant examples of this anti-competitive practice occurring during the November election campaign. By that month, it was also unclear that the engagement with the EU was strengthening Romanian democracy. In December 2003, Theodor Stolojan, the then leader of the main democratic opposition force, the National Liberal Party, had appealed to the EU to closely monitor Romania's forthcoming elections. He had been alarmed at the irregular methods which the PSD had used to ensure a turnout of above 50% in the October 2003 referendum on the revised constitution. The EU overlooked the well-documented examples of electoral malpractice presented by Romanian NGOs presumably because the ratification of this constitution enabled Romania to sign the EU accession treaties.

The EU sent no observers to monitor the 2004 Romanian parliamentary and presidential elections. Instead, Guenther Verheugen, the EU Commissioner For Enlargement

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<sup>7</sup> Eugen Tomiuc, 'Romania: German Chancellor Says Nation Still Long Way From Joining EU'. Radio Free Europe, *Newsline*, 5 July 2001.

<sup>8</sup>Radio Free Europe, *South-East-Europe Newsline*, 3 November 2003.

announced on 4 November that he hoped to complete negotiations with Romania by 24 November, four days prior to voting (with three difficult chapters still to be finalised).<sup>9</sup> This gesture eloquently summed up the flexible approach to Romania that had emerged during his 5 years in this post. It brought a sharp rebuke from Graham Watson, the head of the Liberal group in the European Parliament who, on 10 November, accused Verheugen of interfering in the Romanian electoral process.<sup>10</sup>

The EU had got itself into the awkward position whereby the success of its accession strategy seemed to depend on the re-election of the PSD. Verheugen's intervention and the remarks of many diplomats from EU states during the election campaign, indicated where their sympathies lay. The narrow negotiating timetable for EU entry seemed to dwarf whether or not the PSD had provided Romania with good government since 2000. Its difficulties in complying with the Brussels road map, its authoritarian tendencies, and the persistent accusations of high-level corruption seemed to suggest it hadn't. This was the verdict of large sections of the electorate and perhaps if there had been stronger interaction between the EU and the society, not just with Romanians at the pyramid of power, then the result of the 2004 elections might have come as less of a surprise to EU officials dealing with the country.

Negotiations were concluded on 16 December 2004. By then, two rounds of presidential elections had taken place along with the parliamentary elections on 28 November. As feared, there were significant irregularities in different parts of the country which may

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<sup>9</sup> Valentin Stan, 'A sad joke: November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2004', *Evenimentul Zilei* (English language ed.), 12 November 2004.

<sup>10</sup> *Evenimentul Zilei*, 11 November 2004.

have affected up to 10% of the vote.<sup>11</sup> The PSD emerged as the largest party but without an overall majority. On 30 November, Jonathan Scheele expressed the hope that ‘the competent authorities in Romania’ would resolve the dispute over the first-round conduct of elections.<sup>12</sup> But the Central Electoral Bureau, that was supposed to guarantee electoral transparency, was at the heart of the controversy about the conduct of elections (its head being a judge who had formerly been secretary of the communist party in the supreme court).<sup>13</sup> After 5 years of EU-supervised efforts to turn post-communist Romania into a robust liberal democracy able to comfortably fit into the EU, it was hard to see where the ‘competent authorities’ were that Scheele referred to. It was Jack Crouch, the US ambassador who, instead, stated publicly his view that the concerns of civil society bodies monitoring elections appeared justified.<sup>14</sup> He persuaded them not to carry out their threat of withdrawing from monitoring the 12 December presidential run-off which was narrowly won by Traian Bășescu.. The victory of an outsider who hastily replaced Stolojan as the main opposition candidate in October and who criticised French government leaders and businessmen for profiting from a contract with the Romanian state that may have violated EU competition rules, thus opened a new chapter in Romania’s relationship with the European Union.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> On 3 December 2004, nine NGOs focussing on human rights asked for the electoral process to be suspended and for an enquiry involving the European Parliament, the US embassy and the OSCE. Among them was Pro-Democrația, the NGO which had carried out an extensive monitoring on 28 November.

<sup>12</sup> *Evenimentul Zilei*, 2 December 2004.

<sup>13</sup> ‘Dovada fraudei’, *Evenimentul Zilei*, 2 December 2004.

<sup>14</sup> *Evenimentul Zilei*, 3 December 2004.

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<sup>15</sup> ‘Romanian opposition leader slams French highway deal, sparking government criticism’, Associated Press, 20 October 2004.

