

**"REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION"
RESEARCH CENTER,
UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST**

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The University of Bucharest represents the first institution of upper education in Romania, having a tradition of over 140 years in the didactic field and, in the same time, of theoretical and applicative research in our country. It is not surprising that the most distinguished scientists of the modern and contemporary society came up from the 21 faculties that now make up this academic institution. Within the University of Bucharest, together with the permanent evolution of the didactic aspect, a powerful theoretical and practical scientific research emphasized both before 1989, but moreover after this moment, with great results at the national level and a well-deserved recognition at an international level.

The event which took place at the end of the year is included within this approach, namely the set up of the "*Regional Development and European Integration*" Research Centre. Using an older idea, the deputy dean of the Faculty of Geography, reader Silviu COSTACHIE, the initiator and the leader of this new research center, succeeded to bring together 19 teachers, scientific researchers, science PhDs and trainers for a doctor's degree, a Master's degree, but also young students, attracted by the perspective of working in such center. The set up of the center was based on the necessity to apply politics in the research field, developed by the University of Bucharest that focuses on quality education and the joining of didactic activities with theoretical and applicative scientific research, according to the Bologna Plan requirements.

"Regional Development and European Integration" Research Centre, affiliated to the University of Bucharest, as it can be seen in the name it possesses, is intended to be a multidisciplinary research structure, meant to approach issues connected to Romania's development and the alignment to the European requirements in various domains of economy, social, cultural life etc. the center possesses a powerful lucrative character, grouping 11 researchers (from the 20 founding members) that already have a rich experience in the research field, as directors of national and even international projects. Also, the domains the center will try to tackle are extremely various, although half the members of the center are human geography researchers. We may add here as research domains, both theoretical and applicative: Territorial Planning, Urban and Rural Space Organization, Territorial Infrastructure Analysis, but also domains specific to academic research: Human Geography, Administrative Geography, Urban and Rural Geography, Political Geography, Geopolitics or Cultural Tourism and

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Cultural Geography. This exquisite openness is based on the complex professional structure of the 20 founding members of the center. Accompanying the 10 geographers (from which 7 are university didactic staff) there are 7 historians, 1 architect, 1 philologist, (Mr. Adrian ALUIGHEORGHE, member of The Writers' Union in Romania), but also a NDM (National Defense Ministry) senior officer, brigade general, science PhD (Mr. General Ion PĂLȘOIU), that works as associate teacher at the University of Craiova. We have to also add that the center benefits from the participation, as founding member, of Professor Dinu GIURESCU, Member of the Romanian Academy, noteworthy historian and remarkable personality of Romanian culture and science. Taking into consideration the age structure, the center is considered to be well-balanced as the 20-35 years group of youngsters, representing half of all the members is a fact that outlines the dynamism and the desire of involvement of the youngsters in this project. 4 founding members are added, with ages comprised over 55 years, persons with a vast didactic and scientific research experience reflecting both a special scientific guidance and an experienced approach in the projects that are going to be developed in the centre.

Regarding the upper education research structure, the center aims at an extended series of activities in the domains specific to the academic world. We wish to develop, first of all, a sustained theoretical and applicative research activity, which should be a gain for the academic world and not only, but also the persons that are directly interested in the issues tackled by the center. Together with the research proper, the center aims at organizing scientific meetings, conferences, symposiums, debates, seminaries, workshops and other activities that should favour the results to be spread, discussed, analysed and valorified by the participants. In this latter direction, that of valorification, the center aimed, until the end of 2009, to edit and print a scientific review, comprising the most important research results of the year. We wish our results and other information connected to the center to be found on a web site that is being realized at the moment, adding other means through which the members of the center can be easier known. Concerning the internal structure of the center, we have to mention that there are two working groups within, the group "Regional Development", whose leader is reader Camelia TEODORESCU, and the group "European Integration", whose leader is science PhD Daniel DIEACONU. Although it has been functioning for a very short period of time, the results obtained in the center have rapidly showed up. Within the "Regional Development" group, an initial project of territorial planning has already been finished concerning a territory which is adjacent to the mayoralty of Ciorani commune, Prahova county. Also, in the domain of areas controlled by the administrative-territorial structures of different settlements in the country, there are included 7 requests the center received from Samarinești, Dănciulești and Baia de Fier settlements in Gorj county and Fărcașele, Găvănești, Icoana and Radomirești settlements in Olt county. These projects are doubled by the ones the members of the center won in a national contest, projects developed through the National Council of Upper Education Scientific Research (NCUESR), as for

instance Mrs. Daniela DUMITRESCU's project, a founding member of the center from "Valahia" University in Târgoviște.

The research center "Regional Development and European Integration" aims to actively participate in the future in the theoretical and applicative research academic activity developed in the country and, if possible, abroad. The center aims to be involved in the national and international competitions for NCUESR (National Council of Upper Education Scientific Research) projects, for European projects, for partnership projects with other research structures, but also with other institutions and units, which, in their activity, participate, co work, administer and finance national and international projects. In this respect, we have to outline the openness and the promptness concerning the opportunities offered by the Development, Public Workings and Dwellings Ministry, through the General Direction of Communication. In the future, we would like the activity of the center to confirm the founding members' and the specialized forums' trust in this academic construction. This way, the research activity, but also the upper education didactic activity will only be profited, the set up of the center being a step forward towards the alignment of the Romanian education system and the national research at the European and international standards.

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