

CRPE ANNUAL REPORT

2024

INTRODUCTION

2024 was far from an ordinary year, marked by an extraordinary level of electoral activity in both Romania and the Republic of Moldova. In May, European elections were held, followed by Romania's presidential and parliamentary elections in November and December—though the presidential vote was ultimately cancelled due to Russian interference. In Moldova, the presidential elections were organized in October, alongside a referendum on EU integration. Russian involvement was reported, including attempts to buy votes and undermine the democratic process.

For us at CRPE, this context gave even more meaning to the projects we had already set in motion, focused on our areas of expertise: civic engagement and participatory governance, youth activism, the fight against disinformation, agriculture, rural development, and education. They became even more relevant as the year unfolded, and allowed us to connect with communities and institutions in ways that felt timely and impactful.

It was a year that challenged the European project in many ways, but also reaffirmed the importance of the values we work to promote every day: European solidarity, democracy, transparency, and accountability.

In this report, you'll find a clear look at our year through a summary of our activities, publications, and main achievements, along with a budget overview and an introduction to the team behind it all.

Thank you for following our work, and for supporting it!



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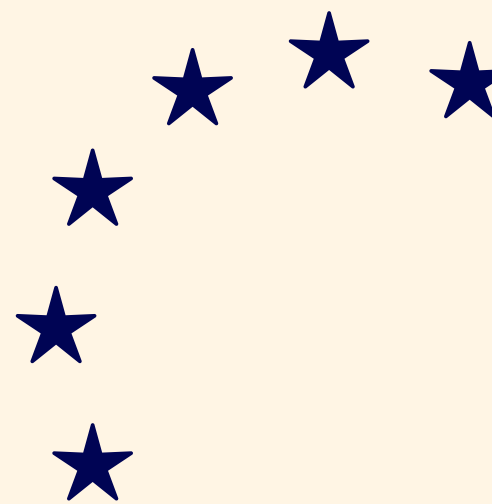


WHO WE ARE

The Romanian Center for European Policies (CRPE) is one of the main Romanian think tanks specialised in European affairs. Since 2009 we have been conducting research in the field of European and national public policies, implementing advocacy campaigns, organising public debates, training programmes and civic engagement campaigns for citizens.

Our main areas of expertise are democracy and good governance, external relations – especially the Republic of Moldova and the Eastern Partnership, agriculture and rural development, education, youth involvement and active citizenship. CRPE was the first Romanian think tank to open a branch in the Republic of Moldova in 2012.

We want to live in a democratic country, in a rule-of-law state that is fully anchored in Europe. We believe in evidence-based public policies designed to serve the needs of all citizens. We design our projects bearing in mind the small changes we can make. We bring real life – documented in figures and stories – on the decision makers' table, in consultations on European and national laws, policies and programmes.



THE YEAR 2024 IN NUMBERS



6500+ people reached

through civic events, EU debates, workshops,
media literacy sessions, and online modules



700+ students involved

of which 500+ reached through online EU learning modules



70+ schools

connected with
from agricultural high schools to top civic and energy
efficiency education hubs



50+ events, **4500+** total participants

debates, civic workshops, eco-camps, simulations, study visits and more



170+ teachers trained

in agricultural innovation, civic tools, green education and
media literacy, through regional meetings, summer schools,
civic tools workshops and events



30+ publications & toolkits

policy briefs, educational modules, practical guides

for teachers, youth workers, and civil society



50+ EU policy recommendations

co-written with youth in 5 countries



15+ institutional partnerships

with ministries, local governments, and EU-level
actors to co-create better policies

**PROJECTS,
PUBLICATIONS
AND EVENTS**



AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

We grow through agricultural education (1/2)

Timeline: January 2024 – December 2026

“Creștem prin Educație Agricolă/ We grow through agricultural education” is a **long-term program dedicated to supporting the transformation of Romania’s agricultural education system through a personalized, dynamic approach.**

Now entering Phase 4 (2024–2026), the project focuses on helping high school students acquire relevant technical skills and motivation to pursue farming careers, while also supporting the teachers who guide them. The new phase aims to foster stronger connections between agricultural schools and local agribusinesses and improve work-based learning opportunities such as internships and study visits.

