ACADEMIC FOCUS

**Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeships
and Youth Entrepreneurship
Programme in Romania, funded by the EEA Grants –
Financial Mechanism 2014-2021**
Agreement no.: 18-COP-0017
(October 1st, 2019 – August 31st, 2022)

THESEUS Project aims at Connecting the Disconnections between Disparate Data, in order to provide knowledge for building Insightful Analysis. The broad availability of data has led to increasing interest in methods for extracting useful information and knowledge from data, determining the emergence of new fields of science (e.g. data science). At the same time, big data algorithms have been signaled as a potential leverage that can lead to digital dictatorship if insufficiently understood, poorly handled and unethically regulated. Companies in every industry focused on ways to structure, process and analyze the growing volume and diversity of data so as to streamline decisions and gain a competitive edge. State institutions, regular citizens, social and political science practitioners on the other hand, are not yet properly equipped to properly mitigate the economic, social and political impact of the information technology revolution that awaits us in the decades to come. Therefore, in the process of understanding and mitigating risks and opportunities of Big Data, complex workloads, new skills and competences have to be acquired.

Following these emerging needs, the **objective of the project** is to enhance human capital and knowledge base by tackling directly skills and competences required and providing an understanding of the

processes guiding big data analytics. This objective will be met by **building and delivering a course**, consisting of four modules, capitalizing on big data methodologies: introductory module, data collection module, data processing module and data analysis module.

The course will not be designed as a technologically focused course, but rather knowledge, awareness and understanding focused course. The course avoids an algorithm-centered approach. It focuses on how options are understood and choices and tradeoffs are designed. Thus, it enhances, through learning by doing, key-competences and skills required in collecting, understanding, correlating and processing big data, helping them streamline problem-solving processes in a data-driven ecosystem.

The project addresses **two professional categories:** *governance and social scientists* and *national security practitioners*, whose complementary work is of paramount importance in insuring the sustainable development of democracy. Both categories carry out great responsibility at social level. Ill-informed decisional processes in national security and policy-making, based on incomplete, inaccurate or incorrectly correlated data generate negative impact, affecting society at large. Although practitioners targeted by the project work with large amounts of data, their background is mostly in social science or security studies, lacking a very specific technical training. Such (future) professionals need to better understand what and how big data can be capitalized so as to ethically and lawfully improve the overall efficiency of their organization.

Participating organisations are: "Mihai Viteazul" National Information Academy (ANIMV) – Romania; University of Malta (UoM) – Malta; Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) – Norway; National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (SNSPA) – Romania. THESEUS Project is part of the Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeships and Youth Entrepreneurship Programme in Romania, being funded by the EEA Grants – Financial Mechanism 2014-2021.

**Empowering a Pan-European
Network to Counter Hybrid
Threats (EU-HYBNET)
H2020 Grant agreement
no: 883054**
(May 2020 – April 2025)

EU-HYBNET is a 60-month project (2020-2025), financed through the Horizon 2020, which will start in May 2020. The project is being developed and implemented by a consortium of 25 partners, coordinated by LAUREA University of Applied Sciences from Finland. The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats and the Joint Research Centre are leading partners of the EU-HYBNET project.

EU-HYBNET will bring together practitioners and stakeholders to identify and define their most urgent requirements for countering hybrid threats, by undertaking an in-depth analysis of gaps and needs and prioritizing those that are crucial to address through effective research and innovation initiatives, including arranging training and exercise events to test the most promising innovations (technical and social) which will lead to the creation of a roadmap for success and solid recommendations for uptake, industrialization and standardization across the European Union.

The project aims to build an empowered, sustainable network, which will:

- define common requirements that can fill knowledge gaps, deal with performance needs, and enhance capabilities of innovation endeavors;
- monitor significant developments in research and innovation;
- deliver recommendations for uptake and industrialization of the most promising innovations that address the needs of
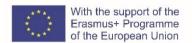
practitioners, and determine associated priorities for standardization;
- establish conditions for enhanced interaction among its members;
- persistently strive to increase its membership and continually build network capacity through knowledge exchange.

EU-HYBNET will address four core themes to ensure coherence in the project's results: 1) Future Trends of Hybrid Threats, 2) Cyber and Future Technologies, 3) Resilient Civilians, Local Level and National Administration and 4) Information and Strategic Communication.

Romania represents the consortium through "Mihai Viteazul" National Intelligence Academy (MVNIA). MVNIA will incorporate the project's research findings and information into its MA & PhD research programs. As students come from diverse areas (security practitioners, legal, media, private business), the impact of exploitation of the information will reach a wide audience, and the EU-HYBNET training documents will also be employed to enhance capabilities of experts and practitioners in the fight against hybrid threats.

