



Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Democracy
Society South-East Democracy

Society South-East Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Dialogue Society South-
East History Dialogue Society South-East
Democracy Region Balkans History Journalism
Dialogue Society South-East Europe Dialogue
Society South-East Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Dialogue Society South-East
Europe Dialogue Society South-East Democracy
Region Balkans History Journalism Dialogue
Society South-East Europe Dialogue Society
South-East Democracy Region Balkans History
Journalism Dialogue Society South-East Europe
Dialogue Society South-East Democracy Region
Balkans History Journalism Dialogue Society
South-East Europe Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Dialogue Society South-
East Europe Democracy Balkans Journalism
Democracy Balkans History
Journalism Dialogue Society
Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Dialogue
Society Democracy Europe
Dialogue Society South-East

**ANNUAL
REVIEW
2021**



Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Democracy
Society South-East Democracy

Society South-East Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Dialogue Society South-
East History Dialogue Society South-East
Democracy Region Balkans History Journalism
Dialogue Society South-East Europe Dialogue
Society South-East Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Dialogue Society South-East
Europe Dialogue Society South-East Democracy
Region Balkans History Journalism Dialogue
Society South-East Europe Dialogue Society
South-East Democracy Region Balkans History
Journalism Dialogue Society South-East Europe
Dialogue Society South-East Democracy Region
Balkans History Journalism Dialogue Society
South-East Europe Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Dialogue Society South-
East Europe Democracy Balkans Journalism
Democracy Balkans History
Journalism Dialogue Society
Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Dialogue
Society Democracy Europe
Dialogue Society South-East

**ANNUAL
REVIEW
2021**

The Ratiu Forum is a joint initiative of the Ratiu Family Charitable Foundation and the London School of Economics IDEAS think tank.

The priority areas of interest of the Ratiu Forum are Romania and the Balkan region. Included in the Central and South-East Europe Programme of LSE IDEAS, the Forum focuses on strengthening cooperation in the region, supporting academic research and freedom, and on developing projects that promote civic engagement.

The Central and South-East Europe Programme addresses the issue of the connectivity between the states of the region and their interaction with global forces. The programme organises conferences, academic workshops and collaborations with various partners from Central and South-East Europe with the primary goal of generating a rich understanding of the region's history, geopolitics and current affairs.

THE RATIU FORUM IN 2021

3	IN-PERSON EVENTS
14	ONLINE EVENTS
19	BLOG POSTS
1062	NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS
535	FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS*
455	TWITTER FOLLOWERS*
10 073	UNIQUE WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

** measured on the 24th of January 2022*

OPENING LETTER FROM OUR CHAIRMAN



Despite the challenges of Covid, I am pleased to report that throughout 2021 the Ratiu Forum has managed to organize a full and regular programme of Webinar conferences focussing on our core preoccupa-

tion – the Issues and Challenges facing Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

This has been with great thanks to the indefatigable Megan Palmer and later in the year Sarah Coolican working with our Turda team of Alis Costescu and Oana Bakos with Dana Stoica and Nicoleta Bucur as remote resources.

Still largely unable to meet at the Ratiu Centre in Turda, the conferences went out on ZOOM with the expert technical help of David Sutton and the team at LSE IDEAS.

All our speakers at our conferences will be listed later in this review but the titles of our **20:20 Visions: Conversations on The Future Of Democracy** will give you a flavour of the variety of matters we have discussed: *Turkey, Israel and the UAE in the Balkans; Europe's Frozen Conflicts; Resetting Transatlantic Relations: Central Europe and the USA; Clientelism and State Capture in the EU and EU Accession Countries; Why War? – an interview with Prof Christopher Coker; 17+1 China's Foreign Policy in Central Europe; The Politics of the Far Right in Central and South-East Europe; Transnational Organized Crime in the Western Balkans and The Collapse of the Soviet Union 30 Years on: Transition and Soviet legacy.* The covered subject matters were every one fascinating, highly topical and extremely well attended. It was also evident that our audience grew significantly throughout the year, as more and more people learned of our existence and the quality of the Webinars.

A broader reach for the Ratiu Forum has been one of the unexpected benefits of the pandemic-related international travel restrictions.

In September, we fortunately seized on a small window of opportunity between Covid variants when we were able to hold two conferences in sequence: ***Rethinking Pessimism and Melancholy in The Covid World***, a closed-door conference arranged by Prof Slobodan Markovich from the University of Belgrade, with a series of speakers – Dr Erica Benner, Prof Christopher Coker, Prof Joshua Foa Dienstag, Prof László F. Földényi, Dr Angus Gowland, Prof Adrian Pabst, Dr Marci Shore, and Prof Simona Modreanu. It included the following panels: *Pessimism and its Message; Central and Eastern European Pessimism; Labyrinths of Melancholy; and Beyond Pessimism.* The subject matter was intensely thought-provoking and conclusions even surprisingly positive. A paper will be published.

The ***Ratiu Dialogues on Democracy (RDD)*** followed on, an event that was also held physically in Turda at the Ratiu Centre and in Cluj. Almost all of our RDD invited speakers were able to attend and we were privileged to hear Prof Péter Balázs, Dr Eric Weaver and Dr Tena Prelec speaking on *Corruption and the Rule of Law*, John Lloyd, Alison Mutler and Wojciech Przybyski on *Journalism and the Media in Central Europe*, Prof Slobodan Markovich, Prof Christopher Coker and Dr Erica Benner on *Ideas, Ideals and Ideology in Democracies.* A closing keynote on *Global Challenges to European Values in the Contemporary Era*, with Prof Richard Higgot and Prof Christopher Coker, wrapped up a day and half of highly stimulating dialogues.

