Romanian Development Camp
13th Edition | July 2021 | Sinaia

Proiect derulat de:
THE ROMANIAN DEVELOPMENT CAMP
The 13th edition

Europe after COVID 19,
from recovery to development, priorities and resources

July 22, 2021
Sinaia, Hotel Palace

-FINAL REPORT-
The 13\textsuperscript{th} edition of the Romanian Development Camp was organized within the project \textbf{Strengthening the Capacity and Sustainability of the Romanian NGDO Platform and the Organizations Active in the Field of Cooperation for International Development in Romania.}

The project is carried out by \textbf{FOND} with the financial support of \textbf{Active Citizens Fund Romania}, a program financed by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the \textbf{EEA Grants 2014-2021}.

The aim of the project is to \textbf{strengthen the capacity of FOND and its members} and to contribute to the proper \textbf{implementation of the national development cooperation policy} and the involvement of non-governmental organizations in this endeavor.

\textbf{The Romanian Development Camp} is a traditional event in development cooperation field, initiated by the \textbf{Ministry of Foreign Affairs} in 2008 and organized by FOND Romania \textbf{since 2010}. Throughout the years, the event provided an open space for dialogue and consultation, strengthening collaboration, building trust and fostering valuable input from national and international stakeholders. Since 2008, the \textbf{Romanian Development Camp} is the first and only event in Romania in the field of international development cooperation and humanitarian aid, which gathers every year more than 100 national and international stakeholders, experts from Romania, the EU and from all over the world.
The concept behind the 2021 edition of the **Romanian Development Camp** was conceived in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, from crisis recovery to development, priorities and resources. Currently, European Union support offered to member states to meet the challenges posed by the **COVID-19 crisis** and its economic consequences are paramount. The recovery and resilience mechanism is the mainstay of **#NextGenerationEU** and is a unique opportunity to emerge from a stronger pandemic, transform our economies and create new opportunities. In this context, the 13th Edition of the Romanian Development Camp aimed to address **current trends and new post-COVID-19 priorities**.

**NextGenerationEU** will support Europe's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and help to build a greener, more digital and more resilient Europe. Key goals of NextGenerationEU include financing measures for the green and digital transitions, as well as swiftly addressing the consequences of the pandemic. The support provided will help EU Member States to invest in energy efficiency, greening and digitalization. The new long-term budget will increase flexibility to guarantee it has the capacity to address future challenges.

The EU Next Generation agreement consist of the following objectives:

- **To support the Member States through investments**
- **To stimulate the EU economy by encouraging private investment**
- **Measures taken to prevent the lessons learned from the crisis from happening again**
Plenary Session I: National Recovery versus European recovery mechanisms post-COVID-19/ Relaunching & Resilience

Facilitator: Ștefan Cibian, Chairman FOND
Speakers:
Mr. László Borbély, State Counsellor, National SDG Coordinator, Government of Romania
Mr. Victor Negrescu, Romanian Member of the European Parliament

The 13th edition of The Romanian Development Camp, “Europe after COVID 19, from recovery to development, priorities and resources” started with the first Plenary Session, which was opened by Mr. Stefan Cibian, Chairman FOND, who outlined the major effects generated by the COVID-19 pandemic: “In this particular context, we have faced some kind of pressure on resources; also, the impact on civil society and the importance of the civil sector were highlighted during this period.”

Mr. László Borbély emphasized that “the pandemic has shown us that we need to change, humanity must change in terms of mentality”. The Department for Sustainable Development was established in 2016 and obtained its strategy in 2018, as Mr. Borbély mentioned. Regarding the achievements of the Department for Sustainable Development so far, among these we mention: first draft of the Action Plan by 2030 or the first report on sustainable development which is to be presented in the autumn. Also, there are discussions regarding the creation of a sustainability code, which should be primarily transparent and accessible to all citizens. Another important project provides the establishment of an excellence center for sustainable development, which will ensure the training of future experts in the sustainable development area.
Mr. Victor Negrescu made a brief introduction regarding NextGeneration EU and The National Recovery and Resilience Plan:

“NextGeneration EU was launched at European level, in order to help Europe to recover, to prepare it for future challenges (such as digitalization or climate change) and includes several tools. The first person who came up with the NextGeneration idea was the Prime Minister of Spain, who interpreted it as a new Marshall Plan.”

“We cannot live isolated” said Mr. Victor Negrescu

Mr. Negrescu emphasized that our society should focus on ways to integrate European funds. The National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) corresponds to the European regulation. Thus, the European regulation supports the need for this funding mechanism to be related to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development (for example, 20% allocated for digital transformation, 2% for the cultural sector, 5% for education).

