

# SEBASTIAN I. BURDUJA

Jean-Louis Calderon 82, Bucharest, Romania  
sebastian.burduja@energie.gov.ro

## Education

- 2016-2019 **THE BUCHAREST UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMIC STUDIES** **BUCHAREST, ROMANIA**  
**PhD in Economics and International Relations, summa cum laude**
- Admitted top of the class and awarded the Romanian Government Fellowship
  - Elected member of the International Economic Affairs Research Center
  - Thesis research focused on solutions for strengthening business ethics and corporate social responsibility in Central and Eastern Europe, establishing Clean Business Coalitions, and combating private-to-private corruption
- 2008-2011 **HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT (HKS)** **BOSTON, MA**  
**HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL (HBS)**  
**Joint Master in Public Policy and MBA with Distinction**
- HKS Concentration: International and Global Affairs (IGA)
  - Awarded 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Honors (HBS top 15%). Selected by faculty as David M. Rubenstein Fellow
  - Course Assistant to Prof. David Gergen (“Becoming a Leader,” Spring 2011)
- 2004-2008 **STANFORD UNIVERSITY** **STANFORD, CA**  
**Bachelor of Arts, Honors and Distinction (4.0 GPA)**
- Major: Political Science (Comparative Politics). Minors: Economics and Sociology
  - Phi Beta Kappa Academic Honor Society, Junior Induction. President’s Award for Academic Excellence (2005). 1<sup>st</sup> Prize for Excellence in Writing for Public Service (2005)

## Experience

- 06/23-present **MINISTRY OF ENERGY** **BUCHAREST, ROMANIA**  
**Minister**
- 05/22-present **MINISTRY OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION, AND DIGITALIZATION** **BUCHAREST, ROMANIA**  
**Minister**
- 01/21-present **PARLIAMENT OF ROMANIA** **BUCHAREST, ROMANIA**  
**Member of Parliament**
- 06/20-12/20 **NATIONAL CREDIT GUARANTEE FUND FOR SMES** **BUCHAREST, ROMANIA**  
**Member of the Board**
- Approved five new programs in response to economic challenges in the context of the coronavirus pandemic: SME Invest, SME Leasing, SME Factor, GEO 37/2020 (postponement of interest payments on mortgages), the program to support new home purchases;
  - Defined the Fund's strategy, including the main development directions, the products offered, the communication strategy, the client portfolio, the organizational structure, etc.;
  - Supervised the activity of the Fund's management.
- 12/19-12/20 **MINISTRY OF PUBLIC FINANCE** **BUCHAREST, ROMANIA**  
**Deputy Minister**
- Coordinated the main state aid schemes provided by the Ministry of Public Finance, including the financing of over 20 strategic projects, of over 0.5 billion EUR, generating thousands of new jobs;
  - Initiated, coordinated, and completed reform for the improvement of the ministry’s main state aid schemes;
  - Organized dozens of discussions with the private sector, including chambers of commerce and strategic investors, to present investment opportunities in Romania;
  - Coordinated new state aid schemes developed by the Romanian Government in the context of the response to the coronavirus crisis, namely the programs for SMEs, the program to support major domestic air operators, as well as the state aid scheme for the hospitality industry;

- Restructured projects with reimbursable financing from international financial institutions to respond to the needs generated by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Advanced investment programs financed by international financial institutions, worth over 1 billion euros, of strategic importance for the health, education and culture sectors in Romania;
- Secured a loan of over EUR 4 billion for Romania through the European SURE instrument;
- Initiated a program of EUR 100 million, with international reimbursable funding, to support the project “Safer, inclusive, and sustainable schools” for the consolidation, rehabilitation and modernization of schools from both urban and rural areas across Romania, particularly from regions with the highest seismic risk;
- Coordinated the process of Romania's accession to the OECD on behalf of the ministry, including the chapters on budgetary planning, state-owned companies, corporate governance, liberalization codes, etc.;
- Supervised the activities carried out by the Ministry of Public Finance for the Swiss-Romanian Cooperation Program, including the preparation of the second contribution, amounting to over CHF 221 million;
- Coordinated the preparation of ECOFIN Council meetings and represented Romania in regular meetings;
- Elaborated a strategy at national level for the implementation of priority projects under PPPs (public-private partnerships);
- Chaired the Commission for the Authorization of Local Loans, ensuring a predictable framework for financing local public authorities;
- Advanced the process of connecting cash registers to the fiscal authority, contributing to better collection rates.