Continuing the Ratiu Foundation's support for independent investigative journalism, prior to the Journalism and Media in Central Europe debate, the Recorder.ro journalist Victor Ilie was presented with this year's Ion Ratiu Journalism Award for his meticulous research and published investigation on corruption in the Government's purchasing of Covid-related supplies.

In the closing evening, despite a happily benign thundercloud threatening overhead, we dined outside in a green and grassy pasture on a hill

overlooking the Turda Gorges, serenaded by traditional musicians, mooing cows and, as the evening wore on, lit by crystal chandeliers, whilst feasting on an excellent Transylvanian-themed dinner provided by Paul Bloomfield and his team. Gordon Barrass delivered a warm speech of gratitude to the Ratiu Forum initiative stressing the current importance and relevance of our programme and congratulating the organizers of the Dialogues itself, especially acknowledging Pamela Ratiu for the concept and finishing touch of this quite magical dinner she had arranged.

It is also most important to mention that during this same year the Ratiu Forum has run a very successful series of our ***Journalism Mentoring Programme*** with young Romanian journalists in regular attendance via Zoom.

This has been possible thanks to the invaluable support of the experienced journalists Alison Mutler, Kit Gillet, Emilia Șercan, Diana Oncioiu, Ovidiu Vanghele, Alex Nedea and Paul Radu. Seven group sessions were held in all, in parallel with individual mentee-mentor training sessions. We have been delighted to learn that two of our attendees have subsequently secured posts in international media groups.

Following our previous Teaching of History Workshop in February 2020, the Ratiu Forum organized a ***Teaching of History*** Webinar in May 2021 for 17 selected teachers from around Romania.

Speakers included Prof Christopher Coker, Vlad Zigarov on the *Politicisation of History*, Carol Capiță and Raul Cârstocea on *Teaching Romania's Darker Past*, Professors Eric Weaver and Slobodan Markovich on *Nationalism and the Curriculum*, with Prof Christopher Coker both moderating and giving the audience his concluding thoughts. It was a most fascinating discussion and certainly provided the teachers (and onlookers) with many challenges to take back to their classrooms.

A Ratiu History Prize was also launched, calling for essays on the Odessa Massacre.

So, despite the difficulties occasioned by Covid, I am proud to report that the association of LSE IDEAS and the Ratiu Centre for Democracy has, I believe, enabled the Ratiu Forum to deliver for another year an extremely full and valuable programme during 2021. We look forward to more of the same through 2022.

Nicolae Ratiu

Chairman of the Ratiu Family Charitable Foundation

LSE IDEAS MESSAGE



2021 was another extraordinary year for the Ratiu Forum, which continued to develop despite the ongoing uncertainty and turmoil created by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our **20:20 Visions** events have continued online, drawing in large audiences and covering a range of timely topics. Similarly, our **Journalism Mentorship** and **Teaching of History** programmes have grown in both strength and scope. Finally, our **Dialogues on Democracy** conference went ahead in-person last September and provided a space for reconnecting with peers and discussions of today's biggest threats to democracy.

After the successful first year of our **20:20 Visions** webinar series, 2021 continued in the same vein with eight webinars from January until December, covering topics such as *Europe's Frozen Conflicts*, *China's 17+1 Foreign Policy*, *Politics of the Far Right* and many more. We had record breaking attendance at these webinars, with distinguished speakers including Professor Mary Kaldor, James Sherr, Professor Michael Cox and Professor Serhii Plokhyy. A special 20:20 Visions in December has rounded off our 2021 events calendar, reflecting on the *Collapse of The Soviet Union 30-years on*.

Our Ratiu Forum Journalism Programme has continued into its second year, with Alison Mutler and Kit Gillet continuing their support for journalists from Romania and the region, providing insightful webinars aiming to enhance the practical skills journalists today need to succeed. Topics included, how to pitch to international editors, funding sources and models for independent journalists, journalism safety and legal protections and the importance of reliable sources. Each webinar was co-hosted by an experienced journalist, and participants got the chance to hear insights

from Nick Thorpe, BBC, Emilia Șercan, University of Bucharest, Chris Stephen, The Guardian, and Christian Lupșa, DoR. We received an incredible response from the attendees and plan to continue this important work with our in-person workshop weekend in March 2022, hosted by John Lloyd from the Financial Times.

The Ratiu Forum Teaching of History Programme also continued into its second year, which saw the launch of our **Ratiu Forum History Prize**. Emanuel Grec from the University of Heidelberg won the 2021 prize with his analysis of the Odessa Massacre and the problems of 'victimhood' Holocaust memory in Romania. Emanuel Grec will be speaking alongside Dr Raul Cârstocea and Professor Carol Capiță, among others, at our online **Teaching of History Webinar** in January 2022. Although we have had to postpone some of our in-person workshop activities this year due to Covid, we have worked tirelessly to continue the work around supporting history teachers and journalists through these programmes, something we hope to continue into 2022.

The Ratiu Forum Blog has played a huge part in these efforts, publishing interviews, timely and insightful regional analysis from the World Economic Forum, and valuable contributions by Professor Richard Higgott (Brussels School of Governance), Professor Michael Burleigh (LSE), Professor Dennis Deletant and others. Going into 2022, we welcome all our journalism and history workshop attendees to submit pitches for publication on the blog, as we hope to grow its audience and the insights it can help to provide.

