

Alumni in Eastern Europe

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Chris Williams has been working with former School of Education staff and students, in Bulgaria and Romania.



Apostol Apostolov, who gained his PhD at Birmingham, was a researcher on the Children's Fund project. He is now based at the Karin Dom centre in Varna, Bulgaria, which provides innovative programmes for children with special needs. As part of the 'Cafe Society' lecture series, Chris presented research about 'Crime against people with disabilities', which was funded by the Rowntree Foundation. A BBC film about orphanages in Bulgaria has raised awareness of the abuse of young people with disabilities. Professionals were interested to learn that research can bring about significant changes in law, court practice, police responses, and staff behaviour.

Raluca Stoica, who has just returned from her Master's course, is taking up a new post teaching Romanian culture at an American school in Bucharest. She and Chris did presentations for secondary teachers and students at a school where Raluca had previously worked. The school is very progressive, and staff were keen to develop their ideas about 'Critical and creative thinking'. Students joined seminars about 'Studying abroad', although the raised fees and other problems in England now present other countries as a more likely destination. The School is strongly community-based. The Director, Georgiana Manta, had been a student at the same school, and her mother a teacher.



Hiromi Yamashita also gained her PhD at the School of Education. She was a researcher within the Centre for International Education and Research (CIER), and is now an Associate Professor at Nagoya University, Japan. She was contributing to the Ramsar Convention conference in Bucharest. The conference took place in the Palace of Parliament, the second biggest building in the world. (The Pentagon wins.) It was built by dictator, Nicolae Ceaucescu, who was executed before he could use it. As the conference was taking place, the government was suspending the current President, while the Prime Minister was being accused of plagiarising his PhD and claiming falsely that a diploma for a three-month course was a Master's degree.