

The Embassy of Romania – London/ On October 24th, 2008, the Embassy of Romania in London hosted the **Conference of the Romanian Students in the UK**, the first event of this kind.



The event was organised under the patronage of the Embassy of Romania in the UK, the Ratiu Foundation and the British Romanian Chamber of Commerce. The participants comprised of over 150 Romanian students, Romanian professors and researchers, coming from the most important universities in the UK.

The **Conference** had as a main objective the creation of links between Romanian students, professors and researchers. Debating on various suggested themes of interests to all of them, as well as promoting the existing career opportunities in Romania, were also major points of discussion.

The event started with a plenary session, in which the following guests presented their points: Lord Watson of Richmond – member of the House of Lords, Honorary Chairman of the English Speaking Union and President of Cambridge Foundation, as representative of the British academic sector, Razvan Orasanu – State Counsellor in the Prime Minister's Chancellery, as representative of the governmental sector in Romania, Raymond Breden – CEO at KPMG Romania, as representative of the British business sector, Princess Marina Sturdza, President of Summits International Ltd., and Nicolae Ratiu, President of the Ratiu Foundation – as representatives of the non-governmental sector.

The second part of the Conference included presentations and debates in the four workshops that tackled the following subjects: Student Associations and networking; the Teaching and Researching Process; the Return to Romania: sectors and careers, as well as Promoting the image of Romania in the UK.

The Ambassador of Romania, Ion Jinga, addressed the participants in the opening of the event: *"Every responsible nation gathers up and promotes its values from fields such as science, education, and culture. Currently, there are 2,500 Romanian students in the UK, joined by an impressive number of researchers, professors, doctors, artists and architects. There are almost 600 Romanian doctors and nurses working in the British national healthcare system. Promoting the Romanian values is essential, it being a part of the European civilisation values. Solid education leads to the development of a nation."*



Lord Watson of Richmond greeted the presence of the Romanian students in the UK, emphasizing on the importance of globalising the activities of the education institutions which led to the students' mobility and freedom of movement: *"Mobility is the key to success in a globalised society."* English is the *"catalyst which brings societies closer, contributing to the exchange of ideas and opinions, and amplifying the chances of growth and development of a nation."*

Razvan Orasanu, also a graduate of a British university, pointed out the fact that this is the first meeting of this kind that he participated at and delivered a message from the Romanian Prime Minister, Calin Popescu-Tariceanu, which encouraged the students to return to Romania where they will find attractive job opportunities, after completing their studies,.

Raymond Breden offered the students a pragmatic presentation of the career opportunities from the business sector, useful advice for writing a CV, as well as preparing for a job interview in a multinational company.

Princess Marina Sturdza, who moderated the Conference, also shared with the ones present her experience in the non-governmental sector.

The "Research and teaching" workshop, held by Professors Dan Petrovici and Adrian Podoleanu from Kent University, presented concrete ways of obtaining European and national funds for research contracts, as well as scholarships, encouraging the students to follow the path of scientific or academic careers.



Dragos Bucurenci, Director and founder of the "Mai mult verde" ("More Green") association, won the audience over with his unique way of presenting his NGO's activities, as well as the advice he gave to students in regards to their decision of returning to Romania or staying in the UK after completing their studies.

Carmen Podgorean, Minister Counsellor at the Embassy of Romania, answered the students' questions concerning the job opportunities in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The workshop "Promoting the image of Romania in the UK" was moderated by Nicolae Ratiu, who told the participants: *"You have to be proud to be Romanians. Romania needs you!"* Narcisa Nita, Press Attaché, presented the Embassy's Strategy of promoting Romania's image, an introspection of the way in which the Romanian community is presented by the British media, the activities supported by the Embassy and the objectives in promoting the image of Romania in the UK.



The Conference marked the founding of *Romanian Youths*, the Romanian Students Association in the UK, which plans to offer the already existing Romanian students associations a framework of representation, knowledge and debate on various subjects of great interest to all students. The initiative belongs to a group of Romanian students from Queen Mary University in London, Sheffield University and Edinburgh University, Andrei Hancu, Razvan Hoinaru and Laurentiu Prodan.

The conclusion points were synthesized by the Ambassador Ion Jinga: *"There is not one single success recipe but, after this session of debates, we can say that mobility, perseverance, concision, the capacity to synthesize and the entrepreneurship spirit are a few attributes that you should develop for the future."*

The event concluded with a reception offered to the participants by the Ambassador of Romania in the UK.