



**SERVICES FOR
INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION
MARKETING**

**Post-event report on
Education UK Exhibition in Romania**

**21 November 2015
Sheraton Bucharest Hotel
Bucharest, Romania**

Introduction

Thank you for your participation in our exhibition in November 2015.

Education UK exhibition held on Saturday 20 November attracted almost 550 people at the Sheraton Hotel in Bucharest.

This report provides a summary of the event, including visitor and exhibitor's feedback. We believe that this information will enable you to report return on investment and will assist you with future decision-making.

The event brought representatives from 25 universities along with a number of 4 exhibitors from the school sector to meet with Romanian students and parents, providing them with information on education opportunities, subject and pathway choices, as well as helping them to make applications for 2016 intakes.

We asked different questions related to British Council staff support to exhibitors and visitors, quality of the exhibition area, and other services provided to participants and the responses were overall satisfactory. We are glad to inform you that the British Council's exhibition is almost the best well-organized education exhibition in Bucharest according to the opinion of our volunteers who attended similar fairs in the past. However, we continue to develop quality of our events to make them more useful for most of our visitors.

British Council Romania undertook a review of the fair to identify what went well, what did not go well, and the key 'lessons learnt' were summed up to improve our future activities. Including feedbacks from exhibitors and visitors, together with inputs from British Council colleagues, this post-event report presents the results of that review.

We hope all the UK institutions feel as positive about our Romania exhibitions as we do and that our annual event in Bucharest continues well into the future. We are looking forward to seeing you again at our next exhibition on 12 November 2016!

Regards,
British Council Romania SIEM

The report includes:

- 1. Key Highlights - Page 3**
- 2. Marketing channels & impact - Page 6**
- 3. Visitor's profile and Market trends - Page 8**
- 4. Insights from exhibitors and visitors - Page 11**
- 5. Lessons learnt and Future steps- Page 13**
- 6. Appendix: List of exhibitors (page 16)**

Key Highlights

Venue	Sheraton Bucharest Hotel, Romania Saturday 21 November 2015
Opening hours	10.00 - 18.00
Stand costs	£1,135.00 (plus VAT)
Exhibitors	25 universities and 4 schools
Exhibitors' feedback	<p>88% of our exhibitors valued the high quality of the visitors</p> <p>72 % of our exhibitors agreed that the exhibition was a high value event.</p> <p>88 % of our exhibitors rated the support received from the British Council before the event as being "excellent".</p>
Partners	<p>15 collaborating institutions</p> <p>6 sponsors (Blue Air, British Embassy, Xerox, Fischer International, IELTS, Gloria Jean's Coffee, Carturesti)</p>
Online registrations	618
Participants	550