Mr. Negrescu also mentioned that in the National Plan for Recovery and Resilience there are few references to the 2030 Agenda; therefore, a tool is needed to monitor the involvement of PNRR in relation to the implementation of sustainable development objectives. From the evaluation of several plans it was found that 25% is allocated to projects related to health, 3% to education (in Romania increased to 10%), 32% to environment, 26% to digital component.

He concluded that “We have an unsustainable civil society”.

Plenary Session II: Financing for Development – tendencies in post-COVID-19 era and new priorities

Facilitator: PhD. Luciana Ghica, Associate Professor, Faculty of Political Science, Bucharest University/ Director, International Cooperation and Development Studies Centre

Speakers:
Mr. Gabriel Mareș, Director of Development and Humanitarian Policies Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania
Mr. Cătălin Harnagea, General Director, The Romanian Agency for International Development Cooperation (RoAid)
Ms. Sarah Strack, Director, FORUS
Ms. Celia Cranfield, Senior Policy and Advocacy Adviser, CONCORD Europe

The second Plenary Session was moderated by Ms. Luciana Ghica, who made a brief introduction regarding to the Neighborhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe (NDICI- Globale Europe) which is based on the following key pillars: geographical, thematic and rapid response. It is also an important instrument for the next financial pillar 2021-2027, given that the amount of money is almost 80 billion euros.

Society is facing three challenges:
• Quantity vs Quality: focus on achieving targets and volumes of funds vs content;
• Predictability: annual vs multiannual;
• Accountability & Transparency: European Commission/European Parliament.
Mr. Gabriel Mareș, Director of Development and Humanitarian Policies Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, started his speech by mentioning that COVID-19 has claimed lots of lives. Given that, the neighborhood gained more visibility and importance. Even if the Sub-Saharan Africa is the top priority, the neighborhood is on the second place.

Mr. Mareș said:

“We have to pay attention more to the Eastern Neighborhood and to make it a top priority. Each member state has a voice in prioritizing the resources for the next years”.

Therefore multilateralism is important for Romanian policy: for example, last year in Romania, 206 million euros were allocated to the multilateral system; the rest of 61 million euros have been used for bilateral assistance. We, as a society, need to overcome the consequences of the pandemic; one useful solution would be the vaccine. Regarding the relationship between Romania and other eastern countries, Mr. Mareș emphasized that Romania donated dozes of covid vaccine to Republic of Moldova, but also to Ukraine and Georgia. Romania supported Republic of Moldova with approximative 6 million euros since the pandemic started (medicines and protective equipment).

Mr. Cătălin Harnagea, General Director, The Romanian Agency for International Development Cooperation, spoke briefly about RoAid history and also about their actual and future plans. In 2018 was implemented the first annual plan and now they are at fourth annual plan. At the moment, RoAid is under a period of final evaluation for the final report which will be evaluate by the European Commission.

In 2020 RoAid implemented projects mainly in Africa and Black Sea Region. This year, they are willing to include Sub-Saharan Africa. Also in 2020, the NGO sector implemented projects in Kenya, Myanmar, financed by RoAid, with the support of government.

Mr. Cătălin Harnagea said that:

“RoAid is looking forward to increase the part that agencies support NGOs. When we write the regulations, we think about that NGOs have a very important role to educate people.”
Ms. Sarah Strack, Director, FORUS was the next speaker. She made a short presentation of FORUS, reminding us that FORUS is an innovative global network for civil society and is looking for financing sustainable development.

Ms. Sarah Strack said that:

**FORUS is an innovative global network for civil society, which connects NGO platforms and Regional Coalitions with each other to build collaborative actions, learn from each other and strive for an enabling environment for Civil Society Organizations.**

From her perspective, financing sustainable development can be characterized as having multiple actors and spaces, but insufficient actions. During her speech it was mentioned that the total combined ODA is far from the long-standing 0.7 target (only 0.32 percent of the combined gross national income). Some of the challenges which they are facing are the amount of resources or multiple actors and spaces, but insufficient action. Therefore, **FORUS is concentrating** on ensuring meaningful participation of civil society and also working with a diverse, cross-constituency groups of CSO’s.

Ms. Celia Cranfield, Senior Policy and Advocacy Adviser, CONCORD Europe, emphasized, first of all, the fact that the impact of the pandemic was harmful for CSO’s. During her speech she mentioned that the European Union global response was important and CONCORD is encouraging multilateral response.