The EU soon made it clear to the new government of Calin Popescu-Tarişeanu, drawn mainly from the centrist coalition of the Alliance for Truth and Justice<sup>16</sup> that reform must be accelerated. Quinton Quayle, the ambassador of Britain which will take over the presidency of the EU in July 2005 insisted at the start of the year that the time for ‘hard work is beginning now’. <sup>17</sup>Arguably he is raising unrealistic expectations. He is referring to opposition parties newly installed in office which probably did not expect to be there 3 months earlier. They are expected to take over a state machine geared towards the interests of the PSD and somehow produce impressive early results. It is difficult to see this happening in Britain. Indeed Tony Blair and his team, were not able to do anything dramatic on the domestic front during the whole of their first elected term (unless granting independence to the Bank of England is counted).

On 24 January Jose Manuel Barroso, the President of the European Commission delivered a stern lecture to Prime Minister Tarişeanu about what needed to be done to avoid the activation of what is known as ‘the safeguard clause’. This was agreed during the closing stages of negotiations in 2004 and enables the EU to postpone entry until January 2008 if it is dissatisfied with Romania’s performance on the reform front.

The Tariceanu government cannot produce dramatic results because the very same EU allowed his predecessor, Adrian Năstase to carry out only cosmetic reforms. The weak Romanian state is a monument to the EU as well as to Nastase. Insisting on real miracles

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<sup>16</sup> The Alliance is composed of the National Liberal Party (PNL) and the Democratic Party (PD) both of which served in the 1996-2000 government.

<sup>17</sup> *Bucharest Daily News*, 31 January 2005.

now when Brussels was content with cheap conjuring tricks from Nastase is unfair. It may even amount to crude partisanship.

EU officials have indicated that full-time concentration on reforms in the justice system that will enable the battle against corruption to be won rules out the option of holding early elections. The Alliance lacks a working majority and is dependent on parties whose commitment to real reform is questionable at best. Arguably, its hands are tied in the key reform battles until it gains control of parliament.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps this would not have been the case if, in 2004, the EU had insisted on transparent elections and Verheugen had distanced himself from the PSD.

On 28 February, Olli Rehn, the new commissioner for enlargement visited Romania and expressed his support for the Tariceanu government's reform efforts. But he distanced the EU from responsibility for any failings. At one point he declared: 'Let's be clear: it isn't our task to combat corruption but that of the administration...and of each Romanian'. In fact, EU decisions had a crucial bearing on the corruption battle and continue to do so.

Arguably, Verheugen's continued willingness to give Premier Năstase the benefit of the doubt on this crucial question, was a disastrous message; it had a very negative impact on Romania's ability to rid itself of the image of being a country where corruption was widespread .

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<sup>18</sup> The heads of both houses of parliament are the last two PSD Prime Ministers, Năstase and Văcaroiu, both supported by at least one of the Alliance government's nominal allies.

So has the EU decision to maintain the same narrow timetable for the distribution of pre-accession funds. In 2005 far more money will arrive than in the previous year and the rate of release will accelerate in 2006. A new ministerial team lacking recent experience in government will probably be unable to absorb this funding and spend it effectively. The tight EU funding schedule, means that the Alliance is almost certainly going to be preoccupied with internal coalition affairs, filling key posts, especially the ones that will be flush with money. This only increases the danger that a government that is reformist in intention will be blown off course. As a result, EU funds would not get to the people who really need it thanks to the obsession of Brussels with carrying out a rigid timetable that pays no attention to the realities on the ground in Romania. Populist forces with an anti-democratic agenda will be bound to benefit if the lure of pre-accession funds result in a government elected on a reform agenda succumbing to the same temptations as its predecessor.

On 28 February 2005 Olli Rehn also declared that management of Phare funds would be one of the most urgent issues that would need satisfactory handling in the time ahead. But the EU cannot evade indirect responsibility for the mishandling of these funds in the past.

A stark illustration of this perhaps was provided in June 2004 when the EU's anti-corruption watchdog, OLAF revealed that it had major worries about the misappropriation of pre-accession funds in Romania. Attention focussed on a vice-president of the PSD, but it was another member of the ruling party holding the same rank who decided whether there should be criminal investigations and, not surprisingly,

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he refused to acknowledge any wrong-doing. There was a clear conflict of interest but Jonathan Scheele, the EU's chief in Romania, when asked about OLAF's findings on corruption revealed that his own office had not been kept well-informed and OLAF was an autonomous body that answers not to the European Commission but to the European Parliament.<sup>19</sup> Thus the EU displayed little of the coordination that it insisted the different Romanian ministries must show in their approach to governance, and indicated a lack of resolution on the corruption issue that was at total variance with the pronouncements of its leading officials on the subject.