01/17-12/19

**RISE CONSORTIUM**

**BUCHAREST, ROMANIA**

**Managing Partner**

- Built the firm’s business model as an international network company dedicated to enabling Romania’s development into a strategic investment hub and global growth engine
- Designed RISE Consortium’s four practices (advisory, implementation, business intelligence, and capital) to offer a one-stop-shop for both foreign investors who seek to develop their presence in Romania and local businesses seeking to serve global markets or expand abroad
- Recruited a team of top specialists from around the world to form the largest global Romanian network of investment experts, covering North America, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia and the Pacific, and the Middle East and North Africa
- Established the RISE thought leadership module, with key insights on Romania’s business environment, CSR framework, and investment opportunities

11/12-12/15

**THE WORLD BANK GROUP**

**WASHINGTON, DC**

**Social Development Specialist, Europe & Central Asia (ECA)**

***Governance and Public Investment Management***

- Outstanding Achievement Award by World Bank’s Europe and Central Asia Vice-president (January 2016)
- Co-led the World Bank technical assistance for improving the \$9 billion EU-funded Regional Operational Program (ROP) in Romania, making recommendations for: institutional set-up and governance arrangements, EU structural funds, process improvements and efficient flows, knowledge sharing, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), human capital management, financing structure, and support of program applicants/beneficiaries
- Co-led the World Bank technical assistance for enhancing the coordination of public investment strategies, programs, and projects, with a special focus on: harmonizing the full cycle of EU and state-budget-funded programs from design through post-implementation, multiannual budgeting, and territorial contracts
- Co-led the technical assistance for improving project selection models for public infrastructure investments financed from EU and state-budget funds and proposed a new set of strategic selection criteria for achieving four core objectives: absorption, impact, legitimacy, and capacity
- Developed and implemented a survey of 470 beneficiaries of EU structural funds across all regions in Romania, incorporating findings into recommendations for improving the absorption and impact of public investments
- Conducted interviews with over 200 beneficiaries of EU structural funds in 50+ localities across Romania, covering public authorities, NGOs, and private companies
- Led presentations on best practices for the design and implementation of EU-funded public investment, disseminating project results through 25+ workshops in all regions in Romania, reaching a total of over 600 stakeholders in the public, nonprofit, and private sectors
- Organized a week-long knowledge exchange mission to Spain, facilitating interactions between specialists in the Romanian Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration and their Spanish counterparts
- Managed project teams of a total of over 30 consultants

### ***Social, Urban, and Rural Development***

- Contributed to two key reports on Romania's urban development, providing inputs on: overall analytical framework; principles of economic growth; the dimensions of development (density, distance, and division); assessment of Integrated Urban Development Plans; and EU-level regulations on spatial planning
- Made recommendations for Romania's regional and urban development, informing national, regional, and local-level policies on how EUR 40 billion in EU assistance will be channeled over the 2014-2020 programming period (with contributions to the Romania-EU Partnership Agreement, Operational Programmes, Regional Development Plans, and Development Strategies of local and county councils);
- Developed the framework for assessing challenges faced by marginalized communities and vulnerable groups across Romania, providing solutions for their effective integration through hard and soft interventions
- Helped evaluate Romania's urban development ("growth poles") policy and integrated planning documents, formulating recommendations for improvement for the 2014-2020 EU financing cycle
- Reviewed and contributed to TRACE (Tool for Rapid Assessment of City Energy) reports on energy efficiency for seven large Romanian cities
- Led "Competitive Cities" presentation for the 2013 World Bank "Shared Prosperity Days" (awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> prize)
- Helped design and develop knowledge dissemination products (video clips, presentations, brochures, etc.)

### ***Business Development and Other Support***

- Led the research effort and developed the preliminary analytical framework for Romania's decentralization, laying the foundation for a technical assistance project implemented in 2015
- Assisted with the drafting and negotiations of the follow-up Romania Regional Development Program on harmonizing state-budget and EU-funded public investments (finalized successfully in 2014)
- Supported the Danube Delta RAS with two key analytical components: framework for implementing the Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) tool in Romania; and the education chapter for the Diagnostic Report on the Danube Delta Integrated Sustainable Development Strategy
- Provided assistance to Bank teams working on integration of urban marginalized communities and Roma in Romania, focusing on solutions for effective deployment of EU structural funds for promoting Romania's inclusive growth and eradicating extreme poverty
- Contributed to the World Bank Romania Country Partnership Strategy 2014-2017, promoting the need to support marginalized communities through a more modern public administration

