

March 8, 2006
Bucharest

OFFICIAL OPENING OF
the EU/PHARE Twinning Project
“Strengthening the institutional and operational capacity of migration and asylum management”

On 9 March 2006, 12:00 hours, I. L. Caragiale Room at the Ramada Majestic Hotel (38-40 Calea Victoriei Bd., Sector 1, Bucharest, RO-010082), will take place the official opening of the EU/PHARE Twinning Project RO04/IB/JH10 “*Strengthening the institutional and operational capacity of migration and asylum management*”, which is developing between the National Refugee Office, Authority for Aliens and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in Germany.

Beside the project leaders on behalf of Romania and Germany - **Mr. Corneliu Alexandru**, Head of the General Directorate of European Accession and International Relations within M.A.I. and **Dr. Claudia Kurschat**, the German Federal Office of Migration and Refugees – , the launching ceremony of this Phare Programme will also be attended by **H.E. Wilfried GRUBER** – the Ambassador of Germany in Bucharest, **Ms. Anne de Ligne** – Head of Phare Section within the European Commission Delegation in Bucharest, **Ms. Cristina Gheorghe-Tranca** – Head of the International Organisation for Migration – Romania and **Mr. Gerhard Korts** – Resident Twinning Pre-Accession Adviser.

At the same time, **questor principal Vasile-Gabriel NITA** – Sub-secretary of State within the Ministry of Administration and Interior, officials within M.A.I., and representatives of the United Nations Higher Commissariat for Refugees and of other public institutions have been invited to take part in this event.

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The journalists accredited with the Ministry of Administration and Interior are invited to take part in this official opening of the project, beginning with 11:30.

Bucharest, 9 March 2006

Seminar for Closing the Institutional Twinning Project
“Strengthening the capacity of the Central Unit for the Public Administration Reform and the national network of modernizers”

“Towards 2007”

On Friday, 10 March 2006, the Ministry of Administration and Interior of Romania, through the **Central Unit for Public Administration Reform**, together with its partners from the **Ministry of Public Position and State Reform of France** and the **Public Administration Institute from The Netherlands** are organising the seminar of closing the **Institutional Twinning Project Phare 2003** “*Strengthening the capacity of the Central Unit for the Public Administration Reform and the national network of modernizers*”.

The event is taking place at the Majestic Hotel (38-40 Calea Victoriei, sector 1, Bucharest). The press is invited to participate in this reunion beginning with 12:30 hours.

This event will be attended by **Mr. Vasile Blaga**, the Minister of Administration and Interior, **Mr. Jonathan Scheele**, the Head of the European Commission Delegation in Romania, **H.E. Hervé Bolot**, the Ambassador of France in Romania, **H.E. Jaap L. Werner**, the Ambassador of the Netherlands, **Mr.**

Liviu Radu, Secretary of State for the public administration reform, **Mr. André Giannechini** the project leader on behalf of the French party, Mr. Frits Van den Berg, the project leader on behalf of the Dutch party, **Mr. Laszlo Klarik**, General Director of the Central Unit for Public Administration Reform, Mr. Marian Petrache, counsellor of state, Mr. Ilie Bolojan, prefect of the county of Bihor, Ms. Marie Agam Ferrier, the project resident counsellor.

This 18-month project, amounting to 700,000 euros and financed by the European Union within the framework of the Phare Project 2003 551-005.03.01, by its implementation and monitoring actions regarding the reforms in administration, focused on strengthening the institutional capacity of the Central Unit for Public Administration Unit and on supporting and making operational the national network of modernizers at the level of the ministries, the county councillors and the prefect institution.

The major condition for Romania's E.U. accession is the improvement of the administrative capacity, while observing the principles that define the European administrative area: transparency, feasibility, responsibility, predictability, adaptability and efficacy. Ambitious in its purposes and vast regarding the domains that it has addressed, this project made important contributions to this issue and carried out a series of activities in the area. The Central Unit for Public Administration Reform acted as a vector or as the main operator in all these activities.