Our annual conference, **The Ratiu Dialogues on Democracy**, went ahead in-person, in Turda and Cluj-Napoca, Transylvania, last September. Our panel topics focused on corruption and the rule of law, journalism and the media in Central Europe and the role of ideals and ideology in democracies.

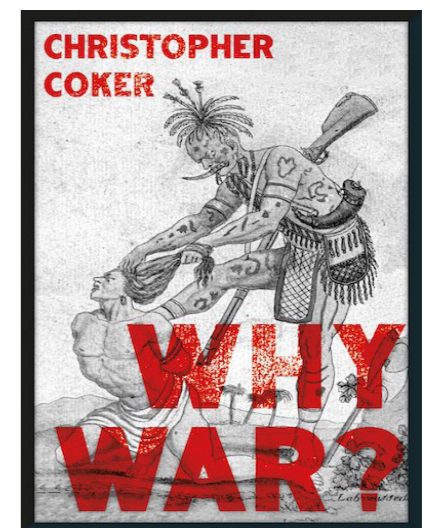
The closing keynote address was delivered by Richard Higgott, Emeritus Professor of International Political Economy at the University of Warwick and Distinguished Professor of Diplomacy at Vesalius College at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, and was entitled *Focusing on global challenges to European values in the contemporary era*, a brief version of which can be found on the Ratiu Forum blog.

Other projects the Forum has worked on this year include the launch of Prof Coker's much anticipated book, *Why War?*, which launched in May 2021. This special webinar saw Professor Coker in conversation with Dr Aaron McKeil, discussing the themes of the causes of war and the future of modern warfare using AI. Finally, Professor Christopher Coker and Professor Slobodan Markovich, University of Belgrade, facilitated a closed-door conference on **Rethinking Pessimism and Melancholy in the Covid World**, which we intend to host again this year at the Ratiu Conference Centre in Turda.

We hope to continue into 2022 with our strong events line-up and the production of timely reports and blog posts, while ever expanding our regional network to support the going development of civil society.

Sarah Coolican

Programme Manager, LSE IDEAS



THE RATIU FORUM ADVISORY BOARD

Radu Albu-Comănescu, PhD in History and Lecturer at the Faculty of European Studies of the Babeş-Bolyai University, teaches EU Governance and Theories of European Integration, European and International Negotiations, and a Cultural Heritage Management. His fields of research extend to the history of Europe, history of political and religious thinking, cultural, economic and public diplomacy, as well as governance, statebuilding and networks of power. He is active in various NGOs and think-tanks dedicated to public policies; a member of the executive board of the Ratiu Democracy Centre, he is at times also a columnist for “Ziua de Cluj”, Romania’s largest regional newspaper.

Dennis Deletant is an Emeritus Professor of Romanian Studies at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College, London. Between 2011 and 2020 he has been Visiting Ion Ratiu Professor of Romanian Studies at Georgetown University. He was also Professor of Romanian Studies at the University of Amsterdam (on secondment from UCL) between 2003 and 2010. He was appointed to the board of the British Government’s ‘Know-How Fund for Central and Eastern Europe’ in 1990 and was actively involved in its work in Romania and in the Republic of Moldova until 1999. For this service, he was made an officer of the Order of the British Empire in 1995. He was awarded ‘Ordinul pentru merit’ with the rank of commander for services to Romanian democracy on 1 December 2000 by President Emil Constantinescu of Romania. Between 2000 and 2001 he was Rosenzweig Family Fellow at the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC. He is the author of several monographs and volumes of studies on the recent history of Romania, among them ‘Ceauşescu and the Securitate: Coercion and Dissent in Romania’, 1965-89 (London; New York, 1996), ‘Romania under Communist Rule’ (Bucharest, 1998), ‘Communist Terror in Romania: Gheorghiu-Dej and the Police State’, 1948-1965, (London; New York, 1999) and ‘Ion Antonescu. Hitler’s Forgotten Ally’ (London: New York, 2006). He is currently researching a study of British clandestine operations in Romania during World War II.

John Lloyd co-founded The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford in 2006, where he was Director of Journalism and a Senior Research Fellow. He is a Contributing editor at The Financial Times, and Chairman of the School of Civic Education (Russia). Lloyd was a freelance reporter in Belfast in the early 1970s. He was a reporter on LBC Radio, worked at London Weekend TV as a reporter on the London Programme and producer on Weekend World. At the Financial Times, he has been Labour Editor, Labour and Industrial Editor, East Europe Editor, Moscow Bureau Chief; and founding editor of the FT Weekend Magazine. He has edited both Time Out and the New Statesman.

Slobodan G. Markovich, MBE is Full Professor at the School of Political Science of the University of Belgrade where he lectures Political Anthropology, Political History of South-East Europe and Image of European Other. He is also Full Professor at the Institute for European Studies in Belgrade. He has been Research Associate at LSEE/LSE since 2012, and at LSE IDEAS since 2018. He has been the head of the Centre for British Studies at the School of Political Science in Belgrade since 2017. His published monographs include a book on Freud’s pessimism: ‘Pessimistic Anthropology of Sigmund Freud’ (Belgrade, 2012), on Serbian economist, politician and diplomat ‘Chedomille Miyatovich. A Victorian among Serbs’ (Belgrade, 2006), and a monograph on British-(Balkan) Serbian relations: ‘British Perceptions of Serbia and the Balkans 1903-1906’ (Paris, 2000, in English). His (co-) edited collections of papers in English include ‘British-Serbian Relations from the 18th to the 21st Centuries’ (Belgrade, 2018), Problems of Identities in the Balkans (Belgrade, 2006), and ‘Challenges to New Democracies in the Balkans’ (Belgrade, 2004). He has been the coordinator of annual meetings ‘Psychoanalysis and Culture’ since 2016. His research interests include Construction of Ethnic/National and Religious Identities in the Balkans, British-Balkan Relations, psychoanalytic anthropology, and History of European Pessimism.

