

# STUDENTS AND TEACHERS FROM BACAU PARTICIPATED IN THE PROJECT CITIZEN COMPETITION

<http://www.inainte.eu/2011/06/elevi-si-profesori-bacauani-au-participat-la-competitia-project-citizen/#ixzz1o5biCNda>



Recently, at the „Al. I. Cuza” School auditorium it has been the judging contest of the student local projects, participants in the national programme „Participatory democracy. Project Citizen”. The event also marked the completion of the training programme for teachers Project Citizen organized for the time this year by the Teaching Body House "Grigore Tabacaru" Bacău and endorsed by the Ministry of Education. Project Citizen is an innovative method of teaching civic education, based on studying a local community issue that requires a public policy chosen by the students.

The method implementation in Romania is coordinated by Intercultural Institute Timisoara by CIVITAS programme – an international exchange programme in civic education, initiated and coordinated by Florida Law Related Education Center for Civic Education from U.S. CIVITAS is an international exchange programme in civic education, initiated and coordinated by the Center for Civic Education Calabasas, California, USA , funded and implemented with the support of the U.S. Department of Education. CIVITAS network involves many partnerships between federal states from U.S. and countries in different parts of the world, especially countries with "emerging democracies".

Romania representative for the network is the Intercultural Institute Civitas Timisoara. Therefore, Romania is integrated into a partnership that includes Florida, Texas, Mississippi and Hungary. Partnership coordination is provided by Florida Law Related Education Association, the other partners are Texas State Bar Law Related Education Program, Mississippi State University, Civitas Hungary.

Applying Project Citizen was starting in Romania in 2002 in schools in Timis, Bucharest and Iasi, but the interest of students and teachers led to expansion of the project in more counties in order to have a national implementation what has happened in the meantime. The project is carried out under a cooperation protocol between the Ministry and the Intercultural Institute Timisoara. Its purpose is to make students aware that citizens must be actively involved in the construction of public policies, that the democratic decisions are meaning the consensus between citizens and public authorities.

By teaching approach, Project Citizen is completed by making a portfolio by students led by a teacher, students willing to find a resolution for a reality issue of their community.

In the contest were presented the following projects:

"Romania supports Moldova's EU integration" Project by "Henri Coanda" students led by teacher Iuliana Caraghin.

# INTERVIEWING THE EU-MOLDOVA FORUM COORDINATOR



- What is your opinion on Moldova's application for EU membership ?
- What could make the Moldovan authorities and citizens to achieve this aim?
- What could do the Romanians authorities and citizens in order to achieve this?

The dialogue of the Republic of Moldova with the European Union has registered an unprecedented advance in the last year and a half, a fact that was reflected in concrete negotiations on the association agreement EU-Moldova or negotiations on the liberalization of the visa regime. The statements by the European officials have been extremely encouraging the Moldovan authorities and there are more and more voices that considers Moldova to be the success story of the Eastern partnership (PaE), a Community initiative which aims to intensify relations with six countries in the proximity of the EU (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine).

The stated aim of PaE is the political and economic integration of the six countries in question, a vague expression that avoids the term intentionally, to spare some States Members for which EU enlargement has become a highly sensitive topic. Therefore, at the moment, the Republic of Moldova is not recognized in any official text of the European right to become EU candidate country. But the population and politicians are strongly supporting the idea of membership, identifying Moldova as part of Europe. Paradoxically, the Lisbon Treaty entered into force in late 2010, does just mention the possibility of an EU candidate country to become a member if it has adopted the community values and comply with it. It seems to be a contradiction that the Brussels officials are aware and they will have to clarify as soon as possible so that the Eastern partnership should not become an initiative without purpose and content. This does not mean however that Moldova must feel discouraged, on the contrary, it should take advantage of the support enjoyed by far in the European media and to prove that, indeed, his place is in the European Union.

Since the political change following the events of 7<sup>th</sup> of April 2009, Moldovan authorities have agreed on the aim of the European integration, this fact was actually the foundation of the coalition called the Alliance for European Integration. And, indeed, the political commitment to promote closer relations between Moldova and EU was reflected in the negotiation of the Association Agreement and on the liberalisation of the visa regime. However, the final Negotiations depends on the Ability of Authorities to reform the states that is a hard process, meaning the time and the money. But it is important the real intention of Moldavia to have concrete actions, to produce changes in the Moldovan society.