In 2024, CRPE:

- Advocated for the effective implementation of the National Resilience and Recovery Program (PNRR) financing measure (43 mil EUR) for agricultural high-schools (AHS),
- Completed a comprehensive research aimed at identifying the potential of expanding work-based learning in agriculture,
- Promoted the updating of agricultural specialization manuals by backing the production of a German-to-Romanian agricultural mechanic manual with FAPPR's assistance.
- Pushed for the creation of a larger allocation for MADR in 2025 and promoted and helped to get data on AHS needs to be met.
- Launched a study to follow up and assess the interest of students in AHS.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

We grow through agricultural education (2/2)

Events:

- Agricultural education in the horizon 2030: Vision, Programs, and Funding – The Annual event of the AHS, Bucharest, February 22nd – 23rd 2024, which brought together teachers from over 35 agricultural high schools, representatives of ministries and other relevant institutions, academia, and the NGO sector.
- 2 Agri 4.0 webinars, with a focus on automation and smart farm management (November 2024).



AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

CoopNet 3.0

Timeline: May 2023 – December 2025

The COOPNET 3.0 project builds upon a comprehensive program initiated in 2012, focused on strengthening the agricultural cooperatives sector in Romania. Led by a consortium comprising CRPE, Civitas, and CMSC, with support from the Romanian–American Foundation, this program has impacted public policy, engaged with policymakers, developed and scaled a cooperative intervention model, provided training for cooperative facilitators and leaders, fostered communication within the cooperative sector, and ultimately strengthened the agricultural sector.

CRPE sustained its commitment to strengthening agricultural cooperatives by conducting in-depth research and creating dialogue platforms. The organization strategically presented its findings to key stakeholders—governmental agencies, financial institutions, and retailers—to advocate for policies and programs that would better support and incentivize the growth of these cooperatives, contributing to a more resilient and equitable agricultural landscape.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

CoopNet 3.0

Events

- The event "Agricultural Cooperatives in 2024: Development and Perspectives": brought together representatives from public institutions such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the Romanian Parliament, representatives of LAGs (Local Action Groups), agricultural universities, NGOs, farmers, and representatives of agricultural cooperatives.

Publications:

- "Agricultural Cooperatives in 2024: Development and Perspectives" - a secondary data analysis on the comprehensive agri coops database and a survey to provide a better understanding of the state of development and professionalization of the early-stage agricultural cooperatives (established after 2020) in Romania

EDUCATION

Advocacy for the inclusion of young adults from vulnerable backgrounds on the labor market (1/2)

Timeline: 2023 - 2025

From 2023 to 2025, CRPE is implementing an advocacy project, supported by HEKS/EPER Romania, to enhance career counseling services and improve dual vocational and technical education (VET) in Romania. The program focuses on developing and implementing advocacy plans at both the local and national levels, incorporating technical dialogue with relevant institutions, building supporter networks, and organizing consultations, debates, media outreach, and events. Activities primarily target Covasna, Mureş, Sibiu, and Alba counties, where HEKS/EPER and its partners are implementing projects to increase access to decent work for vulnerable young adults.

EDUCATION

Advocacy for the inclusion of young adults from vulnerable backgrounds on the labor market (2/2)

Events:

- Career guidance as a core element of school counseling: Public policy recommendations from Covasna, Alba, and Sibiu counties.

Publications:

- Good practices in ensuring the quality of career guidance
- School and career counseling in relation to the community
- Career guidance and community engagement: European best practices
- Implementing School and Career Counseling: Part II

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS

IDEU – Digitalization and Inclusion in the EU

Timeline: June 2024 - March 2026

IDEU aims to gather citizens' opinions and recommendations regarding the EU's digital transformation policy that promises to "leave no one behind." It seeks to build greater understanding of EU digitalization policies through a crowdsourcing approach. We will ask citizens to share the challenges they face in everyday life due to the lack of digital inclusion, as well as solutions that we can then promote in public policy debates. Our objective is to raise awareness in society about the goals and ambitions of digital transformation at European, national, and local levels, while also encouraging collaboration across various stakeholder groups (NGOs, policymakers, public authorities, academia, media).



