



UNIVERSITATEA BABEȘ-BOLYAI
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TRADITIO ET EXCELLENTIA



Facultatea de Studii Europene
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Workshop on political communication – 7 May 2026, h. 8:45-13:45

Moderator: Laura Iannelli (Università di Cagliari)

8:45-10:15 Dr. Adrian Corpădean (Erasmus teaching) - The instrumentalization of the EU's enlargement policy through political communication in East-Central Europe

East-Central European countries have been prominent beneficiaries of the EU's enlargement policy and of the subsequent instruments that complement the single market and are tailored to the specific needs of the rather young post-communist democracies – chiefly cohesion and agricultural funds. However, the enlargement dossiers of 2004-2007-2013 also brought unprecedented complications to the Union, ranging from socio-economic setbacks to peculiar expressions of illiberalism, failed justice reform and misuse of EU resources. That said, the interest in the long-neglected enlargement policy has been rekindled under the direst of auspices, most notably marked by the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, which appears to be a chance for member states like Romania to portray themselves as supporters of the Moldovan and Ukrainian accession bids, and, by extension, of those germane to the Western Balkans. Whilst for Romania, leaving aside historical controversies with its neighbours in the interest of playing a constructive role in an embattled region may be regarded as an act of political maturity, other East-Central EU members, such as Hungary and Slovakia, have opted for a vocal nationalist stance, and position such hurdles at the core of their attitudes, thus finding themselves at odds with the long-term geostrategic interest of the Union. This research methodologically focuses on the discourses and other communication outputs that stem from the triangle East-Central EU members – EU Commission – candidate states, in order to examine the instrumentalization of the enlargement endeavour for more or less puny political goals, as well as for alleged national interest, set against the background of the thorny regional context.



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Bio note

Adrian-Gabriel Corpădean is a Habilitated Associate Professor and Dean of the Faculty of European Studies at Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. He holds a doctorate in modern European history from the University of Paris-Cergy and Babeş-Bolyai University, and completed his postdoctoral studies at the Romanian Academy. His research focuses on the EU's enlargement policy and on institutional communication within the EU, with particular emphasis on the relations between the EU the Western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine. He is the author of over 90 publications, has lectured at 45 conferences, has contributed to the implementation of 27 academic projects, and has conducted 36 Erasmus mobilities. He is the editor-in-chief of the international academic journals Synergies Roumanie and Studia Europaea (both Erih Plus), and editor of the international journal Modelling the New Europe (Scopus). E-mail: adrian.corpadean@ubbcluj.ro

10:30-12:00 Dr. Laura Herța (Erasmus teaching) - Communication in discursive representations

In this presentation, the main focus is placed on the analytic and theoretic framework of the Copenhagen School of Security Studies while the case study is centred on the Syrian refugees. The presentation will firstly present the traditional, Cold-War period approaches on security (with its focus on state security and military threats) and then briefly tackle the attempts to respond to post-Cold War realities and revisit the concept of security. The second part will present the core elements of non-traditional conceptions of security, focusing on the writings of scholars associated with the Copenhagen School of thought. At this point, the concept of securitization will be presented and the way in which speech acts pinpoint to perceived security issues will be described. Finally, the last part will concentrate on the Syrian refugee crisis and will try to demonstrate that recent American and European discursive constructions shift the issue of refugees from democratic politics to “emergency politics”, hence turning the crisis into a European one, rather than a Syrian one.

Bio note

Laura Maria Herța – PhD in History, habilitated in International Relations and European Studies, Associate Professor of International Relations and Vice-dean at the Faculty of European Studies in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. She is also senior Research Associate at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. Author of



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several books and articles on the history of Yugoslavia and the wars in Former Yugoslavia, as well as author of chapters and articles tackling EU as normative power, humanitarian intervention in Sub-Saharan Africa, transformation of war, the role of ethnicity in South Caucasus. Interested in: war studies and security studies, humanitarian intervention, the Balkan region and Eastern Europe, social-constructivist theorizing, conflict transformation and conflict resolution.

She is adjunct editor-in-chief of the international academic journals *Studia Europaea* (Erih Plus), and Online Journal *Modelling the New Europe* (Scopus). E-mail: laura.herta@ubbcluj.ro

12:15-13:45 Presentation of the Faculty of European Studies (Dr. Adrian Corpădean and Dr. Laura Herța)

History

As the only faculty in the field of European Studies in Central and Eastern Europe, FES was founded in the early-1990s within a Tempus programme, sponsored by the European Commission, within a European academic consortium composed of Université Libre de Bruxelles, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano, Università degli Studi di Milano, Universiteit Utrecht, University of Bradford, University of Athens, Università degli Studi di Pisa and Sussex European Institute.

