

The Romania Film project

Romania is one of the candidate countries in Eastern Europe that applied to be member of the European Union. In 1995 Romania applied, and for the time being it has been given the accession date of January 1st 2007. By applying for membership of the EU, Romania is hoping for an improvement of both the economical and social situation. For the European Union on the other hand, enlargement of the Union will stimulate economical growth and stability in the region. Within the frame of the wider concepts of worldview and identity, we shall elaborate on this theme in a film project.

Content

We set out from the way in which Romanians look towards the world outside Romania. The accession to the European Union is a contemporary theme to visualize this. The question that we try to answer is in what way the process towards the accession has an influence on daily Romanian reality. Often European issues are associated with enlargement of scale. That's why we choose to look at what's happening at a local level. To see how decisions made at a European level affect events in daily life. Because policy-making is usually quite an abstract process, we want to visualize what, for the Romanians, accession to the EU is really about. In this way we want to show the personal side to a discussion that concerns us all. Personally we, the filmmakers, consider the enlargement of the European Union as a positive development. Nevertheless we think it's a continuous learning process of which there's still enough left to be said. That's why we want to show different sides and interests involved in such a complicated process.

Audience

Our aim is to reach an audience broadly interested in society, in the Netherlands, Romania and other European countries. In the Netherlands you could stereotype them as NRC/Volkskrant-readers, people interested in contemporary issues and the world around them. These are people both in favour as well as against the EU, but with an open mind for discussion. This also includes people (professionally) interested in Eastern Europe but our main focus is explicitly towards a broader audience.

The Romanian people will be a special member of our audience, since they shall be spectator and at the same time subject of the film.

Design

The Romania Film project includes a film, a website and an exhibition. In this project reality is approached in a researching and at the same time interpretative way. We think that the different backgrounds of the filmmakers, art and science, will be of extra value to the contents of the project. By combining two different approaches that constantly challenge one another other during the making of the project, a result will arise with multiple elements that will supplement and at the same time balance each other.

To visualize this in the film we will make use of interviews with both citizens and officials of varying levels of government. But, next to the so-called 'talking heads', we will also use pure visual impressions that can say more than a thousand words. We will support the film by an exhibition of video stills, selected from the recorded video material. By showing contradictions we shall visualize complex reality without trying to moralize.

The website has a triple aim; to elaborate on the contents of our project, to communicate about the developments and to promote it. The double-faced character of the project, through the differing backgrounds of the initiators, will also be found in the website; in the combination of socially engaged discussion and visual elements. It will be possible to see a selection of video stills and short video fragments, and there will be a forum where the discussion between Dutch and Romanian people about the enlargement of the EU is stimulated. Finally we want to use the website as a way to bring people in contact with our project.

Who are we:

- **John Treffer**, Audio Visual (VAV) student at the Gerrit Rietveld academie.
- **Marieke van der Sloot**, Political and Cultural Geography student at the University of Amsterdam.

Our aims

- **Contribute to socially engaged discussion**
- **Interaction between arts and science**

Our first goal is to contribute to a socially engaged discussion on EU enlargement, by showing a documentary. At the same time we intend to create a short open minded direct visual report, in which matters will be dealt with in a more subjective and artistic manner. In this way we want to contribute to a discussion on enlargement, identity and the complex reality involved in this process.

Besides this, initiating, organising and realising the project is a learning process and an aim in itself. The cooperation between art and science results in an interaction of which both students can learn and which will widen their horizons. The academic character of this project leaves room for us to take all initiatives and experiments we deem necessary.

Academic recognition

For John this project is one of the major parts of his work to be evaluated for the third year course. For Marieke this project shall be evaluated as a work-practice in the graduating phase of her studies. A positive evaluation shall result in 20 ECTS credits.