Alison Mutler studied Romanian literature and language at the University of London and graduated in 1987. She first reported from Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova before communism ended, and was in Romania, working for British television station ITV during the 1989 anti-communist revolt. She moved to Romania in 1991 and joined the Associated Press, which she left last year after 25 years. She has been president of the now defunct Foreign Press Association. She occasionally freelances for Coda Story and Radio Free Europe, among others. Starting with 1st of November 2021, Alison is the director of Universul.net.

Wojciech Przybylski is the editor-in-chief of Visegrad Insight and chairman of Res Publica Foundation in Warsaw. Previously Wojciech has been the editor-in-chief of Eurozine – a magazine representing a network of European cultural journals, and – a Polish journal Res Publica Nowa. He has launched and leads the ‘New Europe 100’ project that is networking and bringing forward a community of successful innovators from CEE across the fields of business, research media, NGO and public administration run jointly by Res Publica, Financial Times and Google. He is a member of the advisory board of the European Forum of New Ideas. His expertise includes European and transatlantic affairs as well as policies related to innovation and culture. He has been published in Foreign Policy, Politico Europe, Journal of Democracy, EUObserver, VoxEurop, Hospodarskenoviny, Internazionale, Gazeta Wyborcza, Dziennik Gazeta Prawna and several others. His new book ‘Understanding Central Europe’ (co-ed. with Marcin Moskalewicz) was published in 2017 by Routledge.

Richard Ralph CMG CVO is a retired professional British diplomat. He joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office after graduating from the University of Edinburgh with a degree in politics and international relations in 1969. In the course of his career, he served in the British embassies in Laos, Portugal, Zimbabwe, and Washington, before being appointed successively ambassador to Latvia, Governor of the Falkland Islands, ambassador to Romania and Moldova, and, finally, ambassador to Peru.

Ovidiu Vanghele started his career in 2002 when, at the end of his first university year, was hired by Mediafax news agency. During his ten years in the agency, he gradually became interested in more detailed subjects, closer to investigative journalism. In 2012, he joined the Pro TV news team, but also contributed to the network’s premium show “România, te iubesc!”. In 2013 he left mainstream media to set up the Center for Investigative Media (CIM), an NGO he heads ever since. He published several press investigations tracing millions of Euro spent pointlessly, illegally or simply stolen. His best known investigations focused on the abuses from mental health centers, on the Romanian Academy monetary frauds, on the National Railway Company’s contracts or the acquisitions made by the leaders of what was known as “Republica Constanța”. Most of these also became judiciary investigations. He has spent almost the entire 2016 documenting, together with Ana Poenariu (RISE Project), the series “Toți oamenii generalului”, an investigative saga on the personal and financial development of Gabriel Oprea, one of the biggest paradoxes of Romanian politics. Aside from investigative journalism, Ovidiu formed and headed the editorial team of EurActiv Romania, but also collaborated with Factual (a Funky Citizens fact-checking initiative) or Ziare.com sometime in 2020. Ovidiu has been teaching investigative journalism at the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Sciences, University of Bucharest since 2016. At the same time, since 2017, he has been coordinating the Let There Be Light Project (Să Fie Lumină) together with Vlad Stoicescu. With his partners in this project, Ovidiu published the first-ever investigative report, sending an Orthodox bishop in court for sexual assault on seminar boys. Starting 2021, Ovidiu and his long-time partner Vlad Stoicescu have a new joint project: “The Latest Inquest” (Judecata de Acum), a weekly live video podcast where they unveil and debate important Romanian current affairs.

Vlad Zigarov is a European Affairs Associate at LSE IDEAS and senior adviser on foreign policy at the European Union in Brussels. He holds an M.Sc. in International History from LSE and an MA from the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at UCL. He previously studied Philosophy, History, and International Affairs at the University of Bucharest and worked for various state and private organizations in Romania, the UK and Belgium.