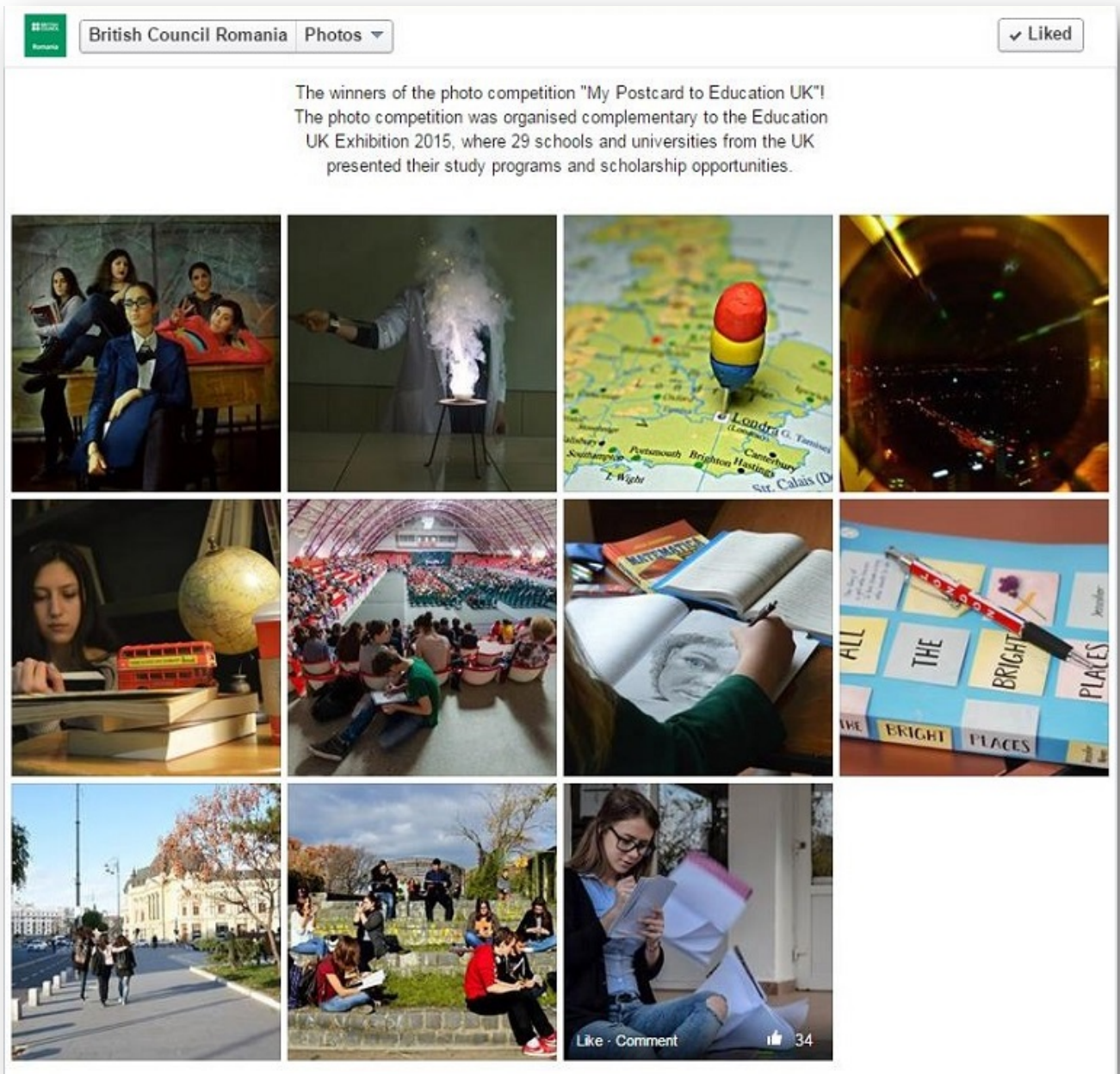
Unique features to give added value to the event:

- **A team of 30 volunteers** consistently assisted and offered their valuable support to both visitors and exhibitors
- **19 presentations/ workshops** covering topics such as building strong applications, what makes the UK schools so special, which are the main benefits of gaining degrees from UK universities, choosing the right course and right university, career orientation and its importance for HE studies, and how universities can help students develop their employability skills. The topical seminars provided further opportunities for exhibitors to engage with prospective students and stirred a lot of interest from the media.
- **Competitions with attractive prizes** run before the event and involving pupils, high school and university students across the urban areas of Romania ("My Postcard to Education UK" photo competition, Education UK quiz organised in partnership with Xerox)

“My postcard to Exhibition UK”

(photo competition organised on the British Council Romania’s Facebook page, with more 48,000 fans. There were 8 winners from different cities of Romania.)

Key message received from one of the winner: **“I would like to study in UK because I want to learn more English and of course because of its reputation.”**



Students and parents waiting in queue at the stands of the UK institutions.



Marketing channels & impact

The marketing plan designed for the event was a mixture of online and offline activities and identified a wide range of relevant channels to attract potential students, as well as parents to visit the fair.

The “Education UK Exhibition” run on different digital and social media platforms, however the highest reach was through the British Council Romania Facebook page and the British Council Romania website.