09/11-10/12

**DALBERG GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORS**  
**Consultant**

**WASHINGTON, DC**

### ***Inclusive Business and Private Sector Development***

- Managed the implementation of the application process for the G20 Challenge on Inclusive Business Innovation, a major global competition organized by the G20 and the IFC
  - Developed the eligibility and evaluation criteria, application forms, and judging framework
  - Led interviews with the Challenge's 35 top-ranking inclusive businesses, which generate over \$5B in annual sales at the Base of the Pyramid
  - Evaluated applicants' financial sustainability, innovation, measurement capability, competitiveness, and environmental and social compliance
  - Produced and synthesized quantitative and qualitative findings for the final judging panel and for a flagship report highlighting inclusive business models and promoting South-South replication

### ***Innovative Financing Mechanisms***

- Led research on "pull mechanisms" and trust fund structures for the pilot phase of the G20 AgResults Initiative, expected to award \$100m for the adoption of innovations in agriculture
  - Assessed types of "pull mechanisms" (prizes, advance market commitments, patent buy-outs) in terms of their benefits, risks, and effectiveness in addressing market failures along agricultural value chains
  - Examined and adapted lessons learned from the implementation of comparable innovative financing mechanisms like the Haiti Mobile Money Initiative
  - Evaluated governance arrangements and the overall cost effectiveness of eight multi-donor trust funds to help define and recommend options for structuring the AgResults financing mechanism
- Developed the technical design of a "Malaria Bond" pilot for the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Board, which seeks to attract additional private-sector funding to support pay-for-performance malaria interventions

- Drafted pilot terms (size of issue, outcome return, principal guarantee, maturity) and a prepared a detailed cost model estimating savings from efficiencies in program administration and delivery
- Recommended eight countries appropriate for testing the “Malaria Bond” by assessing their disease burden, delivery infrastructure, strength of current monitoring and evaluation, and political commitment
- Validated and refined findings through 40 interviews with key donors, implementers, social and commercial investors, commodity suppliers, and sector experts

- summer 2010 **MCKINSEY & COMPANY** **BUCHAREST, ROMANIA**  
**Senior Analyst**  
*Private Sector Development*
- Led assessment of commercial efficiency opportunities for market-leading telecom operator (\$1B+ in revenues)
    - Performed market and operational analyses against benchmarks in local and regional markets
    - Conducted original fieldwork in client shops and call centers, validating findings with company management and developing proposals for improving workforce productivity by 20% on average
    - Recommended reorganization measures to achieve over 30% operational cost savings over two years
  - Diagnosed \$3.5B stock portfolio managed by top global investment fund, performing valuations of main players active in the local energy market, which ultimately led up to the largest IPO in the country’s history
- summer 2009 **UNITED NATIONS - ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE** **GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**  
**Intern, Environment, Housing, and Land Management Division**
- Reviewed existing research and drafted recommendations for strengthening real-estate markets, urging UN member states across Eurasia to adopt a set of preventive measures for averting large-scale crises
  - Integrated UN expert contributions into the 2010 Country Profile of Azerbaijan’s housing sector, which served in advising government officials on how to increase administrative efficiency and promote sustainable development
- 3/07-6/07 **NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY** **WASHINGTON, DC**  
**Intern, Europe and Eurasia Division**
- Contributed to the review process of grant-proposals from Eastern Europe and Eurasia
  - Evaluated the effectiveness of donor-funded activities in Ukraine, Russia, and the Crimean Peninsula
- 10/06-3/07 **FREEMAN SPOGLI INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES** **STANFORD, CA**  
**Research Assistant**
- Analyzed the democratic development and political prospects of countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, including their rule of law, civil society, media independence, and elections, and formulated recommendations
  - Organized findings and recommendations into 12 country profiles and presented final report to Prof. Larry Diamond, contributing to his bestseller *The Spirit of Democracy*
- 06/06-08/06 **ROMANIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS** **BUCHAREST, ROMANIA**  
**Special Advisor to the Director of the NATO Division**
- Developed a strategic plan for NATO’s public diplomacy efforts, with a special focus on Romanian youth
  - Presented the draft strategy to Division leadership
- 09/05-05/06 **STANFORD ORGANIZATION FOR INTERNATIONAL LEARNING (SOIL)** **STANFORD, CA**  
**Financial Officer**
- Organized campus conferences, workshops, and talks on the topics of education and international development
  - Researched financing sources, applied for small grants, and managed the SOIL budget
- Community**  
2014-present **THE CAESAR FOUNDATION** **BUCHAREST, ROMANIA**  
**Founding President**
- Developed the concept and the strategy for the foundation and implemented it together with the executive team, helping CAESAR become a leading Romanian think tank with a global presence of over 300 experts and more than 3000 supporters worldwide
  - Recruited high-profile members of the Advisory Board (diplomats, entrepreneurs, civil society experts, professors, etc.)