#### Conclusion

The time is overdue for an audit of the EU strategy.

What was the alternative to the *acquis*?

Why 2007 entry is better than 2008 unless the EU adopts a radical fresh approach and stops placing unrealistic demands on the Romanians via an unsuitable entry model.

There is plenty of evidence that benevolent EU interest in Romania strengthened a fragile democratic process in the 1990s. But the evidence becomes more elusive for the period from 2001 onwards when negotiations for Romania's membership began in earnest. The European Union's principal partner was the Social Democratic Party (PSD) which continued to display a monopolistic approach to power. During its four years in office, the PSD successfully employed a number of stratagems to try to ensure that Romania was able to join the EU by 2007-08 on flexible terms with many crucial reforms far from being realised. Proof was the relatively nonchalant approach of the EU to the electoral

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<sup>19</sup> *Evenimentul Zilei*, (English language Online edition), 2 June 2004.

malpractice that occurred during the 2003 referendum on the Constitution and the parliamentary and presidential elections of 28 November 2004.

The government in office is the chief partner of the EU for any candidate state but it is uncomfortable to observe that the EU has failed to establish effective channels for engaging fruitfully with the wider society. If this had been done, the European Commission would surely have been able to accumulate much evidence to suggest that its pre-accession strategy was not proving to be a motor helping to accomplish the modernisation of the country's institutions and prepare it for the challenges of full membership. It might even have prompted officials in the EU with a longer-term perspective to press for an audit of their own strategy towards Romania.

One cannot say if Romanian democracy will encounter fresh challenges that threaten its continuation once it becomes a full EU member. But it is difficult to envisage that it will be strengthened. The class structure is unlikely to change in ways that assist the deepening of democracy. A middle-class with large purchasing power and reliance on a law-based state and other transparent state institutions is likely to remain weak and unfulfilled for a long time to come. Individuals who might have contributed to its growth are likely to emigrate to other EU states where they believe they can accomplish their career goals more easily. The exodus of unskilled groups working in manual occupations in Western Europe is likely to intensify. This might be seen as an important safety-valve. It will enable workers who might have proven disruptive if they had stayed at home to face continuing hardship, to seek new opportunities elsewhere from where they would send

remittances back home, boosting the economy. But there are already signs that not all impoverished regions are witnessing an outflow of people. In parts of Oltenia and southern Moldova, where support for authoritarian and paternalistic political forces has been the highest in the country in a number of elections, the level of social demoralisation may be precluding high emigration rates. Moreover, the elderly will not emigrate and their preponderance in the electorate is likely to grow even further as perhaps very large numbers of people from the younger and middle-age cohorts decide to leave. An electorate heavily skewed towards the elderly (a bastion of the PRM and the ultra-nationalists) as well as towards the most economically unproductive parts of the country, is not one that is likely to be a solid support-base for reform-minded and modernising political forces. There are already strong indications that an EU strategy whose only consistently applied policy is one which reduces state control over the economy and the level of state support for the population, is placing unrealistic demands on that population. If capitalism arrives in Romania without fundamental reform of the bureaucracy and regulatory institutions that make an appreciable difference to peoples lives, then it is unlikely that a robust democratic system will follow in its wake.

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## Corruption in Romania as seen by an independent consultant

Conference organised by Club Romania – EU  
With the support of Heide Rühle MEP  
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**Club RO-UE**

# 1. INTEGRITY and SECURITY

## the fight against corruption

- Nicolas H.E. van Helten, Law Enforcement and Security Consultant

## 2. INTRODUCTION

- Developments in the Netherlands and Europe
- Some remarks to stimulate discussion

Background: adviser in European countries like Romania, counsellor at the Permanent Representation in Brussels, director in the Intelligence and Security Service and police chief

Corruption, both in public administration and in private enterprises, has been a subject of growing political attention. In our European area of freedom, security and justice we want to show our citizens, that corruption and fraud are not accepted as a fact of life. In a democratic society people may expect to be protected against these criminal phenomena.