By 23 March 2006, the date the project finishes, the objectives will be entirely achieved and the results will be the expected ones. The main outcomes are as following:

- ⇒ *The capacity of co-ordinating, planning, innovating,*
- ⇒ *The capacity of simplifying the administrative procedures,*
- ⇒ *The capacity of training trainers in the context of the areas related to public administration reform (public administration principles, change management, communication, the strategic planning, negotiation techniques, multi-annual modernization plans, European affairs – structural funds),*
- ⇒ *The capacity of drawing up and implement Multi-annual Plans of Modernization,*
- ⇒ *The capacity of absolving and disseminate the modern management tools (Methodological guides, the Self-Evaluation Framework for the public institutions' functioning),*
- ⇒ *The capacity of accompanying the modernisation actions at the local level and of initiating innovative projects for improvement of the services provided for citizens.*

Considering that the public administration reform is a dynamic and permanent process, the European Commission will keep on supporting Romania's efforts through institutional twinning projects meant to enhance administrative capacity.

Bucharest, 8th of March 2006

BULLETIN

The General Anti-Corruption Directorate organized an action of catching a police agent “red-handed”, in view of retaining him

Yesterday, March 7, 2006, officers within the General Anti-Corruption Directorate, together with prosecutors within the Prosecutor's Office near the Bucharest Law-Court, caught “red-handed” a police agent – forensic worker in the Police Station No.8, while he was getting 1,500 euros, currency claimed from a Romanian citizen, in exchange of a diplomatic passport.

On the same day, the Prosecutor's Office near the Bucharest Law-Court disposed the retaining of the police agent for 24 hours, on charge of influence trafficking, crime punished with a 2-year and 10-month prison sentence.

The investigations in this case started in February 2006, when the officers of the General Anti-Corruption Directorate were notified on the criminal activity of police agent Ionel B. from the Police Station No. 8.

For developing the investigations in this case, under-cover investigators were used, who succeeded in organising the action of catching the police agent “red-handed”, having the technical support of the officers within the Information and Internal Protection General Directorate.

The criminal activity of the police agent was related to the fact that, on 16 February 2006, he claimed and received 100 euros from a Romanian citizen to whom he promised to provide a police identification card. Saying that he could “arrange” with the public servants, as he had some “authority” and so he could get the desired document, the police agent took the money but did not give that person any police identification card.

At the same time, applying the same method, he claimed 4,000 euros from another Romanian citizen, to whom he promised to provide a diplomatic passport, on the day of the action organised by G.A.D. (07.03.2006), and took the money that he claimed, that is 1,500 euros, in advance.

Presently, police agent Ionel B. is taken in custody, and the required legal actions are being taken in order to bring him to justice, with a penal file.

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March the 6th, 2006
Bucharest

BULLETIN

THE ILLEGAL MIGRATION FROM ROMANIA IS ALMOST ZERO

*The illegal migration from Romania decreased significantly, and presently it is close to zero, has stated Liese Prokop, federal Home Affairs Minister of Austria, in the opening of the **Conference Austria – Romania – the European Union**, reunion organised by the European Forum Alpbach, which has started today in Vienna.*

Liese Prokop has shown that the rate of the criminal acts in which the Romanians in Austria are involved decreased significantly, the decrease recorded in 2005 being of over 20 per cent. *The criminal actions in which the Romanian minors are involved also recorded a significant decrease*, stated the Austrian federal Home Affairs Minister, who has said that these are the consequences of the co-operation between the two states. *“Romania took very seriously all the problems and it has always displayed availability in co-operation”*, has also shown Prokop, which allowed the application of appropriate solutions to all the problems arisen.

At the same time, the Austrian federal Home Affairs Minister appreciated the progresses achieved by Romania in the process of preparing for the E.U. accession, underlining the importance of the reforms carried out, considering the fact that the accession date will very soon be discussed at the level of the European institutions. *“The certain and measurable progresses”* of Romania were also referred to by Kevin O’Connell, Deputy Director of EUROPOL, present in the conference opening.

The Romanian Minister of Administration and Interior, Vasile Blaga, has shown in the opening of the conference that Romania is waiting optimistically for the decision regarding the date of Romania’s E.U. accession. Vasile Blaga has ensured all the participants that Romania will meet, by the deadline established, all the commitments relating to the covering of the staff shortage at the level of border police and to the border securing, fields marked with red flags in the latest monitoring report of the European Union, in which our country is shown to have achieved important progresses.