EU-HYBNET is a Pan-European network of security practitioners, stakeholders, academia, industry players, and SME actors across EU, collaborating with each other to counter hybrid threats.

Jean Monnet Module EUSEGOV

A common understanding of EU Security Governance
Teaching and researching the EU security policies and institutions
for a better academic and professional approach in the security
and intelligence field
(October 21st, 2020 – October 20th, 2023)*

"Mihai Viteazul" National Intelligence Academy (MVNIA) implements a three-year Jean Monnet Module grant: **EUSEGOV** – *A common understanding of EU Security Governance. Teaching and researching the EU security policies and institutions for a better academic and professional approach in the security and intelligence field*. The EUSEGOV module focuses on EU Governance, a subfield of EU studies that has received less attention comparatively with the study of other EU related issues. The module aims at educating students and at equipping them with the knowledge and necessary skills to become EU citizens and better security providers. The academic value of the EUSEGOV module is to deliver courses on EU Security Governance for security and intelligence studies students. The courses tackle specific aspects of EU integration studies: *Introduction to EU Security Governance and Strategic communication in EU Security Governance.*

The **specific objectives** of the Module are:
- Providing a coordinated series of MA compulsory and PhD summer courses aiming to familiarize students with the main trends and approaches in the field of communication and security governance in the European Union.
- Updating the teaching contents on the topic by research activities.
- Making aware students who do not automatically come into contact with EU studies of the importance of security governance by training them in using both the specialized language and methodology specific to subjects that pertain to the area of international relations, political sciences, as well as security studies.

The module's objectives will be achieved through the **teaching, researching and promoting** activities. To this respect, the EUSEGOV module includes a **two completely new courses**, one compulsory for MA students and one optional for PhD students, covering a major gap in the curricula i.e. the developments in the idea of European Security Governance. By bringing together academics and experts from various fields of knowledge, from civil society organizations and institutions, the interdisciplinary teaching and research approach of this Module provides the students with an in-depth and systematic understanding of key EU Security Governance topic. The EUSEGOV includes also research activities on the **Strategic communication in EU Security Governance thematic**. The research report will contain an extensive analysis of three aspects: *Strategic communication in EU – practices and official documents*; *EU Security strategic communication institutions*; *EU Security Governance future: alternative scenarios*.

A general dissemination campaign will be implemented to create a broad understanding of the importance and the particularities of EU Security Governance: two conferences, opening and closing conferences; a MA and a PhD round-table debates The main output is represented by the training of a target group formed by master students and PhD candidates in security and intelligence studies that must better understand the direct and indirect implications of EU's security governance impact on the member states.

DOMINOES
Digital cOMpetences InformatiOn EcoSystem[1]
ID: 2021-1-RO01-KA220-HED-000031158

The DOMINOES project aims to reduce societal polarization through combating the rapid spread of online disinformation among young people. In order to do achieve this result, the project aims to increase the capabilities of partner organizations to develop new and interactive online educational content, which is adapted to the specificities of the current and future, digitally skilled, generations of students. The project begins from two inter-related premises: that the digital ecosystem is undergoing a significant transformation, due to the emergence of new communication platforms and that higher education institutions need to develop curricula that teach critical thinking and digital skills holistically rather than in a disparate fashion.

The project targets two groups: current teaching staff and students of partner institutions, who will be future professionals in the

field of security and intelligence. Selected participants from the two target groups will be helped, through several on-site classes, to acquire digital teaching skills, to produce innovative educational material and to use advanced digital skills for the detection and countering of online propaganda, fake news and information manipulation.

The project will elaborate a handbook on the topic of digital disinformation and fake news. This will include the most relevant and up-to-date information on the evolution of the phenomenon of fake news, the psychology of disinformation, the social factors supporting or arresting the dissemination of fake news, skills relevant to avoid online disinformation and policies and legal approaches employed to deter the phenomenon. Then, three on-site courses, each including 30 participants, will take place in the three participating countries. A mix of professors and students will be taught how to avoid online disinformation and how to teach others to do so, in an interactive and inclusive fashion. Finally, the information gathered for the handbook and validated through the face-to-face interactions will be used for the creation of an online course which will be accessible to a wide audience and will represent a sustainable product of the project. This course will include not only the theoretical material gathered for the elaboration of the handbook, but also a wide set of interactive exercises aimed at facilitating student engagement with the material.