During my career I saw a lot of things we nowadays consider to be unacceptable. Examples can be seen in the car trade, the hotel, restaurant and night-club business, building projects, planning permission, waste disposal and border traffic. Probably you yourselves are able to come up with many examples too. My question is: what are you doing about it?

## 3. INTEGRITY

### a positive element

- Corruption
- Fraud
- Lack of trust

The negative elements of our problem are crystal clear, but it is worth the trouble to look at a positive approach: the stimulation of integrity in public life but also in private enterprise. A lack of trust can only be repaired if people in charge are seen to behave with integrity.

What we are up against are **NEED & GREED**. Many people, who are needy, do not resort to corruption and fraud. Some people who are doing well are nevertheless so greedy that they are corrupt and commit fraud to enrich themselves even more. Although we know that some phenomena will never go away completely, this is no excuse to do nothing about it.

An important element in the fight against corruption and fraud is to support people, who are showing their integrity. They are worthy of our esteem and can repair the lack of trust in the authorities and entrepreneurs of our society.

## 4. SECURITY

### is it threatened by corruption?

- Vandalism
- Violence

- ▶ Criminality
- ▶ Terrorism
- ▶ Public fear

If people worry about their security, you will hear them complain about vandalism, violence, criminality and terrorism. It is a much more complicated issue for them to complain about corruption. Who to turn to? What can a citizen do?

Are the public afraid of thieves and robbers or even of their own public servants?

The security of the state is indeed threatened by corruption because people in charge can gain money or favours by not doing their jobs properly. It even happens that they got their jobs by paying bribes, so they have to earn this money back. Turning a blind eye to misbehaviour and abuse only enhances the existing public fear for their safety and security. This way the very roots of our society are threatened.

## 5. TERRORISM

- ▶ On September 11, 2001 a number of hideous crimes was committed. A whole nation felt hurt and threatened
- ▶ The War on Terrorism is a concept of failure
- ▶ What are our fears?
- ▶ What can we do?

In the context of this presentation on corruption I will just make a few remarks on these points. If you want me to expand on this, just tell me in the discussion.

The 9/11 disaster in 2001 was man made. It was the second attack on the World Trade Centre in New York. This time with simultaneous attacks on the Pentagon and other vital objects. It was preceded by other vicious attacks on American targets and followed by other terrorist acts, like the Madrid railway stations attack on March 11, 2004.

Like the concept of the War on Drugs the War on Terrorism is a wrong concept. Although the underlying emotion is understandable, the idea of a well organised military-style campaign is beside the point.

Our fears, that we could be victims as well, may cause panic-reactions. It is difficult to find the right perspective, but we have to understand what is happening and try to go on with our lives. This is easier said than done, but it is done.

## 6. ORGANISED CRIME

- ▶ the Underworld: a threat for the citizens?
- ▶ the Upperworld: do solid citizens go wrong?
- ▶ realism: Organised Crime and its Containment

Organised crime has a strong smell of corruption. Violence is also an element but much less frequently used than many people suppose. Experience with organised crime can teach us a lot about corruption and possible attacks on integrity.

The public in general are not worried a lot about organised crime. The underworld is something they read about in papers and sometimes they see the gruesome results on television. Substantial gains can be made by achieving goals through criminal means. That is why so called solid citizens in the upperworld sometimes cut corners to get wealth and power quickly.

There are no simple solutions, so we shall have to think of preventive strategies as a complementary set of measures to the traditional repressive approach of trying to catch more crooks. You cannot simply prosecute every problem away. It is not only a problem of police and public prosecution, but politicians, administrators and academics at least have to come up with ideas and work together to prevent corruption of our democratic society.

## 7. A MINISTER CONFRONTED ADMINISTRATORS WITH REALITY

- Government shows integrity or it does not. A little bit of integrity is impossible. If government integrity is tainted the administration will lose the citizens' trust. This will be the beginning of the end of democracy.
- ▶ Government integrity needs constant maintenance

When the late Mrs. Ien Dales – as a minister of the Interior – spoke at the public administration conference in 1992 many mayors couldn't believe their ears. Was it their own minister telling them that she was worried about the integrity of public administration? Why did she not trust them anymore? The Dutch public administration was well known for the absence of corruption and fraud. But within half a year a number of cases of corruption and fraud by people in local and regional government became public, especially concerning building contracts and planning permissions.

This shock is still having its effect on public awareness. Before 1992 nearly all public servants were above reproach or even suspicion. OK, business people had to pay bribes in third world countries to get contracts, but public servants? Oh no.