In its 32 years of existence, the Faculty has gained international prestige in the consortiums it belongs to, through its academic activities (e.g. the double degree programmes with the Universities of Nottingham Trent, Padua, Münster, Magdeburg, Paris Marne-la-Vallée, Paris Est-Créteil, Essex, Saint-Étienne, Tomar and Naples), as well as through advanced research in the fields of International Relations and Area Studies / European Studies.

Mission

The mission of our Faculty is to foster excellence both in research and in teaching European Studies, with a focus on generating expertise in the European integration process. Our academic staff aim to strengthen the European project and implement European resources in Romania and its neighbouring areas, through their involvement in community life, projects and networks designed to improve EU decision-making mechanisms, manage EU policies and resources and internalize values that stand at the core of the



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integration process. The Faculty frequently hosts events related to the European agenda with decision-makers and the civil society, due to its reputation and expertise proven during its permanent collaborations with EU institutions, diplomatic representatives and public administration bodies.

Statistics

It is a community of 1400 students, 15-20% of whom are international, and 47 academic staff (divided into two departments: European Studies and Governance, and International Relations and German Studies). It implements Erasmus agreements with 130 universities and has been involved in over 30 EU-sponsored projects.

Teaching

The FES provides a complete academic experience in the areas of International Relations and European Studies (in English, German and Romanian - distance learning too), with the additional possibility to opt for Management, European Administration and Business Diplomacy at the BA level. Multilingualism is key in our BA, MA & PhD courses, with English, French and German in the limelight. Their curriculum is constantly being adapted to the requirements of our institutional partners and embraces a multidisciplinary core of subjects, with international relations, EU integration, political science, communication, economics, project management, law, history, digital skills and anthropology at the forefront.

Our MA programmes include Cultural Diplomacy and International Relations (in English), International Relations, Foreign Policy and Crisis Management (in English), Comparative Political European Studies (in French), Political Culture and Global Studies (in German and English), International Communication (in English and Romanian), European Affairs and Programme Management (in Romanian) and Advanced Management (in Romanian).

The PhD School of the Faculty of European Studies, "International Relations and European Studies", with seven coordinators, boasts a framework for the multi- and inter-disciplinary research on current European social, economic and political issues, placed at the crossroads of history, political science, economics and international relations. Besides supervising PhD theses and offering training on specific subjects, our School organizes events open to a broader audience and, thus, it participates in the public life of the city. PhD programmes and cotutelles are also available in foreign languages, chiefly English and French.



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Research

The scientific activity of our Institute of International Relations and Area Studies has been carried out through numerous national and international scientific grants, publications and conferences, such as the annual “Crisis Communication and Conflict Resolution” event. The Institute publishes together with the Faculty the following journals: On-line Journal Modeling the New Europe (Scopus-indexed), Synergies Roumanie (published in Paris, Erih Plus-indexed), and Studia Europaea (Erih Plus-indexed). Among the research projects we have been part of or are currently implementing, there have been Marie Curie doctoral networks, Jean Monnet Projects, Chairs and Centres of Excellence, Horizon research projects, as well as nationally-sponsored initiatives (exploratory research projects, Romanian-French joint projects, a major centre of excellence on resilience and others). Students are part of our international conferences and hold their own scientific and community events, under the auspices of the European Students’ Society.

Development projects

The Faculty of European Studies has been conducting projects funded by the European Union since its establishment and has a dedicated office for this priority. Among the most recent endeavours that our students have benefitted from, in areas germane to the convergence between education and active life, cooperation with the business and public environment, inclusiveness, PhD grants, academic networking and curriculum development, one should note sources of funding such as: Erasmus Mundus for multiple-degree MA projects, the European Social Fund, CEEPUS, European Parliament grants, Erasmus KA2 for capacity-building, Romanian government and World Bank grants etc.

Internationalisation

Apart from our 130-strong Erasmus Plus network, we collaborate with the European Security and Defence College in Brussels to extend the research conducted under the auspices of the Faculty's Doctoral School, and are in the process of negotiating various dual degree BA and MA agreements. FES represents BBU in The Guild SSAH of research-intensive universities and participates in the regular meetings of the association, as well as in the drafting of position papers aimed at strengthening the role of social sciences and humanities in the implementation of the Horizon programme. As part of the EUTOPIA university alliance, FES is piloting a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) titled "Collective Intelligence" under the coordination of the University of Paris-Cergy. The FES also runs an international guest professorship programme, which has recently included colleagues from Ukraine.



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Assets

The activities of the FES are conducted in three locations, all within the boundaries of Cluj city centre. Our course and seminar rooms are fully equipped with hardware and software that enable hybrid teaching, while the computer labs have advanced VR capabilities. Apart from its dedicated library, the Faculty has access to the Central University Library in Cluj, one of the most prominent institutions of its kind in East-Central Europe, to the ample sporting facilities of BBU, to the University's spectacular Botanical Garden and to its conference and training locations situated across the country (including in the Carpathian Mountains, next to the Danube and the Black Sea). The administration is digitized and utilizes various e-platforms for financial processes, general management and communication.