The main outcome of the project will be an increase in the advanced digital skills and ability to spot fake news of the representatives of the target group. Participants in the on-site and online courses will improve their teaching abilities and their competences in addressing a young generation of digital natives.

At the end of the project, the partners will organize three simultaneous multiplier events, which will be addressed to persons from the wider target group, but who were not part of the initial on-site training activities. The main results of the project will be presented, with a particular focus on the online training course. This will allow participants to access the same information as those that were included in the on-site activities and further help achieve the project's objectives of reducing societal polarization and combating online disinformation.

Erasmus+ Mobility Projects at „Mihai Viteazul"
National Intelligence Academy

Between June 2020 and May 2022, two Erasmus+ KA103 mobility projects were implemented within „Mihai Viteazul" National Intelligence Academy (MVNIA). The projects were funded by the European Commission, through the National Agency.

The objectives pursued by MVNIA within the the two mobility projects were in line with the specific objectives of Key-Action 1. Therefore, the Academy sought to:

- Support students in order to improve their knowledge, skills and competences;
- Favour quality improvement, excellence in innovation and internationalization by intensifying transnational cooperation with other higher education institutions and training centers;
- Improve the international dimension of education and professional training by promoting mobility and cooperation between higher education institutions;
- Increase the capacity to offer study programmes that better meet the needs of the students.

The mobility of staff and students sets the premises for improving professional knowledge and experience, developing linguistic and intercultural skills, as well as strenghtening European identity through the promotion of common values. Collectively, the 2 projects encompassed a number of 8 beneficiaries, students and professors alike, who took part in different tyes mobilities, as follows:

- 4 training mobilities
- 2 traineeships
- 1 teaching mobility
- 1 study mobility

MVNIA embraces cooperation and recognizes the importance of belonging to university networks for the development of competitiveness and institutional modernization. For this reason, strenghtening existing partnerships and starting new projects are objectives of utmost importance in the process of institutional internationalization. Fortunately, the Erasmus programme has put at MVNIA's disposal all the mechanism needed to achieve this goal. As a result, throughout the implementaion period, the Academy has signed three new inter-institutional agreements with the following institutions: University of Malta, the Jagiellonian University in Krakow and Matej Bel University in Banska Bystryca.

Even though the two projects have been completed, the Academy will continue to disseminate and exploit their results in new projects, scientific publications, and by developing new study programmes.

CALL FOR PAPERS *ROMANIAN INTELLIGENCE STUDIES REVIEW*

"Mihai Viteazul" National Intelligence Academy, via its National Institute for Intelligence Studies, publishes the *Romanian Intelligence Studies Review* (RISR), a high-quality peer reviewed and indexed research journal, edited in English and Romanian twice a year.

The aim of the journal is to create a framework for debate and to provide a platform accessible to researchers, academicians, professional, practitioners and PhD students to share knowledge in the form of high quality empirical and theoretical original research papers, case studies, conceptual framework, analytical and simulation models, literature reviews and book review within security and intelligence studies and convergent scientific areas.

Topics of interest include but are not limited to:
- Intelligence in the 21st century
- Intelligence Analysis
- Cyber Intelligence
- Open Source Intelligence (OSINT)
- History and memory in Intelligence
- Security paradigms in the 21st century
- International security environment
- Security strategies and policies
- Security Culture and public diplomacy

Review Process: RISR shall not accept or publish manuscripts without prior peer review. Material which has been previously copyrighted, published, or accepted for publication will not be considered for publication in the journal. There shall be a review process of manuscripts by one or more independent referees who are conversant in the pertinent subject area. Articles will be selected based on their relevance to the journal's theme, originality and scientific correctness, as well as observance of the publication's norms. The editor evaluates the recommendation and notifies the author of the manuscript status.

The review process takes maximum three weeks, the acceptance or rejects notification being transmitted via email within 5 weeks from the date of manuscript submission.

Date of Publishing: RISR is inviting papers for No. 27 and 28 and which is scheduled to be published on June and December, 2022.

Submission deadlines: February 1st and July 1st

Author Guidelines: Author(s) should follow the latest edition of APA style in referencing. Please visit www.apastyle.org to learn more about APA style, and http://www.animv.ro for author guidelines. For more details please access the official website: **rrsi.ro**

Contact: Authors interested in publishing their paper in RISR are kindly invited to submit their **proposals electronically in .doc/.docx format at our e-mail address rrsi@sri.ro, with the subject title: article proposal.**