- Led the organization of major events, campaigns, and projects: the i74 citizen initiative campaign for reforming the Romanian Parliament; the CAESAR Forum “Romania in 3D”; the CAESAR Gala and Leadership Awards; the CAESAR Executive Training Series; the CAESAR Colloquia (Romania’s Democratic Consolidation, Diaspora Voting, Cyber Security, Environment and Disaster Risk Management, Cultural Entrepreneurship, etc.)
- Coordinated the drafting and dissemination of CAESAR knowledge products, including position papers, technical assistance to key national-level actors, and monthly media reports
- Initiated and co-led the civic get-out-the-vote campaign “Who Votes Matters” (*Cine votează contează*) for the presidential elections of November 2014, reaching an audience of over 1 million people over new and traditional media channels

2008-2012

**LEAGUE OF ROMANIAN STUDENTS ABROAD (LSRS)**

**BUCHAREST, ROMANIA**

**President and Co-Founder; Honorary President**

- Led organization from the beginning, building membership to over 8,000 Romanian students and graduates of top universities around the world, and managing a team of 300+ volunteers across 35 countries
- Coordinated fundraising efforts exceeding \$100,000, negotiating partnerships with organizations such as Accenture, PwC, Roland Berger, Adobe, the Romanian Senate, the Ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs, etc.
- Initiated and led the “Young Romania Forum” in partnership with the National Bank of Romania, coordinating the *Romania in 3Decades* publication (January 2012), which synthesized a young generation’s vision for the country’s long-term development (2011-2030) across ten key sectors, including economy, health, justice, etc.

**Books**

“The Plan for Romania” (*in Romanian*), Litera Publishing House (2020)

“The Complete Handbook on Transportation and Infrastructure” (*in Romanian*), Club of Romania Publishing House, Bucharest, Romania (2018). Coordinated the complete handbook on the transport sector in Romania (800+ pages), bringing together 78 top experts (professors, practitioners, activists, policymakers, entrepreneurs)

“Between Hope and Disillusionment. Democracy and Anticorruption in Postcommunist Romania” (*in Romanian*), Curtea Veche Publishing House, Bucharest, Romania (2016). Foreword by Larry Diamond, Stanford University

**Articles**

“Cities for People: The Key to Romania’s Development” (*in Romanian*), in Vasile Iuga, Mihaela Nicola, Răsvan Radu (eds.), Transatlantic Romania, Bucharest, Romania (2016)

“The Strategic Triangle of Romanian Public Administration”, in Clara Volintiru (ed.), RO3D – Romania: Democracy, Development, Dignity, Grafoart Publishing House, Bucharest, Romania (2016)

“Beyond (Dis)illusions: Opportunities for the Anticorruption Battle in Romania’s Private Sector” (*in Romanian*), in *7 Fundamental Themes for Romania*, RAO Publishing House, Bucharest, Romania (2014)

“From Europhiles to Atlanticists: Romania’s Security and Defense Policy, 2004-2007,” in *Stanford Journal of International Relations*. Volume 9, Issue 2, Spring 2008

“Lagging Behind: Romania’s Democratic Quality under Neocommunist Governance, 1989-1996,” in *Stanford Undergraduate Research Journal*. Volume 6, Spring 2007

“Assessing Corruption in Romania: An integrationist story,” in *Stanford’s Student Journal of Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies*. Volume 2, Spring 2006

“Unsurpassable Trenches: Romania's Diplomatic Battle, 1943–1944,” in *Stanford Journal of International Relations*. Volume 7, Issue 1, Winter 2006

Contributed as the main author or co-author to over 30 World Bank reports on regional and urban development, social development, EU funds, and public administration. Full list of public reports is available here: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/docsearch/author/m1229070>

Regular contributor with op-eds and articles on the three most widely read platforms in Romania: *Adevarul*, *Republica*, and *ziare.com*.

**Affiliations**

Atlantic Council Millennium Fellow (2018)

National Endowment for Democracy Scholarship for the European Forum Alpbach Political Symposium (2017)

Friedrich Naumann Foundation’s Future of Freedom Program (2017, 2018)

German Marshall Fund’s European Forum, Young Professionals Summit (2017)

World Economic Forum’s Global Shapers, Washington, D.C. hub (2015-present)

Forbes 30 under 30 in Romania (2012)

**Skills** Skilled in MS Office, XHTML, MS Fox Pro, and STATA

**Languages** Fluent: English and Romanian. Proficient: French. Conversant: Spanish and German

**Personal** Traveled to more than 50 countries

**Nationality** Romanian