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Green Rights for a Sustainable Future (1/2)

Timeline: September 2022 - November 2024

Green Rights is a multi-year project led by CRPE, focusing on addressing and highlighting the climate challenges faced by urban areas in several EU member states, including Romania, Hungary, and Italy. Launched in late 2022, this project emphasises the critical role of citizen engagement in achieving the EU's climate goals for 2030 and 2050 and fostering carbon-neutral cities.

The project engaged more than 1,500 participants, ranging from civic groups, CSOs, and youth organizations to public authorities through more than 30 national and cross-border activities. It facilitated citizen dialogues and debates on urban climate challenges, developed action plans, created interactive tools to assess public awareness and behavior, published assessments and reports on EU climate goals, collaborated with media to promote climate journalism, empowered youth and underrepresented groups to engage in climate action, and worked to increase transparency and accountability in public authorities' climate policies.



Green Rights for a Sustainable Future (2/2)

Publications:

- Green Urban Transformation: case studies and insights
- What is the role of green investments in the future of Romanian cities?

Applications: Carbon Footprint Calculator

Events

- Green Priorities in the Future of Romanian Cities - 28th of May 2024
- The Future of the European Green Deal - 29th of May 2024
- CSOs role in promoting green projects in urban areas - 3rd of June 2024
- Climate Emergency: Between What Public Authorities Can Do and Personal Impact - 25th of October 2024
- From awareness to action: Understanding our impact and shaping a climate-responsible future - 24th of October
- Bucharest's pollution crisis: Making green policies and investments a priority - 12th of November



YOUTH PARTICIPATION

EmpowerYouth: Increasing youth engagement in public decision-making

Timeline: November 2024 - November 2026

EmpowerYouth seeks to enhance the political and civic participation of young people in Romania, Armenia, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova by fostering an open dialogue between youth and decision-makers. The project will support 80 youth organisations in increasing civic engagement through environmental and climate-related issues, topics that resonate strongly with young people and serve as a catalyst for participation. Advocating for environmentally friendly policies and combating climate change are among the top expectations young people have from the European Union.