Online promotion:

Websites (articles and web banners)

- www.britishcouncil.ro (330 views in October, 1 708 views in November – the pages in Romanian are overwhelmingly more popular than the ones in English).
- www.studentie.ro
- www.cariereonline.ro
- www.isic.ro
- www.agerpres.ro
- www.dcnews.ro
- www.ziarulstiintelor.eu
- www.pitucidarvoinici.wordpress.com
- www.integraledu.ro
- www.romanulfinanciar.ro

E-mailing and newsletters:

- British Council Romania newsletter Inbrief (45,630 subscribers)
- Direct mailing to the British Council Teaching Centre Students (12,000 subscribers)
- Direct mailing to the English teachers from the British Council database (slightly over 3000)
- ISIC newsletter
- Educativa newsletter (over 25,000 subscribers)
- Direct mailing to the database from Educativa (about 20,000 high-school students)
- League of Romanian Students Abroad (LSRS) newsletter

Press releases: 12 and 19 November

Social Media

British Council Romania Facebook page (46 000 likes, in October, 47 000 likes in November)

35 posts about the Exhibition and the exhibitors (one post for each Exhibitor) with a reach ranging from **65 000 views** (for boosted posts) to an average of **4000 views** (for regular posts)

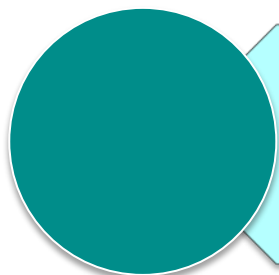
Partners' Facebook pages

XEROX Romania (1,300,000 likes)
 ISIC Romania (29,144 likes) – 1 post
 League of the Romanian Students Abroad- LSRS (5,792 likes) – 3 posts
 VIP (14,983 likes) - 1 post
 Cariere Magazine (24,565 likes) – 1 post
 Stdentie.ro (91,809 likes) – 1 post
 Gloria Jean's Coffee ("Victoriei" and "Piata Romana" pages, 4000 likes) – 4 posts

Offline promotion

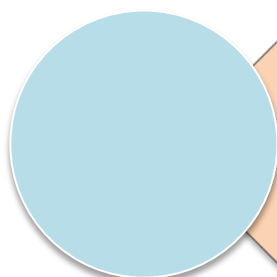
- Distribution of **8 000 flyers** in over **80 schools, high schools, universities, bookshops, Gloria Jean's Coffee Shops and relevant events (Science festival in Bucharest, Iasi and Cluj, Gaudeamus Book Fair, British documentary festival)**
- Distribution of **300 posters** in schools, high schools and universities from Bucharest, Iasi, Cluj, Ploiesti
- A large outdoor banner displayed outside the British Council Romania main office in Bucharest, with an estimated traffic of 5000 people daily.

Visitor's Profile



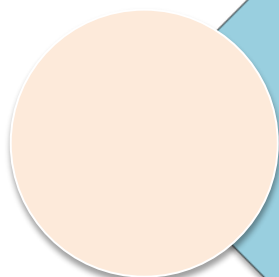
70% pre-university students

- 13% undergraduate
- 7 % parents



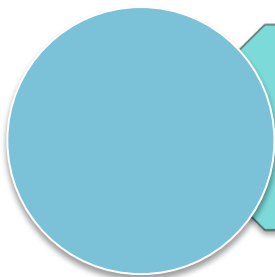
75 % between 12-19 years old

- 10 % between 20-23 years old



43% looking for *undergraduate programmes*

- 17% looking for *postgraduate programmes*



70% female

- only 30% male

Market trends

The market trends outlined below reflects the data collected through the British Council's global Visitor registration system.

Registrants' preferred areas of study

	%
Business and Administrative Studies	14%
Creative Arts and Design	11%
Computer and Mathematical Science	10%
Humanities	8%
Health and Medicine	7%
Law	7%
Engineering and Technology	7%

43% of the registrants mentioned UK as their country of choice for studying abroad and their main motivations are:

	%
High academic standard	27%
Cultural environment	13%
International recognition of qualifications	12%
Wide variety of courses and Institutions	11%
Overseas work opportunities	9%

More than 60% of the registrants would like to study a course in the UK:

	%
in the UK	64%
in my home country	13%
in another country (not UK or home)	15%
online/distance learning	8%

When asked about when they would expect to go to UK for studying the registrants outlined the following:

	%
In less than 6 months	5%
In 1 year	36%
In 2 years	25%
After 2 years	34%

When asked about the funding for tuition and living cost the registrants responses were:

	%
Self / Family / Relatives / Friends	65%
Scholarship	25%
Others	7%
Company / Organisation	3%

The main sources of information for the registrants:

	%
British Council	33%
Internet	28%
Friend and relative	13%
University, Teacher	10%
Email	8%

Insights from exhibitors and visitors

At the exhibition there were 29 UK exhibitors of whom **25 filled out** our printed exhibitor's feedback questionnaire.

