



Liga PRO EUROPA Liga

HISTORY

The *PRO EUROPA League*, one of the first non-governmental organizations in the post-communist Romania, was founded in Tîrgu-Mureş on the 30th of December 1989 by a group of intellectuals committed to the Pan-European idea and the values of democracy and pluralism. For a short time, the League functioned as a forum for intellectual reflection. However, in March 1990, Tîrgu-Mureş became the site of dramatic inter-ethnic confrontation conducted by advocates of national-communism. Under the strain of these inter-ethnic conflicts that destabilized Transylvania in the spring of 1990, the *League* opted for direct civic involvement and became an activist group. The need for definite steps — for social dialogue and civic education — became an absolute priority. In spite of the authorities' and extremist groups hostility, the *PRO EUROPA League* has succeeded in recruiting more than six hundred sympathiser members of different ethnic and religious backgrounds, organising a considerable number of meetings, debates, colloquies, and round table conferences, the publishing of a civically engaged press, and denouncing the instigations and abuses of undemocratic authorities.

In April 1993, a group of intellectuals in Satu Mare endorsing the *League's* principles and values, formed a branch and took on an active part in promoting the European idea. Despite the obstructions suffered by the organisation and the reprisals against some of its leaders, the *PRO EUROPA League* has initiated, encouraged and supported the foundation of regional and national democratic and antitotalitarian civic movements (The Alliance for the Timișoara Proclamation, The Antitotalitarian Forum, The Civic Alliance). As a member of the Centres for Pluralism Network, the League has also collaborated closely with similar groups from Romania and the other post-communist countries.

Considering Romanian-Hungarian partnership as a guarantee of the stability and security on this zone, the *PRO EUROPA League* has functioned, even through moments of diplomatic freezing, as a forum for Romanian-Hungarian dialogue and has made a consistent and intense lobby at the highest political levels.



Opening Ceremony of the "Europe Day" 1995

PROFILE

Building on the expertise and experience it has gained, the *PRO EUROPA League* is now in the stage of embedding its programmes in a strong institutional base, as well as further developing them to increase their social impact.

The areas of interest serve the League's overall activity: European integration and the consolidation of the pro-European tendency and mentality in Romania. The central programmes of the *PRO EUROPA League*, implemented predominantly in Transylvania, are based on the promotion of interculturalism, human rights and minority rights, on civic education and on preventing conflicts. A part of its projects is devoted to the development of cross-border environmental cooperation, local autonomy, regionalism and to increasing women's presence in public life.

The *PRO EUROPA League* organises national and international debates, colloquies, seminars, conferences, summer courses and camps, workshops. The *PRO EUROPA League* also conducts publishing and documentary activities, offers advice and initiates studies.

The target groups of the *League* are public authorities, opinion leaders, educators, politicians, mass media representatives and, generally, all those pertaining to the category of multipliers.



One of the Pan-European seminars

INTERCULTURALISM

The *League's* intercultural dimension gained institutional status in 1993 when, inspired by the multicultural, multilingual and multireligious reality of Transylvania, an Intercultural Centre was created. The program's priorities are education for a multicultural coexistence, protection of alterity and of regional diversity, and the search for opportunities for intercommunity dialogue.

The Intercultural Centre carries out two main activities - organizing events and initiating research activities. The Centre organises events devoted to inter-ethnic and inter-religious social dialogue and to mutual intercultural knowledge. The Centre also initiates studies in the area of multicultural societies, contributing thus to filling a long-standing documentary gap in the Romanian literature in this field. The Intercultural Centre has launched a significant number of civic cultural, artistic, scientific and sporting events, many of them having already developed into traditions: "The Week of Tolerance", held annually March 19th-25th, a reminder of the tragic events of March 1990 and a response to the intolerance of those days; "Europe Days" in May, pleading for European values; "The Summer University of Bálványos" in July, an original forum of Romanian-Hungarian reconciliation; "The Intercultural Forum", a bi-annual debate, serving as a framework for alternative dialogue for ethnic, linguistic, cultural or religious communities.



Bálványos Summer University

The Intercultural Centre owns a library which is open to the public. It offers documentary means for European multicultural experience. In its research activity, the Centre collaborates with experts on interculturalism from academic circles.

PLURALISM

This program is centred on civic education, the development of an associative spirit and civic partnership. It includes:

THE COLLEGE OF DEMOCRACY - The College was initiated in 1994 as a course for developing leadership skills of a multiethnic group of young people who have proved a strong motivation for social, civic and political involvement. The project includes bi-monthly courses and workshops (including workshops that take place in state institutions), and fieldtrips to offices in Bucharest and Budapest. It enjoys the collaboration of some of the most prestigious personalities of public life.