COLLABORATORS AND GUEST SPEAKERS IN 2021

Péter Balázs

Central European University

William Bartlett

London School of Economics

Dimitar Bechev

Institute of Human Sciences in Vienna

Eric Beckett Weaver

University of Debrecen

Erica Benner

Political philosopher

Vanja Čalović

MANS, anti-corruption NGO in Montenegro

Carol Capîță

University of Bucharest

Andrea Lorenzo Capussela

Author and researcher

Raul Cârstocea

University of Leicester

Luke Cooper

London School of Economics

Michael Cox

London School of Economics

Liz David-Barrett

University of Sussex

Bojak Elek

Belgrade Centre for Security Policy

Joshua Foa Dienstag

University of California

László F. Földényi

ELTE, Budapest

Diana Georgescu

University College London

Bilyana Gyaurova-Wegertseder

Bulgarian Institute for Legal Initiatives

Julia Himmrich

LSE IDEAS

Yu Jie

Chatham House

Anna-Maria Getoš Kalac

Zagreb Faculty of Law

Cristina Gherasimov

Foreign Policy Advisor to the Moldovan President

Kit Gillet

Freelance journalist

Angus Gowland

Reader, University College London

Richard Higgott

University of Warwick

Abby Innes

Assistant Professor in Political Economy

Mary Kaldor

LSE IDEAS

Ivana Karásková

MapInfluenCE and China Observers in CEE platform

Walter Kemp

Global Initiative against Transnational Organised Crime

Victor Ilie

Recorder

John Lloyd

Financial Times

Cristian Lupșă

DoR

Slobodan Markovich

University of Belgrade

Wojciech Michnik

Jagiellonian University

Simona Modreanu

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University

Alison Mutler

Universul.net

Alex Nedea

Recorder

Diana Oncioiu

Să fie Lumină and dela0.ro

Adrian Pabst

University of Kent and National Institute of Economic and Social Research

Dušan Pavlović

Political economist

Victoria Phillips

London School of Economics

Serhii Plokhii

Harvard University

Wojciech Przybylski

Visegrad Insight and Res Publica Foundation

Tena Prelec

University of Oxford and London School of Economics

Slavo Radosevic

University College London

Paul Radu

RISE Project

Christopher Reeves

Jagiellonian University

James Sherr

International Centre for Defence and Security

Marci Shore

Associate Professor, University of Yale

Louisa Slavkova

Sofia Platform Foundation

Lauren Speranza

Center for European Policy Analysis, CEPA

Chris Stephen

Freelance journalist for the Guardian and Petroleum Economist

Emilia Șercan

Journalist

Nick Thorpe

Writer, film-maker and award-winning BBC journalist

Ovidiu Vanghele

Să fie Lumină and Centrul de Investigații Media

2021 PROGRAMMES

JOURNALISM



The Ratiu Forum Journalism Programme continued in 2021 with a webinar series targeting journalists from Romania and the region. These online workshops were coordinated by experienced journalists Alison Mutler and Kit Gillet, tackling topics such as the role of journalists, media funding or journalists' safety, and were attended by approximately 70 participants. More details are available in the next pages.

The Mentorship Programme for Young Journalists was launched at the end of 2020 and was carried out in 2021 as a pilot-project, coordinated by Alis Costescu.

- 12 young journalists were selected to work as mentees with experienced journalists:
- Alex Nedea, Recorder;
 - Diana Oncioiu, Dela0.ro, Să fie lumină;

- Ovidiu Vanghele, Centrul de Investigatii Media, Să fie Lumină;
- Paul Radu, RISE Project;
- Alison Mutler, Universul.net;
- Emilia Șercan;
- Kit Gillet.

Participants were offered individual working sessions with their mentors and attended a series of workshops on the following topics:

- Approaching 'marginals' in media – impact and ethical sides
- How can we trace plagiarism?
- How to avoid running out of scoops
- Fighting fake news
- How to pitch editors at international publications
- Alternative investigation techniques

Within the programme, young journalist Mălina Măndruțescu,

who worked under the coordination of international news correspondent Kit Gillet, documented and published an article in Foreign Policy on the film "Collective" and its focus on corruption in Romania. The text can be read [here](#). A Marcin Król Fellow la Visegrad Insight, she collaborates with Panorama, True Story Project Foreign Policy, Balkan Insight, BIRN and FOCUS Magazin.

Another 2021 mentee, Irina Anghel, who has been working during the programme with journalist Ovidiu Vanghele, joined the Bloomberg team in London as a reporter, after a 10-week internship. She is currently working in the Global Business department and covers consumer and healthcare topics. Irina has a master degree in Journalism and Economic Policies from Sciences Po, Paris.

TEACHING OF HISTORY



Last but not least, young journalist Alexandra Filip has published [an article](#) on the challenges encountered by women in Romania when in need of an abortion procedure during the lockdown. She was mentored by Diana Oncioiu and publishing the piece within the Facts not Fake: Political Skepticism in Romania and Moldova grant programme, co-founded by the EU.

Aiming to challenge uncritical thinking about the past, to improve the teaching of history in Romanian schools and to explore how this further influences public attitudes towards socio-political realities, the **Ratiu Forum Teaching of History Programme** resumed in 2021 with a webinar that unfolded in May and was attended by 17 history school teachers.

More details are available in the next pages.

The Ratiu Forum History Prize was launched in 2021 as a call for papers contest, with the purpose of raising awareness among history students about their future role as educators and to challenge the public to reconsider the importance of understanding and acknowledging history as part of the collective memory.

The first edition of the Prize focused on the commemoration of the Odessa Massacre, and the 2021 awardee is Emanuel-Marius Grec, a PhD Researcher in History at the University of Heidelberg.

The paper is available [here](#).

2021 EVENTS

ONLINE EVENTS

20:20 VISIONS

20:20 Visions: conversations on the future of democracy is a series of online discussions on current challenges to democracy faced by Central and Eastern Europe, started in 2020 and hosted by LSE IDEAS and the Ratiu Forum.

All the webinars unfold via Zoom and are open to the general public.



	22 JANUARY 2021 TURKEY, ISRAEL AND THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES IN THE BALKANS	26 FEBRUARY 2021 EUROPE'S FROZEN CONFLICTS: KOSOVO, TRANSNISTRIA AND EASTERN UKRAINE	19 MARCH 2021 RESETTING TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS: CENTRAL EUROPE AND THE USA	23 APRIL 2021 CLIENTELISM AND STATE CAPTURE IN THE EU AND EU-ACCESSION COUNTRIES
Speakers	<p>Dimitar Bechev Institute of Human Sciences in Vienna</p> <p>Tena Prelec University of Oxford and LSE</p> <p>Vuk Vuksanovic LSE IDEA and the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy</p>	<p>Cristina Gherasimov Foreign Policy Advisor to the Moldovan President</p> <p>Julia Himmrich LSE IDEAS</p> <p>James Sherr International Centre for Defence and Security</p>	<p>Wojciech Michnik Jagiellonian University</p> <p>Christopher Reeves Jagiellonian University</p> <p>Lauren Speranza Center for European Policy Analysis</p>	<p>Andrea Lorenzo Capussela Former head of the economics unit of the International Civilian Office</p> <p>Liz David-Barrett University of Sussex</p> <p>Dušan Pavlović University of Belgrade</p> <p>Tena Prelec University of Oxford and LSE</p>
Chair	Christopher Coker LSE IDEAS	Mary Kaldor LSE IDEAS	Christopher Coker LSE IDEAS	Abby Innes European Institute
Attendees	158	500	77	73