166 feedback forms were filled out by the visitors on their exit from the venue.

Some positive quotes from exhibitors:

"I found the whole team approachable, friendly and informative."

"Well done! A very well organised event that attracted some excellent and focused students."

"I was really impressed with the number of enquiries that I had. I was busy all day!"

"A great fair. Student ambassadors a brilliant help!"

80% of our visitors rated the quality of the event and venue as being 'excellent'.

Almost **99% of the visitors** who completed the feedback forms said that the exhibition provided the necessary information they looked for.

60% of the registrants attended British Council activities in the last 12 months.

When asked about the level of expectations most of the visitors outlined the following:

- **most frequently mentioned:** same level of quality/ professionalism, as informative/useful/nice/interesting/beautiful events as this one, more universities/exhibitors
- **less frequently mentioned:** focus on career guidance, guidance in choosing the best programme, clarification about the application process, further information about studying abroad, innovation

The event was described in one word by the visitors:

- **most frequently mentioned:** very useful, very informative, interesting, well-organized, complex, an opportunity for a bright future, high quality educational services, excellent, very educative
- **less frequently mentioned:** good, amazing, excellent, very educative, interactive, helpful, a rich experience, nice, wonderful, diverse, cool



Visitors filling out the feedback questionnaires.

Lessons learnt and future steps

This was the third exhibition we run in Romania since 2013. After each of these events, the feedback forms completed by exhibitors and visitors have given us extremely useful information in terms of what we should do better in our next exhibitions to increase ROI for participating UK institutions. Both this perception shared by participants along with the evaluation done by local partners or British Council colleagues who attended the event help us to improve our plans for the future.

Recommendation No. 1

Although almost all the exhibitors (88%) were clearly satisfied with the quality of the visitors, just half of them outlined that both the quality and the numbers have been good. One of the main objectives followed by us in devising an effective communication strategy for the exhibition was to avoid having too many students without serious interest strolling around the stands. Therefore, we have purposely targeted through our marketing campaign those specific segments in our audience clearly looking for studying abroad (e.g. student and families from international schools, other private schools, and the best state schools in Bucharest) rather than stimulating groups of students without any serious intention to study for an UK qualification in the years to come. "Most of the visitors tended to have very specific questions and we had to be ready to answer focused and quite specific questions on programs, subjects and courses" one of the exhibitors said.

The main lesson with regard to how to communicate our next exhibition to achieve on both quality and numbers is to maintain the same strong focus on students and families with high potential from Bucharest and neighboring counties. At the same time, we want to enhance relationships with large number of teachers working as Career Counsellors within as many schools as possible across the country by involving them in various educational projects run by the British Council. This strategy aims to boost the network of teachers in local schools that may be able to identify among their students potential enquirers and encourage them to attend upcoming recruitment event organised by us in Bucharest and other cities.

Recommendation No. 2

The feedback received from institutions on whether they had a busy time at the exhibition was diverse. For a number of four exhibitors the number of visitors who stopped at their stands to make enquiries or just to have a chat was disappointing. Around 50% of the exhibitors assessed the total number of visitors as good. By looking at the visitors' journey we could see that most of the visitors spent their entire time at the exhibition in queues by not more than three stands rather than having a look around all the institutions displaying their materials in the exhibition. Such an uneven itinerary of our visitors links with the visitor's profile as shown in the completed feedback questionnaires. Most of the young people who checked in at the exhibition spoke excellent English; were familiar with the use of the Internet for career guidance proposes, and benefitted in the recent past from quite a lot of opportunities to meet representatives from the UK universities who attended fairs in Romania. They also took part in various projects run by the British Council to promote English or educational opportunities from the UK, and were in touch with the network of educational agents operating in Bucharest. These visitors attended our

exhibition to check details about limited number of institutions that identified in advance as their options for study in the UK rather than to gather background info from each of the institutions that was there. They seem to be the same category of informed enquirers rather than to the so called general public (people who usually come along for making their first impression on what the exhibitors may present as study opportunities for themselves or their children in a couple of years or more).