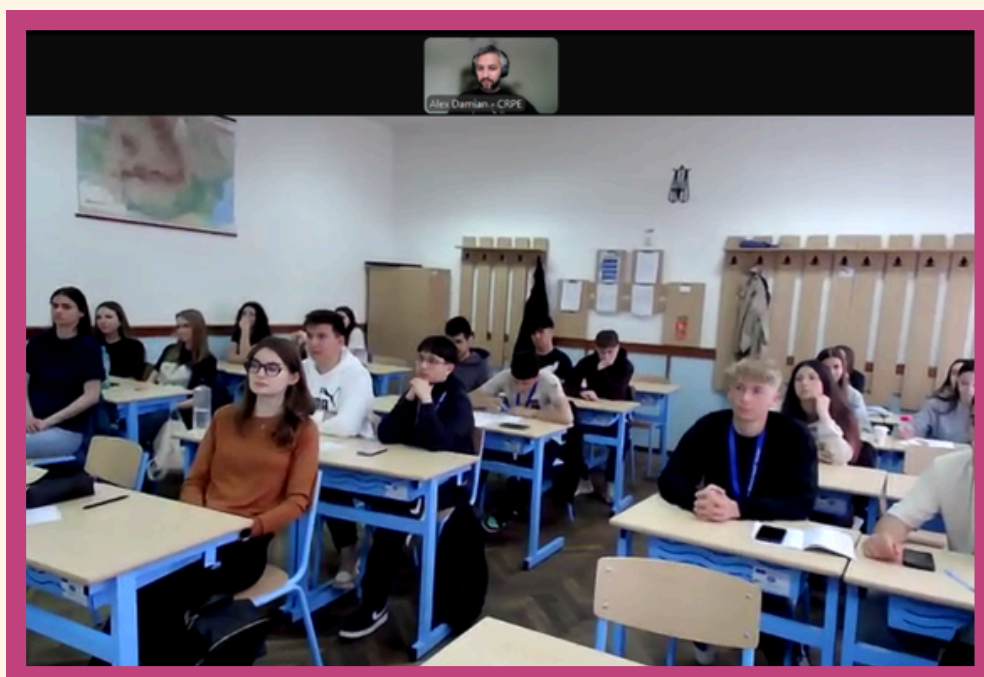
YOUTH PARTICIPATION

EUTEAM: Youth learning and virtual exchanges

Timeline: February 2024 - February 2027

EUTEAM aims to empower over 2,300 youths, 100 teachers, and 100 youth workers by promoting civic engagement on issues that matter most to young people. The project includes the development of three open-access learning modules for youths, on Active Citizenship, Diversity and Interculturalism, and Media Literacy, and one for teachers and youth workers on accessing EU-funded programs.

Activities include organizing virtual programs and sessions for both youths and teachers, developing youth-led action plans and implementing local campaigns in each country, and cross-country working groups and events. The youths will be challenged to transform the ideas and knowledge they have gained after the workshops and training sessions into action plans that are based on the real needs of their school or community.



YOUTH PARTICIPATION

EUElectionPlay. Gamifying youth public participation (1/2)

Timeline: October 2022 – March 2024

Only 1 in 4 young people in Romania voted in the 2020 parliamentary elections, and civic engagement remains worryingly low, especially in rural and disadvantaged areas, with most youth having little to no experience in volunteering, NGO activities, or public consultations.

Schools are key to shaping civic understanding, yet often fail to provide practical, engaging experiences that help students grasp how democratic institutions function. The “EUElectionPlay” project addresses this gap by using gamified, hands-on education in Romania, Slovakia, Portugal, and Hungary to promote inclusive democracy, helping young people reflect on their role in society and learn how to actively participate in shaping it.



YOUTH PARTICIPATION

EU election Play. Gamifying youth public participation (2/2)

Events:

- Youth Voting Participation - March - May 2024
- Study visit for young ambassadors of civic participation - 24 th of May



YOUTH PARTICIPATION

CIVIC-EU: Young Civic Monitors for the Future

(1/2)

Timeline: October 2022 - October 2024

In 2024, CRPE scaled the impact of the Civic-EU project by transferring the results of the 2023 civic monitoring to a wider audience and creating new spaces for youth participation. Two civic workshops in Timisoara and Bucharest engaged over 70 high school students in identifying and debating local issues, while a public debate with European Parliament candidates enabled direct youth-policy dialogue.

A civic monitoring video and national policy recommendations were produced to support these activities. The project concluded with a transnational dissemination event in Bucharest, bringing together over 80 young people and experts from all five partner countries to explore solutions for reducing urban-rural gaps and strengthening civic education and youth cooperation. In total, the project involved over 150 young people, generated 50 EU-level policy recommendations and reinforced CRPE's role in advancing youth civic engagement in Romania.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION

CIVIC-EU: Young Civic Monitors for the Future

(2/2)

Events:

- Two civic workshops in Timisoara and Bucharest
- A public debate with European Parliament candidates
- a transnational dissemination event in Bucharest

Publications:

- A civic monitoring video
- 50 EU-level policy recommendations



FIGHTING DISINFORMATION

Who and how: combating misinformation that alienates citizens from the European project (1/2)

Timeline: October 2022 - November 2024

In Romania, where low citizens' awareness towards disinformation and distorted narratives threatens trust in the EU, our project set out to map out, expose, and counter the narratives pulling people away from the European project. Over two years, we reached more than 1,200 participants directly through citizen dialogues, university debates, and media literacy workshops. Moreover, through over 60 media pieces, interactive tools, and fact-checking content, we engaged thousands more online.