“The accomplishment - at the best standards - of the tasks that Romania will be entrusted with as a E.U. Member-State, especially the ones in the field of the future outer E.U. border security, in view of ensuring a high degree of security for all the European citizens, represents one of the highest priorities of the Ministry of Administration and Interior”, Vasile Blaga has stated.

Also today, the minister of Administration and Interior paid a visit to minors’ receiving Centre in Vienna, institution which manages, in co-operation with Romanian Police and Border Police, a social rehabilitation programme for the children prone to crimes. While in 2003 there were over 200 Romanian children in this Centre, presently there are no Romanian children there, following the prevention programmes developed within the framework of the co-operation between the Romanian and Austrian authorities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The European Forum Alpbach, the organiser of this manifestation, is one of the most important groups of reflection on political, economic and cultural themes in the Central Europe, and the Conference **“Romania – Austria – the European Union”** represents one of the interest points included in its 2006 agenda, whose highlight will be the famous Alpbach Forum in August.

Within the framework of this conference, the Minister of Administration and Interior has delivered a speech on **“Romania – the European Union – Present and Future”**, occasion on which he has approached the main progresses that have been recorded lately in the internal affairs area.

This conference has been attended, on behalf of the Austrian authorities, by the Federal Minister of Home Affairs – Liese Prokop, the Federal Minister of Justice – Karin Gastinger, the Secretary of State in the Austrian Foreign Affairs Ministry – Hans Winkler. The European Forum Alpbach has been represented by the President of this organisation – Erhard Busek, special co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South-European Europe. At the same time, the Deputy Director of EUROPOL – Kevin O’Connell has participated in the conference sessions.

On behalf of Romania, the conference has also been attended by the Minister of Justice – Monica Macovei and the Minister of Foreign Affairs – Mihai Razvan Ungureanu.

The organisation of a reunion of this kind and at this level is extremely valuable as the Republic of Austria is currently holding the E.U. Presidency; it is also very important to the Romanian authorities considering the future European decision on May 17, 2006 regarding Romania's accession to the European Union on January 1, 2007.

March the 6th, 2006
Bucharest

BULLETIN

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ROMANIA – COURSE ON „INTELLIGENCE SERVICES REFORM AND DEMOCRACY”

A training course on „*Intelligence Services Reform and Democracy*” has started today, March 6th, 2006, at the headquarters of “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Police Academy, in the presence of **Nicholas Taubman** – Ambassador of the U.S.A. in Romania, **Claudiu Saftoiu** – counsellor of the Romanian president, General Questor **Virgil Ardelean** – the Head of the General Directorate for Information and Internal Protection, **Mihai Stanisoară** – President of the Committee for Defence, Public Order, National Security within the Deputies' Chamber, **Romeo Raicu** – President of the Parliamentary Committee for Control of Foreign Intelligence Service, **lieutenant colonel Florian Coldea** – first Deputy Director of Romanian Intelligence Service, **Vasilica Sarca** – Deputy Director of the F.I.S. and **Constantin Croitoru** – General Director of the Defence Intelligence General Directorate.

During this one-week course, about 50 attendees – high-ranked officials from 15 institutions, namely the Prime Minister's Office, the Superior Council of National Defence, RIS, FIS, Guard and Protection Service, Special Telecommunications Service, GDIIP (MAI), Ministry of Justice, National Anti-Corruption Department, the Committee for Defence, Public Order, National Security within the Deputies' Chamber, the Parliamentary Committee for Control of FIS, the Parliamentary Committee for Control of RIS's activity, the General Prosecutor's Office, National Defence Ministry, the Association George C. Marshall-Romania – will benefit from the expertise of the lecturers, who are from the Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California – USA.

For the first time in Romania, the course will approach themes relating to the importance of a legal framework for the intelligence field, the institutions with attributions in the control of the intelligence services in democracy, terrorism and organised crime, border security and terrorism, as well as relating to two case-studies: September 11 and the London bombing.

This activity is organised by the Romanian Presidency, the Office for Co-operation in the field of Defence (the Embassy of the U.S.A.), the Marshall Association (Romania) and the Ministry of Administration and Interior, under the high patronage of the Romanian President, Traian Basescu.