20:20 VISIONS: CONVERSATIONS ON THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY



Co-hosted by the Ratiu Forum with LSE IDEAS, the series has a broad and engaged audience, which includes students, academics and professionals from the areas covered by the online talks.



28 MAY 2021 17+1: CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Ivana Karásková
MapInfluencE

Yu Jie
Chatham House

Edward Lucas
Centre for European Policy Analysis

Speakers

Michael Cox
LSE IDEAS

Chair

87

Attendees

25 JUNE 2021 THE POLITICS OF THE FAR-RIGHT IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

Luke Cooper
LSE IDEAS

Bilyana Gyaurova-Wegertseder
Bulgarian Institute for Legal Initiatives Foundation

Rafal Pankowski
Collegium Civitas

Louisa Slavkova
Sofia Platform Foundation

Jonathan White
European Institute

70

Attendees

07 OCTOBER 2021 TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME IN THE WESTERN BALKANS: EFFECTS IN THE REGION AND BEYOND

Vanja Čalović
MANS

Bojak Elek
Belgrade Centre for Security Policy

Anna-Maria Getoš Kalac
Balkan Criminology Network, Zagreb Faculty of Law

Walter Kemp
Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime

Speakers

William Bartlett
LSE Research on South-Eastern Europe, European Institute

Chair

99

Attendees

08 DECEMBER 2021 THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION 30 YEARS ON: TRANSITION AND SOVIET LEGACY

Diana Georgescu
University College London

Slavo Radosevic
University College London

Serhii Plokhii
Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University

Vladislav Zubok
Professor of International History

Victoria Phillips
LSE's Department of International History

141

Attendees

JOURNALISM

The Ratiu Forum Journalism Webinars are included in our Journalism Programme and are co-hosted LSE IDEAS and the Ratiu Forum.

They also started in 2020 and continued in 2021.



4 FEBRUARY 2021
THE ROLE OF JOURNALISTS

Speakers
Nick Thorpe
Alison Mutler

Attendees 23



1 APRIL 2021
FUNDING, MEDIA GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Cristian Lupşa
Kit Gillet

11



10 MAY 2021
THE IMPORTANCE OF SOURCES FOR JOURNALISTS

Speakers
Alison Mutler
Chris Stephen

Attendees 17



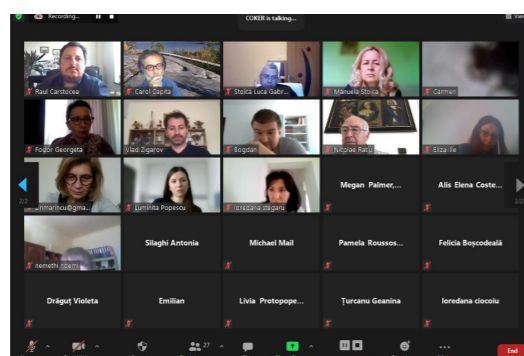
15 JULY 2021
JOURNALISM SAFETY: LEGAL PROTECTIONS, PHYSICAL SAFETY AND POLITICAL THREATS

Emilia Şercan
Kit Gillet

15

TEACHING OF HISTORY

This webinar was included in the Ratiu Forum Teaching of History Programme, continuing a series of history workshops and webinars that began in 2019.



8-9 MAY 2021 THE TEACHING OF HISTORY WEBINAR - SPRING EDITION

Panellists	Christopher Coker LSE IDEAS
	Vlad Zigarov LSE IDEAS
	Eric Weaver University of Debrecen
	Slobodan Markovich University of Belgrade
	Carol Capiță University of Bucharest
	Raul Cârstocea University of Leicester
Attendants	17
Agenda highlights	The politicisation of history Teaching Romania's darker past Nationalism and the curriculum

IN-PERSON EVENTS

PESSIMISM CONFERENCE



The closed-door conference *Rethinking Pessimism and Melancholy in the Covid World* reunited some of the leading experts on the history of European pessimism and melancholy. Among others, the following European intellectuals were discussed: St. Augustine, Sir Thomas Brown, Niccolò Machiavelli, Robert Burton, Oswald Spengler, Sigmund Freud, Emil Cioran, Samuel Beckett, Edmund Husserl, Lev Shestov, and Gustav Shpet. The conference was organised in a hybrid format, with four panellists taking part through Zoom.

9-10 SEPTEMBER 2021 RETHINKING PESSIMISM AND MELANCHOLY IN THE COVID WORLD

Location	Turda, Ratiu Conference Centre	
Panellists	Prof Joshua Foa Dienstag UCLA	Dr Simona Modreanu University of Jassy
	Prof Christopher Coker LSE	Prof Erica Benner formerly at LSE
	Prof Em László F. Földényi ELTE – Budapest	Dr Marci Shore University of Yale
	Dr Angus Gowland University College London	Prof Adrian Pabst University of Kent
	Slobodan G. Markovich University of Belgrade	
Agenda highlights	Pessimism and its Message Labyrinths of Melancholy Central and Eastern European Pessimism Beyond Pessimism	

THE RATIU FORUM DIALOGUES ON DEMOCRACY

The Ratiu Dialogues on Democracy (RDD) is an event organised annually by The Ratiu Forum in partnership with LSE IDEAS in Turda and Cluj-Napoca.