We empowered local communities, journalists, youth, and diaspora groups to understand and resist anti-EU disinformation, in the hope of laying the groundwork for long-term societal resilience across Romania, Bulgaria, and Italy.



FIGHTING DISINFORMATION

Who and how: combating misinformation that alienates citizens from the European project (2/2)

Publications:

- MONITORIZARE: Ținte ale dezinformării în anul electoral 2024

Events:

- CITIZENS DEBATE - 29th of March 2024
- YOUTHS DEBATE - 10th of April 2024
- Bookfest: Cine minte și de ce? - 30th of May 2024
- Dezinformarea legată de UE - 3rd of October 2024
- Workshop anti-EU narratives - 10th of October 2024
- DISINFO Workshop - 26th of November 2024
- Webinar FAKE NEWS Click&Collect



FIGHTING DISINFORMATION

Disinfo 4 Black Sea

Timeline: May 2023 - March 2024

At the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war, disinformation surged across the Black Sea region, amplified on and by social media, and fueled by coordinated influence campaigns from Russia, China, and Iran, in order to deepen existing divisions within democratic societies. With societal resilience at a low point in countries like Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine, our project launched a rapid-response investigation into the narratives, networks, and public impact of this disinformation.

Over nine months, we combined research methods, content monitoring and social media listening platforms, data-science, fact-checking and investigative journalistic practices to expose disinformation networks and measure their public impact. The result: five national analyses, seven comparative reports, and over 100,000 online views.

Publications:

<https://www.crpe.ro/ro/disinfo4blacksea-investigarea-dezinformarii-in-regiunea-marii-negre/>



CRPE AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

FARMKEEN - workplace learning and sustainability in agricultural schools in Moldova

(1/2)

FARMKEEN is a cross-border project aiming to modernise agricultural vocational education in the Republic of Moldova by introducing student-centred, practice-based learning, digital tools, and sustainable agriculture. It addresses key challenges such as low productivity, declining youth interest, and limited practical training by aligning with European standards and fostering collaboration between schools and the agro-industrial sector.

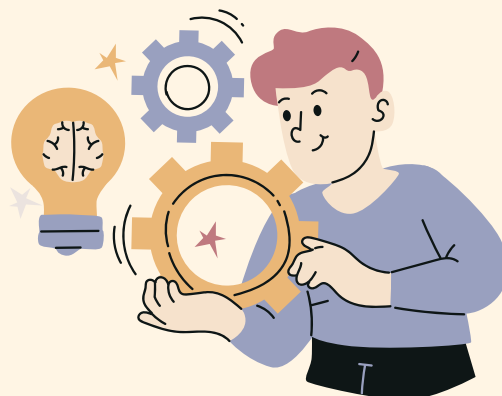
CRPE conducted research to identify and promote best practices and innovative digital tools for enhanced sustainable agriculture education in vocational schools. Based on these findings, CRPE advocated for improved curricula, increased collaboration between schools and the agro-industrial sector, and strengthened vocational training programs across Romania and Moldova.

CRPE AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

FARMKEEN – workplace learning and sustainability in agricultural schools in Moldova (2/2)

Publications:

- Synthesis of research reports: Workplace learning and education for sustainability in agricultural schools in the Republic of Moldova – Perspectives of students, practice partners and educational institutions