Yet it is very easy to get into a situation, where a certain amount of corruption and fraud is seeping into your working conditions. I could give you many examples. This is only one. In building police stations a lot of money is involved. In 1983 we were confronted with a situation that was getting out of hand. The annual budget was 80 million guilders, but the obligations for accepted projects were already reaching a total of 400 million guilders. There was a waiting list of urgent projects totalling 800 million guilders. The problem was solved within a year but this caused a lot of pain and the advisers of the minister gained a lot of enemies.

## 8. INTEGRITY AND SECURITY ARE RELATED

- ▶ Attacks against the integrity of public institutions often mean attacks on the security and safety of citizens.
- ▶ A lack of trust in government officers often leads to feelings of insecurity in citizens.

Management of change in Romanian public life is a complicated and difficult process that has to be continued with energy and a sense of urgency. Again I stress the importance of showing the citizens that it works. They are the judges of the quality of your efforts and results.

## 9. ATTACKS ON INTEGRITY

- ▶ Integrity of the Police, recent Dutch experiences.
- ▶ The greedy Captains of Industry, the public know by now.

The relationship between the integrity of government officers and business people on one hand and the opinions of the public on the other.

A lot of work already has been done concerning the integrity of the Dutch police. I can give you a lot of practical examples, like you will be able to give them in the Romanian context. Selection, training and leadership are the areas where progress can be made, but in those same areas we can find the frustrating influences of existing traditional subcultures and lack of motivation.

## 10. ATTACKS ON SECURITY AND SAFETY

- ▶ The position of organised crime in society
- ▶ The fight against corruption after the elections.
- ▶ The opinions of the public about the role of police, public prosecutors and judges.

Opportunity creates the thief. Look for the money and the expensive way of life. That is where the crooks will mingle with the victims. Questions have to be asked.

Listen to the opinions of the public. Their criticisms of police, public prosecutors and judges may well be right and founded on real life experiences. In Dutch society the voters recently were not satisfied anymore with the security situation so they acted accordingly. People in authority allow themselves to easily rest in the comfort of their own experience. I can give you the example of the minister, that had to step down because he used his former position of a mayor in one of our big cities to act like a king and many officials were only to glad to play his court.

## 11. WHAT ARE THE ACTIONS OF OUR SOCIETY?

- ▶ In the EU: An active development of Freedom, Security and Justice?
- ▶ In our own countries: Do we really stimulate integrity in politicians, administrators, judges and business people?
- ▶ Does Romania really show its priority to stimulate integrity in its democratic institutions?

There is a representation of the European Commission in Bucharest that is able to assist the Romanian institutions, certainly in the field of Justice, Law Enforcement and Interior, to reinforce their struggle to fight corruption or - in my terms - to stimulate integrity in the behaviour of police officers, administrators, public prosecutors and judges. To add a practical remark. The best way to take advantage of EU cooperation is to find partners to help and advise you in reaching your goals.

My impression is that the new Government is able and willing to undertake these major tasks. It can greatly benefit from the positive and negative experiences in Member States of the EU. You will have to find the right kind of cooperation and choose your partners with care. In my experience bilateral cooperation offers the most intensive possibilities, but you can look for multilateral projects as well. EU-wide cooperation is called for when you want an EU-wide policy but that only can provide a very general scope on the problems concerned. As a framework this can be indispensable, but for practical results you need to go back to work with a few selected partners. Most of you may be able to relate these remarks to your own experiences.

For instance I know about a project that is developed by the Border Police to deal with corruption with people from the Dutch state criminal investigation service. In the management of change project within the Bucharest police the Dutch advisers were glad to involve a Roma expert on projects in bad neighbourhood conditions. There must be much more which is already done to stimulate transparency in Romanian society.

Is your parliament ready to start an enquiry into one of your serious corruption problems? My suggestions would be to start talking about this kind of problem and discuss it in your own working environment. What do we accept and what do we not accept from the point of view of integrity and prevention of corruption?

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## 12. SOME PROVOCATIVE PROPOSITIONS

- **The real problem lies in the attitudes of people.**
- **Privacy as a shelter for evil.**
- **Leadership sets the example.**
- **The Romanian way is the only way.**

In my experience the problem is not so much the legal framework as the willingness of people in charge to really participate in changing the way your country is run. This is a most difficult thing as we are all able to find a thousand excuses that improper practices are going on and we can do little or nothing to overcome this. Since 2001 I have seen the process in your country develop. It is slow and cumbersome, but many people show that they are determined to implement changes. It is not so much a question of what has to be done than showing you are doing it. This requires personal courage.