Both the European Union, but, more importantly, the Moldovan citizens expect now tangible results through the implementation of reforms announced by the Government, because, as the head of the delegation of the European Union announcing in Chisinau: “The honeymoon Republic of Moldova - European Union ended. You have made substantial progress in specific policy commitments, but the political and domestic reforms are two different boots. Therefore we continue to measure the success in these internal reforms, you must implement those policy statements that your authorities have made and we will measure this success. As for the Moldovan citizens, they have made a giant step that Moldova be closer to EU in April 2009, a step in the spirit of democracy, when the people come in the street and questioned the Communist victory in legislative elections, sending a clear message to the political entity that the people has the right to decide the destiny of the country.

The special relationship between Romania and Moldova is a fact, and transcends political positions more or less favorable to its promotion that occurred the last the 20 years for the country from the left side of Prut river. However, the development of the bilateral relations is part of a positive trend, the Bucharest authorities openly supporting European integration efforts of their neighboring country.

At the Romania initiative, on 25th of January 2010 the informal Group of friends of the Republic of Moldova was open in the European area, open to all the EU Member States concerned to support the democratic and European development of this country. So far the group met four times, and now there are initiatives to organize a new

meeting by the end of 2011. Also in April 2010 it has been signed a Declaration for the strategic partnership between Romania and Republic of Moldova for the European integration in order to develop a framework of Moldovan-Romanian cooperation and the intergovernmental negotiations for the establishment of a concrete action Plan was in progress. Romania gave Moldova a financial support grant of 100 million euros for a period of four years and was always willing to transfer newly acquired expertise in European integration. Obviously, the action wants to provide consistency and to support the bilateral cooperation for the European integration.

Student **Andrei Andriescu** asking **MARIA CHICAN**,  
the EU-Moldova Forum coordinator,  
the vice-president of Paneuropa Foundation Romania

## **INTERVIEWING THE EX-STATE ADVISER OF THE PRIME MINISTER**



- Politics interested me rather late. But I do know now that a politician, in true sense of the word, can be only somebody with a strong identity. As for me, my identity has grow in my family. As proof, even now I have on my blog a public motto that comes from my grandmother. My grandparents were lived in the same village as Coposu, a icon of morality of the political arena, but I would never picture myself as being involved in a political career. To be working with the politics-makers it was a natural growing of my professional integrity in the academic society. That does not mean, of course, that I trust in chance or talent as for substitutes of work. A hardworking man trusts himself and a lazy one is often a pessimist. It takes hard work to become a good politician. It requires also a lot of ambition. Since I was a little girl I was very ambitious. In sports, at school and later on in my profession, I have tried to be better, more prepared and more successful. I think I will also perform in politics, but it takes time to prouve it.

- I was fortunate, I had my academic training in a era of political effervescence, when you could not hide from politics. The fight against the things not well done, against political differences drove me into this battle. Even then, I was a published author, a Ph. D. in Economics, I already had worked in various research teams. I have a lot of respect for young entrepreneurs, they are the future, but I do confess I don't understand teenagers who choose to involve themselves in politics. I trully believe they are not yet ready for politics.
- Any politician directly exercise his power, even when he delegate responsibilities to his partners. I understand the political power in the liberal sense of the word. I'm talking about

people choosing to exercise political power on their behalf. To exercise the power is a public service. Otherwise, it is illegal to have power.

- Citizens are not depoliticized, not at all. Not acting is to blame because otherwise you'll never exercise your rights, you'll never feel the need to get involved. That's why I resonated with the liberal politics, with a philosophy that appreciates concepts like "individual", "performance", "competition" and a philosophy that thinks a man should always fight to keep alive the "freedom tree".
- Regarding politics, my expectations are the same as usual: politics become more efficient by staff selection, by performance criteria, more transparent regarding the financial donations for the parties and the candidates. We all should be able to speak loud and clear about the political issues. The Romanian politics it's too politicized. I must confess that for the moment I am quite skeptical about politics and I prefer to expect more from me.
- An open and efficient dialogue between the citizens and those who are appointed to represent them is the bottom of democracy. It's elementary. No comments.
- Unfortunately, the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers and the recent global crisis has hit the people believing in the minimal involvement of the state and in all the others "idealists". The concept of the state finds now important the control-assistance axis. Personally, I believe that it's still the time of liberal democracy. As a *caveat* should not be ignored - it is pretty much what it's happening now - an humanistic dimension of the state is really necessary (in the Renaissance sense of the word).

Student **Mihaela Duman** asking **ANDREEA VASS PAUL**,  
the ex-State Adviser of the Prime Minister