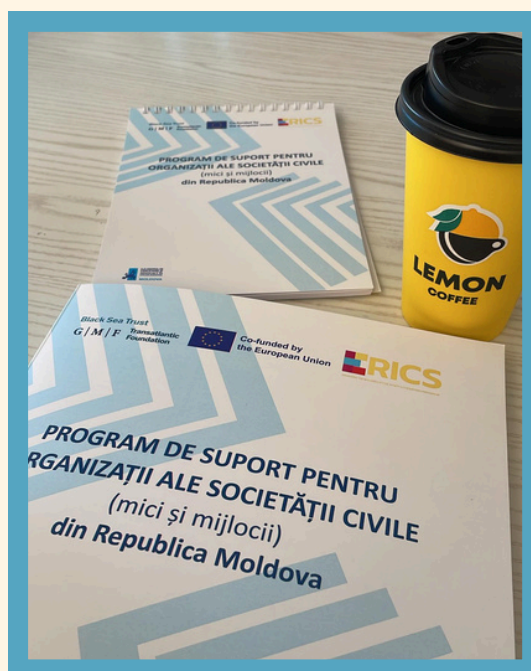
CRPE AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Striving to thrive: capacity building programs for CSOs in Moldova

Timeline: September 2024 – September 2025

We are implementing a comprehensive capacity-building program for 30 small CSOs in Moldova, combining both online and in-person sessions. The initiative includes tailored mentorship, ex-ante and post-ante evaluations, and support in areas such as financial management, advocacy, legal compliance, and organizational development.

Funded by the Black Sea Trust and the European Union, the program aims to enhance the sustainability and community impact of participating CSOs, particularly those operating in smaller towns and rural areas. Top-performing organizations will receive additional financial assistance for essential technological upgrades.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Empowering Communities for the Green Transition: Romania - Norway Knowledge Exchange for Clean Energy & Building Renovation (1/2)

Timeline: September 2024 - March 2025

The project supports Romania's green transition through cooperation with Norway and building local capacity in three key areas: energy efficiency and building renovation, clean energy use (especially geothermal), and municipal waste management.

The project helps Romanian public authorities and communities adopt more sustainable practices, reduce emissions, and make better use of underutilized resources, while promoting policy improvements and cross-sector collaboration. To do so, we wrote a policy brief about premises for good practices in public investments for the renovation, rehabilitation, modernization or construction of public buildings to nZEB standards. We also held 2 Eco-camps, one about good practices and solutions in public and private investments regarding urban transformation and energy efficiency, attended by 58 people, from public institutions, architects, engineers and civil society. The second one, about the implications of the communities in the green transition, gathered more than 80 participants.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Empowering Communities for the Green Transition: Romania - Norway Knowledge Exchange for Clean Energy & Building Renovation (2/2)

Events:

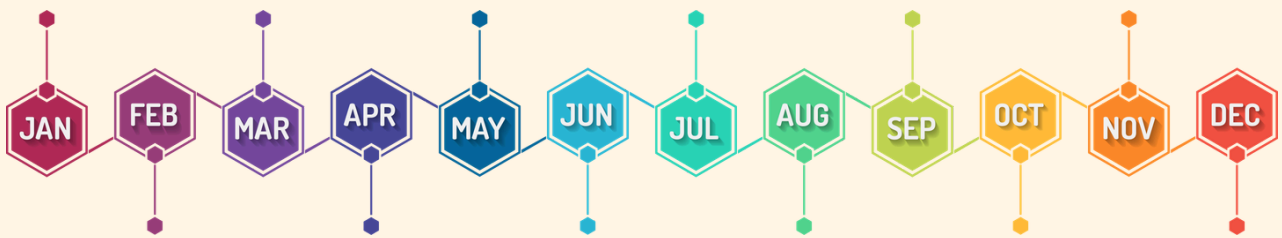
- Educational nZEB Workshops - February - April 2024
- Efficient Romania Forum- 16th of April 2024

Publications:

- Jurnalul consumatorului de energie responsabil
- Eficiență energetică: Practici zilnice
- Eficiența energetică: ABC-ul caselor inteligente
- Ghiduri pentru profesori



EVENTS TIMELINE



29th of March

EU related disinformation – Impact, Audiences, and Risks in the 2024 Electoral Year

February - April

Educational workshops for pupils and students: the path to energy efficiency and nZEB buildings

10th of April

Youths debate - Who poisons the collective mind–false narratives about the European Union

May

5th edition of the Efficient Romania Forum

29th of May

The future of the European Green Deal: between ecological balance and social equity.

