

## Editorial Note

The new issue of the Romanian Journal of Society and Politics (Volume 10, Number 2) is published in the context of a series of achievements which strengthen the journal's commitment to the pursuit of high-quality social scientific research in Romania and Eastern Europe. Thus, in 2015, RJSP has been indexed in two additional international databases, *DOAJ* (the Directory of Open Access Journals) and *ERIH-PLUS*, has reinstated an open access policy for all its articles in the New Series, and extended its Editorial Board, with more important developments scheduled to take place in 2016. The current issue consists of 6 articles (one opinion article and five regular scientific ones) and a special section on Romanian foreign policy.

The issue opens with an opinion piece offered by Jeffrey Isaac, titled *The Parochialism of the Universal, or Beware of American Political Scientists Bearing Gifts*. Jeffrey Isaac, who holds the James A. Rudy Professorship at Indiana University, is the Editor in Chief of *Perspectives on Politics*, one of the flagship journals of the American Political Science Association (APSA), and a prominent figure in contemporary debates on the methodology of political science and its place in both the academic and social world. In this issue of RJSP, Professor Isaac addresses a key topic in current professional debates on the status of political science, namely the Data Access and Research Transparency initiative within APSA, on which he takes a critical view, exposing some of its drawbacks and some of its implications for journals that are not strictly quantitatively-oriented, such as *Perspectives on Politics*.

The first regular article of the issue, *Quality-related Funding in Romanian Higher Education Throughout 2003 – 2011: A Global Assessment*, authored by Gabriel Viiu, tackles questions related to the public funding of Romanian universities for a period of nine years, starting from the introduction of performance indicators as funding criteria in higher education and extending until the introduction of a new funding mechanism in 2012.

The second regular article belongs to Andrzej Fafara and Agata Kleczkowska, and is titled *How to Attain the Golden Age – the Role of the Balceronicz Plan in the Successful Transformation of Poland in the 1990s*. In this article, the authors analyze the economic reform program implemented in Poland in the early stages of the transition from the communist regime to a modern democracy, focusing in particular on employment policies, state-owned enterprises and the banking system, as well as the social and economic implications of the program for Polish citizens.

In the next contribution, titled *Romania's Social Protection Programs Reform During the Economic Crisis*, Arpad Todor provides a comparative analysis of social protection policies in the European Union, with a focus on the Romanian measures adopted in 2011. The author underlines the fact that while Romania had one of the least developed systems of social protection at the start of the economic crisis, it adopted some of the most radical austerity measures in the EU, diverging from the positions of most other right-wing European governments.

In the fourth regular article of the issue, *Whither Development? The Effects of the Eurasian Union on the Central Asian Republics*, Adelin Dumitru discusses the economic and

security impact of the Eurasian Union on five Central Asian states. While in concern to the former, the author primarily focuses on the problem of economic remittances, in concern to the latter he addresses the question of an emerging Central Asian regional security complex, arguing that the Eurasian Union constitutes a significant obstacle in its development.

In the subsequent article, titled *Coaching and Personal Development: the Construction of the Self in a Community of Practice in Bucharest*, Elena Trifan offers an anthropological analysis of personal development practices, with a focus on coaching activities. In the article, the author seeks to expose and highlight the special connection between the self of the coachee and post-Fordist values, as well as the relation between the individual and the community of practice in which coaching is embedded.

The issue closes with a special section dedicated to Romanian foreign policy. The central part of the section is represented by the speech of Bogdan Aurescu, Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time when the speech was presented during the Romanian Diplomacy Annual Reunion, in September 2016. The speech, titled *Romania and Security Challenges at the Limits of the European and Euro-Atlantic Area. Risks, Opportunities and Diplomatic Action* constitutes a synthesis of Romanian foreign policy developments in recent years, as well as an outline of short-term and long-term goals and initiatives in this area. The context for this speech, as well as an overview of some of its implications, are provided by Liliana Popescu, Editor in Chief of RJSP, in an *Introductory Note* to the text.

**The Editorial Team**