MIRRORS OF DEMOCRACY (the Satu Mare branch) is a project devoted to multiculturalism, tolerance and mutual intercultural knowledge. Participants of this project are pupils of different ethnic and religious backgrounds.

ECOLOGICAL CARAVANS is the first non-governmental Romanian-Hungarian initiative to study pollution phenomena beyond state borders. Over the years, they have become a model of collaboration between Romanian and Hungarian ecologists.

GENDER DEMOCRACY is a project targeted at women's involvement in the public sphere and their access to decision making positions in society.



Workshop of the College of Democracy

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Human Rights Office, founded in 1993, monitors the observance of human rights and minority rights by the authorities at the local and regional level. It offers free advice to persons whose rights have been prejudiced and it also presses their suit before the authorities, elaborates case studies, and organises meetings with the aim of consolidating human rights culture. One of the Office's priorities is to study and mediate the discriminatory treatment against Roma.



„Pro Europa” Cross, 1996

PUBLISHING HOUSE

For two years (1991-1993) the *PRO EUROPA League* published the weekly „Gazeta de Mureş”, one of the most consistent publications of political and social analysis of the period. Since 1994, the League has been editing a monthly newsletter, "Info Pro Europa", and since 1995 the quarterly "Alterta", the sole Romanian theoretical magazine devoted to alterity, multiculturalism and minority rights. Other books and booklets published both in Romanian and Hungarian aim to offer new information in the field of interculturalism, democracy, human rights, market economy, and European values.



"It is here, in the heart of Transylvania, with its rich multicultural heritage, drawing on the main currents of European intellectual and spiritual traditions, that there is a unique opportunity to develop a new force for democratic renewal, based on a clear vision of Romania's place in a democratic multicultural Europe.

The Liga Pro Europa, born at a difficult moment in the history of this city, has a very firm commitment to building a multicultural Europe, from the grass roots, starting here in Tîrgu-Mureş, working particularly with young people with open hearts and minds facing the future.

European integration is a great advance, launched by a handful of statesmen, politicians like Schuman, De Gasperi and Adenauer, who combined vision with pragmatism, but lacked also by all kinds of citizens — academics, trade unionists, war veterans, young people — who were convinced of the need to build bridges across frontiers, between cultures, to share power and responsibility.

The ups and downs along the path to European Union make a fascinating story. There may be fewer statesmen today but there are more and more active citizens building their Europe, Europe for students, Europe for consumers, Europe for farmers and so on. Many Europes, many minorities like students, many majorities like consumers. There is also an enlarged Europe that we are building, where the citizens of Romania and of the other associate countries can take their places.

I am sure that the College of Democracy will be a very good school for Europe and I wish all the students much success and enjoyment in their courses."

Karen Fogg
Head of Delegation

"I am grateful for the opportunity to visit the offices of the Pro Europa League. I wish all League members the best and luck with future projects intended to improve human rights and democratic reform in Romania."

Greg Knight
Director of
the American Cultural Center

Coordinating Council

Co-Chairs: Smaranda ENACHE and CSÍKY Boldizsár

Secretary: Mircea SUHÁREANU

Members: Lucia BRISCAN, FODOR Imre, Zeno FODOR, KÓNYA László, SÁRKÁNY-KISS Endre, SPIELMANN-SEBESTYEN Mihály

Consultative Council

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Executive Director: SZOKOLY Elek

Program Assistants: Laura ARDELEAN, HALLER István, KACSÓ Judit-Andrea, KOVÁCS Gyöngyvér

"It was a pleasure and honour to take part in the work of the League for Europe. Especially in Transylvania, the territory of traditional scientists and artists this is most important.

I shall be always ready to come again to join the precious and outstanding people of the Pro Europa League."

Nikola Debelič
Ambassador of Croatia

Congratulations as all you have done to promote ethnic harmony in Mureş, you have made a great contribution to a better life for all Romanians.

Alfred H. Moses
U. S. Ambassador

Over the years, the PRO EUROPA League has cooperated with the following international institutions and foundations:

- Council of Europe
- European Union — PHARE Program
- Soros Foundation for an Open Society
- Friedrich Ebert Foundation — Germany
- Heinrich Böll Foundation — Germany
- Est-Liberté Foundation — France
- National Endowment for Democracy — USA
- CEBEMO/BILANCE Foundation — The Netherlands
- IDEE (Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe) — USA
- American Federation of Teachers — USA
- National Forum Foundation — USA
- Ch. Št. Mott Foundation — USA
- United States Information Agency
- Pro Minoritate Foundation — Hungary
- Amnesty International
- International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights — Austria
- Helsinki Citizens Assembly
- Borderland Foundation — Poland
- Pro Transylvania — Lituania
- Swiss Helsinki Committee — Switzerland
- Minority Rights Group — London

The PRO EUROPA League is a member of
the Centers for Pluralism Network.



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