28th of May

Green priorities for the future of Romanian cities

24th of May

Study visit for the civic participation's young ambassadors

May

Youth participation in voting: events organized in Darabani, Roman, Agnita, Cluj Napoca and Bucharest

30th of May

Debate for book and news readers: who lies and why? EU related disinformation

30th of May

Civic engagement workshop at C.D. Loga National College, Timișoara

30th of May

Public Debate: youth in dialogue with European Parliament candidates

June

Civic engagement workshop at Sfântul Sava National College

3rd of June

The NGOs' role in promoting green projects in urban areas

3rd of October

The impact of the EU related disinformation on the 2024 european elections

October

How can we support youth civic engagement?

10th of October

Online Workshop: fighting anti-EU narratives across Europe

12th of November

Polluted Bucharest. How can we prioritize green measures and investments

25th of October

Climate emergency: between what public authorities can do and our personal impact

25th of October

Climate emergency: between what public authorities can do and our personal impact

24th of October

Understanding environmental impact and shaping a responsible future

26th of November

Click&collect: media education resources for teachers and students

26th of November

The impact of disinformation in the online environment and measuring public perception

November

Agri 4.0 webinars



SMALL VOICES, BIG IMPACT!

One of 2024's highlights came from our Eulection Play project: we selected 7 young ambassadors from Romania who organized five events dedicated to young people in their communities (in Roman, Darabani, Agnita, Bucharest, and Cluj-Napoca). The goal was to promote youth participation in the European Parliament elections, especially since they were first time voters. These events included debates, workshops, and voting simulations.

CRPE's role? Just facilitation. The five events were entirely designed and led by young people, for young people, reflecting their needs and concerns. We are very grateful and proud of their involvement.



AGRICULTURAL HIGHSCHOOLS NATIONAL CONVENTION

Between February 22-24 2024, CRPE organized the biggest national event dedicated to agricultural high schools in Romania. The gathering brought together over 80 school directors, agricultural teachers, VET and agri stakeholders and policymakers to discuss the challenges and opportunities in aligning vocational agricultural education with labor market needs.

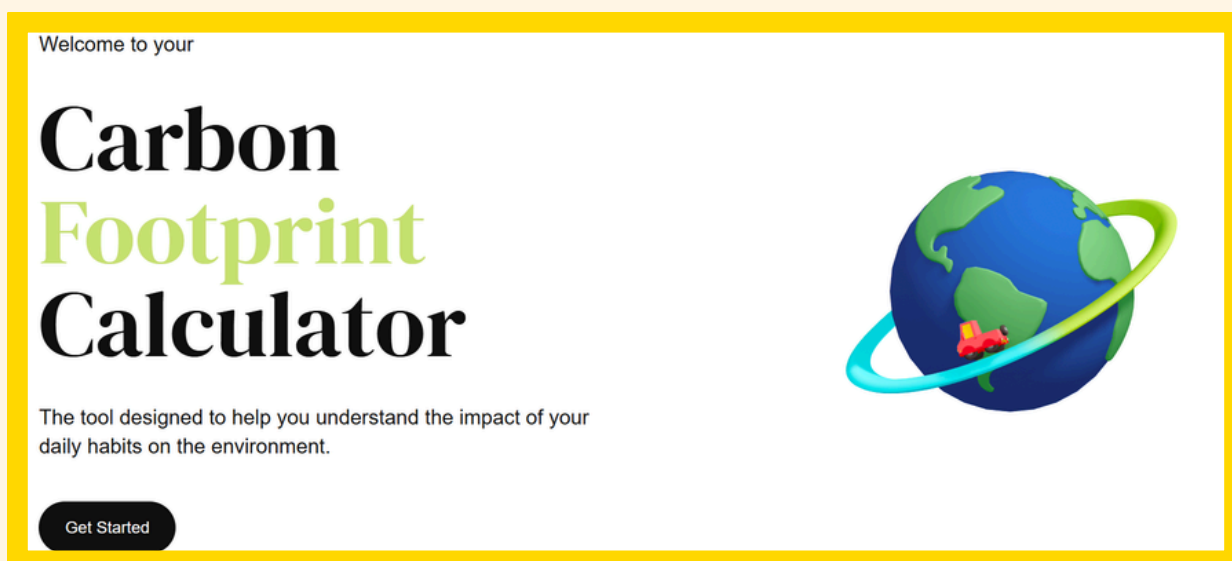
The event featured workshops, policy dialogues, and good practice exchanges, with a strong focus on dual education. The event fuelled various VET-agribusiness partnerships and set a milestone for agri VET policy development.