March the 5th, 2006
Bucharest

BULLETIN

VISA ON-LINE SYSTEM, an instrument to prevent the foreign citizens' illegal migration to Romania

The Ministry of Administration and Interior technically administrates, by means of the Aliens' Authority, the VISA ON-LINE System, which is part of the Information System on Migration, Asylum and Visas Issues (whose main beneficiary is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

By means of this system, the Aliens' Authority within the Ministry of Administration and Interior is closely linked to over 73 Romanian diplomatic missions and consulates overseas, which reduces - *following the operational verifications carried out at national level* - the risks of granting entry visas to the foreign whose right of entering Romania was restricted, or for those who want to migrate towards Occident.

By July 1, 2006, the VISA ON LINE System will be extended to the rest of the diplomatic missions abroad (43 diplomatic missions), which will finalise one of the stages regarding the aligning of the activities in this field with the European standards, as well as regarding Romania's integration in the European system of countering the trans-national crime.

Technically, the VISA ON LINE System allows rapid and legal solutions to the applications for entry visas for Romania, as the verifications required in such cases (carried out at national level, inclusively by the Aliens' Authority of M.A.I.) start immediately after the application is submitted at the diplomatic mission abroad.

Another advantage is represented by the fact that sticker visas are printed in a secured way, and so the illegal migration control is more effective.

*Over 2005, at the level of the Aliens' Authority within the Ministry of Administration and Interior there were recorded proposals for giving solutions to 12,700 applications for visas (5,898 for short-term residence and 6,815 for long-term residence) transmitted by the Romanian diplomatic missions and the consular offices abroad; out of these **approximately 3,500 applications were rejected**, as they did not fulfil the requirements provided by the legislation in operation. At the same time, over the first 2 months of 2006, out of the 2,392 applications submitted at the Aliens' Authority, 1,883 were given solutions, only 1,143 being accepted.*

In the future, the Ministry of Administration and Interior takes into account the technical management of the VISA INFORMATION System as well, which will be implemented in Romania in view of aligning the visas issue with the Schengen Acquis.

One of the major advantages of this system is represented by the fluidising of the traffic in the cross-border points, the VISA INFORMATION System being an instrument meant to facilitate the information exchange regarding visas between the Schengen Member States, at the level of both the diplomatic missions and the control border points.

At the same time, this system makes a significant contribution to the prevention of visas forgery as well as to the identification of the counterfeit documents, the strengthening of the international co-operation in this field enhancing the efficient fight against illegal migration.

March the 5th, 2006
Bucharest

BULLETIN

ROMANIANS EXTRADITED

Tomorrow, March 06, 2006, workers of the International Police Co-operation Centre will carry out the extradition of, and will bring in Romania - at the International Airport "Henri Coanda", 6 Romanian citizens, convicted for different crimes committed in the territory of our country, as follows:

- from Athens, at 8.30, will be extradited:

Ø **OLTEANU Adrian**, aged 39, from Medgidia, against whom the Prosecutor's Office near the Court of Appeal Constanta issued a pre-trial custody warrant, on charge of *attempt to first degree murder and disobeying the arms and munitions regime*;

Ø **BULIGA Ioan**, aged 32, from the county of Suceava, against whom the Territorial Military Court Bucharest issued a warrant of execution of a 5-year and 6-month prison sentence, on charge of *bribery*;

- from Milan will be extradited, at 14.55:

Ø **BOBOC Claudiu Constantin**, aged 28, from the county of Bacău, against whom Bacau Court issued a warrant of execution of a 2-year and 2-month prison sentence, on charge of *grand larceny*;

Ø **POPA Vasile**, aged 24, from the county of Galati, against whom Tg. Bujor Court issued a warrant of execution of a 3-year and 3-month prison sentence, on charge of *grand larceny*;

- from Madrid will be extradited, at 17.45:

Ø **LUNCA Ovidiu**, aged 22, from the county of Bacau, against whom Onesti Court issued a warrant of execution of a 3-year and 5-month prison sentence, on charge of *grand larceny*;

Ø **FIERARU Marius**, aged 31, from Giurgiu, against whom Giurgiu Court issued a warrant of execution of a 3-year and 6-month prison sentence, on charge of *proxenetism*.