They also think that the central approach to the 2030 Agenda should be focused more on topics such as gender equality, Green Deal and also digitization. If we are looking from a CSO’s perspective, we will find out that covering the support of CSO’s, global cooperation are important and necessary factors. Also, big European countries (such as Germany) are making significant commitments which is a big step. Ms. Cranfield concluded that CSO’s should be more involved in the programmes.
Informative Workshop – Civil society resilience during COVID-19 pandemic networks

**Facilitators:** Ms. Anca Ciucă, Vice-Chairwoman, FOND

**Speakers:**
- Mr. Ionuț Jugureanu, Vice-Chairman FONPC
- Ms. Mihaela Munteanu, Communications & Advocacy Director, FONSS
- Mr. Ciprian Păiuș, Chairman, Federation of Romanian Community Foundations
- Ms. Stefana Miret, Board Member VOLUM Federation
- Ms. Simona David Crisbășanu, Vice-Chairwoman, Education Coalition
- Mr. Tomina Vodarici, ASHOKA România

The workshop was opened by **Ms. Anca Ciucă**, who made an introduction, her main objective being to find out how the NGO-s managed to adapt in the context of the Coronavirus pandemic: both good practices and things that could be improved.
Mr. Ionuț Jugureanu, representative of the Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations for the Child, took the floor and highlighted, at the beginning of his speech, the problems that the institution he represents has faced:

- ensuring the health of team members (both executive and field);
- sustainability of activities;
- pressure on policy makers to pay attention to children's rights;
- pressure from beneficiaries in the context of resource limitation.

He continued, presenting the federation's achievements during the pandemic, but began by capitalizing that the first thing he managed to do was to survive and maintain the relationship with the members.

- The campaign "Let's believe in more" was launched, reaching more than 60,000 people as a result of the increase in domestic violence cases in deprived areas, with mothers and children most exposed.

- A parental education programme was also launched to help parents from disadvantaged areas, who called for traditional education, and participated in courses and workshops.

- The project "Let's raise our children at home", in Gorj Country, aimed for children from disadvantaged areas, such as Roma.

Ms. Mihaela Munteanu, Communications & Advocacy Director, FONSS, considered the pandemic a real shock because the needs began to change overnight. Thus, as of 10 March 2020, FONSS answered the question:

“What do we do for society?”

In this way The Social Emergency Center was launched.
- The Federation has pooled human resources, knowing that it is psychologists and social workers who could help people the most. A partnership was made with the prefecture to have easier access to information and other state institutions, but at the same time partnerships with several organizations were also concluded.
- During the emergency, the large number of requests were met with the help of volunteers, spiritual counseling was offered and they tried to stay as close as possible to people.
- Another thing the federation tried to do was to obtain protective materials, but this revealed another conclusion, namely, that the price of social services increased by about 40% because it was necessary to purchase sanitary protection materials.

Last but not least, FONSS took part in the rewriting of **LAW No. 292/2011 of Social assistance**, but it also helped to create a social platform, which became the expression of the social domain that needs to join and work together.

**Mr. Ştefana Mireţ**, board member of **VOLUM Federation**, which predicted that the voice of the NGO-s is vital. He noted the flexibility they showed and the increase in capacity through the beneficiaries.

➢ It also raised the idea of creating a wellbeing program for social workers, marking that it is important to have the resources to be able to move forward.

➢ When it comes to volunteers, she made it clear that the federation has lost many of the adolescents, and given their essential role in the functioning of the federation, the importance of resources and mentors has been speculated.

➢ Also, taking into account cooperation in the social field, Ms. Mireţ insisted on the idea of sharing best practices, as well as developing a platform for wellbeing and volunteering.
Ms. Simona Crisbășanu, Vice-Chairwoman, Education Coalition, said that the needs overlap because each of us went through a period of change during this time, a period when the main theme was survival, and the second reinvention, defending the need for expertise to experts.

A research was carried out on 64 NGOs, which assisted a total of 4000 educational establishments, in a mixed way: donations of EUR 814,954 were made, and the total amount of funds attracted amounted to EUR 1,460,370.

Mr. Ciprian Păuș, Chairman, Federation of Romanian Community Foundations, continued by presenting the organization in which he works. It consists of 19 community foundations, the first two established since 2008, and currently covers more than half of Romania's territory, representing a link between funding and projects.

“We see needs and initiatives and look for the right resources.”

The main project carried out last year was a national campaign with local involvement, which raised more than 2.5 million euros, which were sent further to the health, social and educational field.

Among the opportunities that arose for the federation last year are:

- the fight with the pandemic seen as a joint project;
- communication with new donors (entrepreneurs);
- the fact that more work has been done with the member foundations, resulting in a greater impact at a lower cost;
- the capitalization of new relationships in the community;
- the strengthening of the role of social binder.
Ms. Toma Vodarici, from Ashoka Romania. For 3 years Ashoka Romania has been building a network of top social innovators in Romania.