GREENER CITIES: ENSURING CITIZENS' BUY-IN ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Over the past year, CRPE brought green policies closer to citizens and helped reshape local development with sustainability at its core. Through over 10 events reaching more than 1,500 participants, we created meaningful spaces for dialogue between local authorities, civil society, and citizens. We launched Romania's first independent analysis of local development strategies from a green investment perspective, helping put sustainability on the agenda in communities across the country.

Beyond analysis, we focused on empowering action: we developed a user-friendly calculator to measure individual CO2 footprints, published best practices on transforming urban spaces through green investments, and supported community efforts to advocate for climate-resilient, citizen-centered policies.



HOW TO TALK TO STUDENTS ABOUT FAKE NEWS: TEACHERS STEPPING IN

2024 was a turning point for Romania. With a far-right candidate leading after the first round of presidential elections, we felt it was essential to take a clear, public stance. We stood firmly on the side of democracy, against extremism and disinformation, and for a Romania anchored in European values.

One of the manifestations of this stance was the organization of a workshop immediately after the first round of Romania's presidential elections, in which the far-right candidate emerged in first place, following a campaign conducted almost exclusively on social media. We responded by holding a session called **"How to Talk to Students About Fake News - CLICK&COLLECT,"** focused on media literacy tools and ways to address disinformation in the classroom.

Teachers were truly highly engaged, sharing concerns about the rise of fake news and looking for practical ways to guide their students through it. Many teachers signed up for follow-up sessions, a clear sign that they are ready to do more to support their students in navigating today's media landscape.





**2024 CAUGHT
ON CAMERA**



Annual Report











CRPE ROMANIA

Grants	519707 EUR
Economic revenues, other revenues	34169 EUR
Total income	553876 EUR
Staff salaries	318936 EUR
Expenses	235807 EUR
Excess/loss	-864 EUR
Total income in RON	2755312
Total income in USD	599189

CRPE MOLDOVA

Total income in MDL

87 162

**Equivalent total
income in EUR***

4 527

*calculated using the average annual conversion rate

TEAM DETAILS



BOARD

- Alexandra POPA
- Alexandru DAMIAN
- Ruxandra POPESCU

CRPE ROMANIA TEAM

- Bianca TOMA
- Cătălina MEIROSU
- Maria BALEA
- Oana GANEA
- Cristina CIUCU
- Dănuț LACUREZEANU
- Maria SUCIU
- Doriana GHEORGHE

CRPE MOLDOVA TEAM

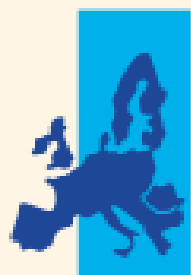
- Alina RAETCHI
- Diana BUTNARU
- Natalia CUCURUZAC

INTERNS

- Tania ACSINTE
- Vlad IAGAR

We would like to adress a special thank you to our partners, colleagues, teachers, students, and the wider civil society who have been part of our journey this year. Together, we've learned, built, and acted for education, inclusion, growth and a greener future. Your support and trust made it all possible. We look forward to continuing this work, and achieving even more, together in the year to come.

SEE YOU IN 2025!



CENTRUL ROMÂN
DE POLITICI EUROPENE

CRPE

DEBATING EUROPE, PROVIDING EXPERTISE

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