Please do not waste time and energy in explaining why corruption is there. You do not have to convince the world outside that Romania has problems and that corruption is really spoiling the positive capabilities of your country.

Alas the simple solution is a myth. It is not simple to show your fellow citizens that you are really working on it. Moreover: time is running short. The year 2007 is very near.

If the real problem lies in the attitudes of people, we have to show that we value integrity and that we are opposed to corrupt and fraudulent practices. If people in authority are questioned about their integrity, there is no room for indignant silence. Be prepared to answer critical questions about your behaviour. Do not report only when you are asked to do so. Let your activities be on record. Even secret activities have to show on some records. If you are on holiday you can step out of your official position, but then don't have your expenses paid by anybody you work with officially. People in leadership positions have to be transparent. This doesn't mean that everybody has to know everything. But you cannot disappear without anybody knowing your whereabouts or being able to reach you. If the leadership doesn't show its integrity quite clearly, you cannot expect the middle management and the workforce to behave correctly all the time.

The Romanian way is the only way for you. This means that you have to find your own approach to stimulate integrity and to counter corruption and fraud. It is necessary to have discussions on all levels about what is acceptable and what is not. If you want a code of ethics, write a code. European examples can be very useful, but a code is not even worth the paper it is written on if it is not implemented in practice.

To cut a long story short: you have to convince the Romanian citizens that you are seriously stimulating integrity in public figures, both in politics and business. They have to see and believe that measures are implemented to cut down corruption and fraud.

Of course you have to convince the EU Member States and the European Commission that you are making progress. This is not a paper exercise. Although accountability cannot do without a certain amount of bureaucracy, a legal framework or a flow of reports, they will not be sufficient to convince the outside world.

You have a lot to do in the next two years from today. I wish you a lot of success in your adamant and purposeful approach of a really difficult set of problems.

Rotterdam, March 11, 2005



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## Freedom of the press in Romania

**Conference organised by Club Romania – EU**  
**With the support of Heide Rühle MEP**  
Brussels, 14 March 2005

By Mihaela Gherghisan,

Radio France International, EUobserver, EUexpands

*Club RO-UE*

The freedom of the press in Romania has been the subject of a very animated debate in Romania and at EU level all last year.

Partly, the debate is continuing this year as well.

Several international organisations and NGOs have observed the situation of the press in Romania and their conclusions are not very optimistic.

Of course, after the general elections held last December and the change of political leadership in Romania, one can hope that the situation would improve and there are already signs of improvement.

**Otherwise, the Romanian EU entry could be endangered, as a non-free press cannot help eradicating the widespread corruption in a country like Romania**

Over the past two years, the freedom of the press in that country has been increasingly put into question and the report of the Freedom House ranked Romanian press as partially free for 2003.

The reasons for that were the political and economical pressures put on the media and especially on television broadcasters by different actors like the government and foreign ownership.

The report also acknowledged about the difficulty of situation of the local press where one journalist was murdered during the year of 2003. His name was Iosif Costinas and he was enquiring on corruption issues for the daily Timisoara.

Other journalists have been physically aggressed or beaten up; they were all local correspondents for different newspapers. Their cases are detailed in the 2004 report of the Media Monitoring Agency (MMA).

In October 2004 The Media Monitoring Agency issued a report on the freedom of expression that says:

“During the first 9 months of 2004, the Romanian media continued to confront the same problems as during the last 3 years. Attacks against journalists are still the most visible phenomenon. Despite warnings coming both from national and international institutions and organizations, the cases of aggression directed against journalists are at least as numerous as last year”.

I would say that a comprehensive look into the situation of the press freedom would find that the most censured media are or have been until very recently:

- **the local press** : the local press situation is reported to have been the most difficult as journalist working for small media in the territory were the most exposed to political ad economical pressures, mainly from the authorities
- **the numerous national television stations** : here a political control of the information was very visible; for the National Public Television TVR there was even a list of analysts critical to the Nastase government that were not to be invited for any

program; also, TV news bulletins show a marginal interest for the political life, focusing on topics like accidents, entertainment, star related scandals, while opinion poll indicates, 73% of the Romanians consider television as their main source of political information, MMA reports

- **the national radio:** journalists working at the Romanian public radio (SRR) complained publicly about the editorial pressure and the censorship coming from management of the institution. The journalists complained about the distorted way in which the EU Parliament report on Romania was presented.
- **some national newspapers :** here there is the problem of profitability as the media market in Romania is still not functional; newspapers can easily become tools of other purposes in the hands of their owners; this was apparently the case of two big national newspapers owned by foreign companies but their case is still under investigation.