The overall purpose of RDD is to strengthen discussions and visions on democracy, creating thus a community of professionals with diverse backgrounds who share an interest in current challenges facing Balkan nations, with a particular emphasis on Romania.

RDD is designed as a series of discussions on topics related to democracy in the region by internationally renowned speakers from academia and government.



13-14 SEPTEMBER 2021 THE RATIU FORUM DIALOGUES ON DEMOCRACY 2021

Locations

Cluj-Napoca, DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Cluj-City Plaza
Turda, Ratiu Conference Centre

Panellists

Prof Péter Balázs CEU	Ms Alison Mutler Universul.net
Dr Tena Prelec University of Oxford	Mr Wojciech Przybylski Visegrad Insight and Res Publica
Dr Eric Beckett Weaver University of Debrecen	Prof Christopher Coker LSE Ideas
Dr Radu Albu-Comănescu Babeş-Bolyai University	Dr Erica Benner Political Philosopher
Mr John Lloyd Financial Times	Prof Richard Higgott Brussels School of Governance, VUB

Agenda highlights

Corruption and the rule of law
Ion Ratiu Journalism Ceremony Award
Journalism and media in Central Europe
Ideals, ideas and ideologies in democracies
Global Challenges to European Values in the Contemporary Era

CORRUPTION AND THE RULE OF LAW

Monday, 13 September 2021, 10:00 - 12:30
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Cluj-City Plaza,
Sindicatelor 6-9, Cluj-Napoca

THE RATIU DIALOGUES ON DEMOCRACY

Speakers:

- Prof Péter Balázs, Central European University
- Dr Tena Prelec, University of Oxford
- Dr Eric Weaver, University of Debrecen
- Dr Radu Albu-Comănescu, Babeş-Bolyai University

Free entry with required registration
Follows us for more details

RATIUM FORUM
THERATIUMFORUM
RATIUMFORUM.COM

GLOBAL CHALLENGES TO EUROPEAN VALUES IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA

Tuesday, 14 September 2021, 14:30 - 16:30
Ratiu Democracy Centre,
Piata 1 Decembrie 1918, Turda

THE RATIU DIALOGUES ON DEMOCRACY

Speakers:

- Prof Richard Higgott, Brussels School of Governance, VUB
- Prof Christopher Coker, LSE IDEAS

Free entry with required registration
Follows us for more details

RATIUM FORUM
THERATIUMFORUM
RATIUMFORUM.COM

IDEAS, IDEALS AND IDEOLOGY IN DEMOCRACIES

Tuesday, 14 September 2021, 10:30 - 12:30
Ratiu Democracy Centre,
Piata 1 Decembrie 1918, Turda

THE RATIU DIALOGUES ON DEMOCRACY

Speakers:

- Prof Christopher Coker, LSE IDEAS
- Slobodan G. Markovich, University of Belgrade
- Dr Erica Benner, Political Philosopher

Free entry with required registration
Follows us for more details

RATIUM FORUM
THERATIUMFORUM
RATIUMFORUM.COM

JOURNALISM AND THE MEDIA IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Monday, 13 September 2021, 15:30 - 17:30
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Cluj-City Plaza,
Sindicatelor 6-9, Cluj-Napoca

THE RATIU DIALOGUES ON DEMOCRACY

Speakers:

- John Lloyd, Financial Times
- Alison Smale, Institute of Human Sciences Vienna
- Wojciech Przybylski, Visegrad Insight and Res Publica

Free entry with required registration
Follows us for more details

RATIUM FORUM
THERATIUMFORUM
RATIUMFORUM.COM

ION RATIU JOURNALISM AWARD CEREMONY

Monday, 13 September 2021, 14:30 - 15:00
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Cluj-City Plaza,
Sindicatelor 6-9, Cluj-Napoca

THE RATIU DIALOGUES ON DEMOCRACY

Speakers:

- Nicolae Ratiu, Ratiu Family Charitable Foundation, Chairman
- Victor Ilie, Recorder, 2021 Award recipient
- Special guests

Free entry with required registration
Follows us for more details

RATIUM FORUM
THERATIUMFORUM
RATIUMFORUM.COM

THE RDD GALA DINNER

The 2021 Ratiu Dialogues on Democracy ended with a Gala Dinner organised in a splendid Transylvanian setting overlooking the Turda Gorge. The event concept bore the signature of Pamela Ratiu and Chef Paul Bloomfield.



14 SEPTEMBER 2021

A TRANSYLVANIAN NIGHT GALA DINNER

Location Petrestii de Jos, Cluj

Closing Remarks by Professor Gordon Barras, LSE IDEAS

Nicolae, Indrei, Pamela,

After two stimulating days focusing on the key issues of strengthening democracy and weakening corruption, which are at the heart of the Ratiu Forum's charter, the discussions continue. On one thing one thing, however, there is complete agreement - and that is our admiration and gratitude for what the three of you have done to make this possible.

Read more [here](#).