Their objective during the past year was to be close to organizations, creating a roll-up program with 30 organizations from Romania and the Republic of Moldova.

This raised the idea of funding in Romania, where the classic form of projects of 6 months or one year to which many organizations apply together should be abandoned and a new one should be requested.

According to Ms. Toma, the relationship with the financier should be changed bilaterally. We should get in touch with the 2022 financier, assume at team level that processes are needed to be good, and continue these collaborative relationships that are continuous and in which there are common objectives.

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Experience sharing (FOND Members)

Facilitator: Ms. Ingrid Marinescu, Executive Director, FOND

Speakers:

Mr. Ovidiu Ana, Progress Foundation
Ms. Iris Alexe, Novapolis Association
Ms. Natalia Budescu, Association for Cross border Cooperation “Euroregion Dunărea de Jos”
Ms. Manuela Iftimoaei, “Alături de Voi” Foundation
The discussion was opened by Mr. Ovidiu Ana, Program Director at Progress Foundation. Progress Foundation is an experienced Romanian NGO that pilots local initiatives in the field of education, inclusion and community development and then scales them up, at national level, as innovative and impactful best practices, using county and local libraries to reach out to virtually any social group and citizen, especially to the most marginalized ones.

A very good example of this is the Occupy Libraries project, which took place in about 25 countries, with over 100 speakers and over 800 international participants. Mr. Ana has capitalized on the idea that the most innovative libraries have services for the community. Another achievement was the creation of the first public library located in a shopping mall in the municipality of Constanta.

Mrs. Iris Alexe, President of the NOVAPOLIS Association, who mentioned that it is important to accept challenges, but also to work as a team when resources are limited.

Among the projects carried out by the association are:

**CDMiR** - a common vision for the integration of migrants and refugees is implemented on four pillars: Capacity Building, Advocacy, Communication and Awareness, Community Consultation.

**EoM** - joint and inclusive communities for immigrants in Romania. It takes place in communities in Bucharest, Giurgiu, Craiova, Constanța and Rădăuți.
Mrs Natalia Budescu, from the Association of Cross-Border Cooperation “Euroregion Dunărea de Jos”, an organization that acts as a facilitator for the promotion of tough development in this region and deals with: exchange of best practices, cross-border economic development, etc.

Among the projects that the association has are:

- **e-EYE**: innovative tools for environmental analysis in the North Black Sea Basin
- **Green Tourism**: Opportunity for Sustainable Development in the Black Sea Basin
- **LSP**: Inventory, analysis, evaluation and remediation of resources
- **National Network of Black Sea BI - Net Business Incubators**

*We turn challenges into opportunities, we didn't just manage to survive, we managed to grow!*
ADV Romania is one of the biggest social enterprises from Romania, built around the one-stop-shop principle, according to which a disadvantaged individual or someone having lived in a placement center can access a package of services addressing several issues: social and psychological services, educational services, professional orientation, qualification, employment and assistance at the workplace.

ADV Romania created 7 products for an integrated approach in the field of social economy:

- **The Youth Club** – day center for children and young people from under privileged categories, including with disabilities. ADV teach them independent living skills in order to destroy the circle of poverty, continuously investing in education.
- **UtilDeco** – work integration social enterprise, having created in time more than 150 workplaces, of which more than half have been for people with disabilities and from other groups at risk.
- **JobDirect** – social enterprise and the first Agency for Placement and Assistance at the Workplace addressing people with disabilities. ADV offer services of evaluation, testing, counseling, professional capacity building, mediation and placement on the labor market, job – coaching for maintaining the workplace.
- **WISE.travel** – social enterprise in the field of tourism – tour operator. Supports NGOs and social businesses by developing communities.
- **ADV Academy** – ADV invest in education, research, public policies and social innovation in the field of social economy. The activities take place in Romania, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and the European Union.
- **The Social Enterprises Accelerator** – grant administrator for 42 social enterprises established and developed in Romania, 5 in the Republic of Moldova and 3 in Ukraine.
- **2021** – ADV are preparing to launch **AFIN**, the first Romanian non-banking instrument addressing Romanian social enterprises.

“We've created a community of social enterprises. Our role is to create, to sustain!”
„Project implemented by the Romanian NGDO Platform (FOND) with the financial support of the Active Citizens Fund Romania, programme funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA Grants 2014-2021. The content of this material does not necessarily reflect the official position of the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021; for more information visit www.eeagrants.org.”