The reasons of the censorship are various but we could list some of them as following

- **political pressure :** political control of the information; the centre-left authorities that were in power until December 2004 were very keen in keeping a “good image” of the country in Romania and abroad
- **economic pressure:** as the media are not profit generators, they could be easily controlled by offering them privileged advertising; being economically weak, the media could be very easily manipulated: MMA conducted a survey in 2004 that shows that 60 out of the 100 journalists questioned have been pressured by the authorities to stop investigating or publishing the results of investigations; another consequence of the economical problems of the media and the political pressure is that the investigative journalism in local media is disappearing
- **willingness to compromise :** media owner have shown a clear willingness to compromise when faced with political pressure and economical problems.

**The picture of the situation of Romanian press is far from being that simple,** it involves indeed several actors and reasons to the situation reported by the NGOs and the EU Commission and EU Parliament; the right picture is difficult to get as the truth lies always somewhere in between.

The warnings about censorship have however allowed the EU and Romania to create a great awareness of the censorship phenomenon and they have, to some extent, succeeded in improving the situation.

**The legislation is still a barrier against freedom of expression,** MMA says as the article regarding calumny has still been maintained is the new draft Criminal Law approved by the Parliament this year. The new elements are the elimination of imprisonment as punishment for calumny and the decriminalization of insult.

**But there are also positive developments.** In 2004, the first Collective Labour Contract in the history of Romanian media, which was signed in April by representatives of the unions and of the owners’ associations. Although it is still difficult to implement, the document represents a useful instrument for protecting the labour rights of the journalists. Moreover, the document establishes the conscience clause as one of the fundamental labour rights of the journalists.

Also, on July 11 in Sinaia, the Convention of Media Organizations, which gathers 36 media organizations, adopted its Code of Ethics, a necessary document for the professionalisation of the Romanian media.

Another factor, which can contribute to the consolidation of the journalist's status and role in the society, is the coagulation of the media Unions. On August 28 the biggest media union federation MEDIASIND was formed through the unification of several media unions, which comprise over 8000 journalists and printers.

**Today**, the political pressure on the media seems to have stopped although the situation of the local press has not improved yet.

The press is still very critical but this could be linked to the economical benefits that were lost for some of the media once the government changed.

The television shows are still very weak professionally speaking but the political pressure seems to be absent.

Romania is still worried about its "bad image" but the current authorities try to improve it thorough other means.

Credits:

*The Media Monitoring Agency : Press Freedom in Romania Report 2004*

*The Freedom House: The Press Freedom 2004*

*Reportères sans Frontières: Caught between Old Habits and Democratic Strides: Romanian Press at a Crossroads 2004*

*EU Commission Regular Report on Romania EU accession 2004*

*EU Parliament Report On Romania EU accession 2004*

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## The Organising Committee

The organising committee wishes to express its gratitude to all who made this seminar possible: our guest speakers, Miss Heide Rühle and her assistant, Miss Janna Schönfeld, who were instrumental in securing the high-profile venue of this conference, the sponsors, and last but not least, all participants who so enthusiastically responded to our invitation.

We remain confident in Romania's future of joining the EU in 2007. We are determined to do our utmost and bring our small contribution in order to achieve this final objective.

Ionela Mitsouko VLAD	Doctorand UCL, stagiaire DG Agriculture
Oana BOGDAN*	Architect – Van Broeck & Meuwissen
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## The Club „România – UE” Bruxelles

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The Club is financially independent, without any religious or political orientation, totally independent from any governmental structure or political party from Romania or the EU.

The Club's main objective is to contribute to the integration of Romania in the EU, having as a first aim Romania's accession in 2007.

The Club wishes to be a “think-tank” which would constitute an objective element of opinion and thus independent as regards the relations between Romania and the EU.

The Club does not engage in any commercial activities and does not seek any commercial profit.

For more details please visit [www.euro-club.org](http://www.euro-club.org) or send an email to [president@euro-club.org](mailto:president@euro-club.org)

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