BLOG POSTS

UKRAINE, KOSOVO, AND TRANSNISTRIA: EUROPE'S 'FROZEN' CONFLICTS, OR THE CONTINENT'S 'FESTERING' CRISES?

by Sarah Coolican
Read [here](#)

TRIANON 100 YEARS AFTER: EXPLORING ONGOING HISTORICAL HUNGARIAN-ROMANIAN TENSIONS

by Megan Palmer and Mădălina Mocan
Read [here](#)

WHY WAR? WHY CONFLICT IS SO PREVALENT THROUGHOUT OUR HISTORY

Sarah Coolican interviews Professor Christopher Coker
Read [here](#)

BULGARIAN ELECTIONS: THE PRIME MINISTER RESIGNS AFTER WINNING THE ELECTION

by Galan Dall
Read [here](#)

QUO VADIS? THE 17+1 AND CHINA'S INROADS INTO CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

by Lukas Fiala
Read [here](#)

POLISH PROTESTS AGAINST ANTI-ABORTION LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS IN A BROADER CONTEXT

by Przemysław Tacik
Read [here](#)

HAVE WE MISSED A NEW 'SPRINGTIME OF NATIONS' IN EASTERN EUROPE?

by Luke Cooper
Read [here](#)

POPULISM BEFORE AND AFTER THE PANDEMIC

by Michael Burleigh
Read [here](#)

THE TEACHING OF ROMANIAN HISTORY, BETWEEN TRUTH AND DENIAL

Sarah Coolican interviews Emanuel Grec
Read [here](#)

DAY OF THE ASSASSINS: A HISTORY OF POLITICAL MURDER

Sarah Coolican interviews Professor Michael Burleigh
Read [here](#)

BULGARIA, WHERE 'AFTER THE ELECTIONS' IS 'BEFORE THE ELECTIONS'

by Louisa Slavkova
Read [here](#)

GLOBAL CHALLENGES TO EUROPEAN, WESTERN, LIBERAL VALUES

by Richard Higgott and Sarah Coolican
Read [here](#)

LOOKING BACK & GOING FORWARD: THE FUTURE OF THE EUROZONE AFTER COVID-19

by Dimitri Zabelin
Read [here](#)

DRAMATIC INTERACTIONS FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE: STORIES, IDENTITY AND AGENCY IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES

by Fin Kennedy
Read [here](#)

THE FIGHT AGAINST ORGANISED CRIME IN THE WESTERN BALKANS: THE EUROPEAN UNION'S PUSH AND PULL

by Bojan Elek
Read [here](#)

THE SALIENCY OF THE PAST: SOME THOUGHTS ON THE CASE OF ROMANIA

by Dennis Deletant
Read [here](#)

RUSSIAN-ROMANIAN RELATIONS AT ANOTHER BLACK SEA CROSSROAD

by Radu Albu Comănescu
Read [here](#)

THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION 30-YEARS ON

by Sarah Coolican
Read [here](#)

2021 FUNDING SUMMARY

SOURCE	RON	EURO
CTP Invest Bucharest sponsorship	288,054	58,193
Other corporate sponsors	12,500	2,525
Private donors	6,450	1,303
RFCF donations	6,595	1,332
TOTAL	313,599	63,353

THE RATIU FORUM TEAM



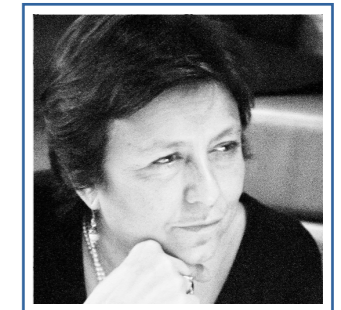
Nicolae Ratiu
Chairman of the Ratiu Family Charitable Foundation



Christopher Coker
LSE IDEAS Director



Pamela Roussos Ratiu
Director to Romania of the Ratiu Forum



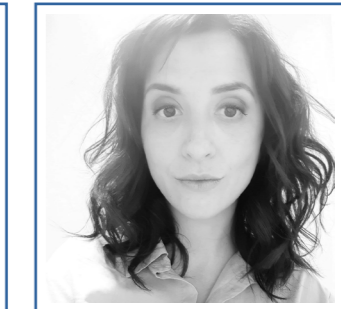
Emilia Knight
Centre Manager of LSE IDEAS



Megan Palmer
Programme Manager (2020, 2021)



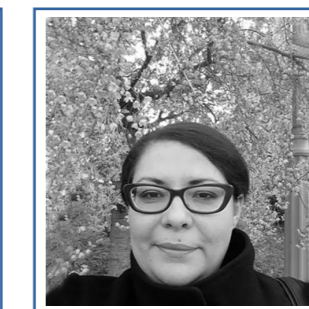
Sarah Coolican
Programme Manager (2021)



Dana Stoica
Communication Coordinator for Ratiu Forum



Oana Bakos
Project Manager for Ratiu Forum



Alis Costescu
Project Manager for Ratiu Forum



Nicoleta Bucur
Design and Website Manager for Ratiu Forum



Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Democracy
Society South-East Democracy

Society South-East Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Dialogue Society South-
East History Dialogue Society South-East
Democracy Region Balkans History Journalism
Dialogue Society South-East Europe Dialogue
Society South-East Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Dialogue Society South-East
Europe Dialogue Society South-East Democracy
Region Balkans History Journalism Dialogue
Society South-East Europe Dialogue Society
South-East Democracy Region Balkans History
Journalism Dialogue Society South-East Europe
Dialogue Society South-East Democracy Region
Balkans History Journalism Dialogue Society
South-East Europe Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Dialogue Society Region
Democracy Balkans History
Journalism Dialogue Society
Democracy Region Balkans
History Journalism Dialogue

 ratiuforum.com

 facebook.com/theratiuforum

 twitter.com/forumratiu