Brand awareness among students proved to be crucial in attracting considerable number of enquirers to some of the stands. Our first recommendation for the UK universities is to consider the possibility to explore the profile raising activities to be offered for free by British Council Romania to all the institutions signing up to attend our exhibition in November 2016. This promotional offer intended to give a chance for these institutions to capture certain level of awareness and interest from their potential applicants in Romania prior to their participation in our exhibition through distributing their advertising materials on British Council's media channels. This digital campaign includes the following elements:

- 15 min promotional video for each institution to highlight a selection of study programmes for Romanian students and tell potential applicants about the main selling points associated to the UK institution and programs – Main communication channels: British Council website (40,000 visitors / month on average) and our Facebook account (more than 50,000 fans);
- advertising materials produced by your institutions on a dedicated webpage “Study for a UK” (videos, texts and artworks provided by the promoted institutions will be posted for at least 2 months on our website starting with April 2016)

Recommendation No. 3

The exhibitors noticed the following market trends based on the enquiries with which they had to deal at stands.

- a. Student finance is changing overall for Romanian students: rate of access to tuition fee loans on under degree studies is excellent; access to scholarships and grants on postgraduate programmes is improving; students see their chances to finance postgraduate studies in the UK increasing as a result of the recently announced provisions regarding Master loans;
- b. Requests for business studies and computer sciences remain high, but it appears to be remarkable level of interest on programmes associating psychology with criminology, creative arts with architecture, sport with management, and computers with math;
- c. Although the demand for summer schools remains constant there is a growing interest from younger people on bachelor degrees (with some parents considering entry at age 12th , 13th , and 14th)

These trends identified by exhibitors are highly consistent with stats and comments collected throughout registration forms and questionnaires completed by visitors.

- a. Students are keen to receive from universities more detailed and clearer information on student finance, funding opportunities or scholarships.
- b. With regards to the subjects the students say they would like to study the diversity is also increasing: computers and business are still on top, but with less than 15% each; the scale of study areas is very diverse including subjects such as medicine, arts and design, engineering and technology, psychology and humanities;
- c. Romanian parents and schools have expressed demand for increased connections with the UK institutions to help them better understand entry requirements to the UK education on one hand and assist the UK institutions update their entry criteria in line with the current state of education in Romania.

Considering the findings above (which seems to confirm a shift towards a more diversifying demand for British education in Romania) British Council is prepared to target more niche markets through holding a series of itinerant workshops and showcases in local schools and universities with partner institutions from the UK. The proposed topics could be the following: Post-graduate programmes combining areas of studies (e.g. Masters in Medical Engineering), Undergraduate courses on sport management and other combinations involving sports, Successful applicants on arts programs from feeder schools in Romania, New opportunities for finance studies at postgraduate level, etc. These direct marketing activities will be provided at promotional prices for the institutions choosing to take part in the thematic workshops and roadshows to be run by the British Council alongside with their participation in our next exhibition to open on 12th November 2016 in Bucharest.

Institutions may get in touch with our SIEM team at British Council Romania via e-mail gabriel.ivan@britishcouncil.ro to receive more details on any of the direct marketing proposals outlined above.

Appendix - List of exhibitors

1. **Brooke House College**
2. **Cardiff Sixth Form College**
3. **John Leggott College**
4. **Rendcomb College**
5. **BPP University**
6. **Bucks New University**
7. **Canterbury Christ Church University**
8. **Cardiff University**
9. **Keele University**
10. **King's College London**
11. **Leeds Beckett University**
12. **Newcastle University/Newcastle University London**
13. **Queen Mary University of London**
14. **Swansea University**
15. **Teesside University**
16. **The University of Manchester**
17. **University College Birmingham**
18. **UCL-University College London**
19. **University for the Creative Arts**
20. **University of Central Lancashire**
21. **University of Chichester**
22. **University of Cumbria**
23. **University of East Anglia**
24. **University of Gloucestershire**
25. **University of Kent**
26. **University of Lincoln**
27. **University of Salford**
28. **University of the West of England, Bristol**
29. **University of Warwick**