

NEC PREMISES BRIEF DESCRIPTION



*Text adapted from the
EVALUATION REPORT on the NEW EUROPE COLLEGE – Bucharest
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The *New Europe College* has its own institute building in 21, Plantelor Street, since October 6, 2000. The construction rights for restoring and expanding the initial building, that had been acquired in 1940 by the Organization of the Swiss in Romania, were transferred by the Swiss Confederation to the Swiss foundation *Stiftung Wissenschafts- und Kulturzentrum NEC Bukarest-Zug* (which was especially created in order to erect the new premises) for the duration of 50 years. The aforementioned foundation passed on the rights of using the building to the foundation to which the *NEC* is legally subordinated (*Fundația Noua Europă*) for the duration of 20 years. This somewhat complicated scheme needed be chosen in order to secure the independence of the *NEC*, and to give the Romanian state the possibility to treat the *New Europe Foundation* as a Romanian, and not as a foreign foundation. The Swiss Confederation, the *Zuger Kulturstiftung Landis & Gyr*, the Canton of Zug, the *VolkswagenStiftung*, and the *Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft (DaimlerChrysler-Fonds, Stiftungsfonds Deutsche Bank)* participated in financing both the restoring of the initial building, that had been left to decay over the last decades, and its substantial enlargement. The Romanian state supported the project indirectly, by the VAT exemption on the construction costs.

The initial house on the site, which was built in 1910, was painstakingly reconstructed and substantially enlarged for round 3 million Swiss Francs, in order to accommodate the needs of the *NEC*. (The main sponsors from Switzerland retained the right of making use of parts the premises (such as one apartment for artists-in-residence nominated by the *Kulturstiftung Landis & Gyr*, the office dedicated to the Swiss Association in Romania, as well as occasional events organized by the Swiss Embassy). There are reception and multi-functional rooms, as well as a flexibly usable conference hall (seating 120 people), a small library with an adjacent reading room and computers, office rooms, flats with working facilities for the fellows under the various programs of the *New Europe Foundation*, guest scholars and once in a while for an artist-in-residence.

The building is not only appropriately furnished and designed, but also elegant and beautiful. A distinct and pleasant ambience has been created with modern works of art*, an impressive staircase, a state-of-the-art concert piano**, outstanding furnishings, etc., all ensuring that intellectual work can flourish. The complicated locking and alarm system that secures the building is almost too perfect. The design of the house has to be primarily attributed to the Executive Director MARINA HASNAȘ, who is a professional architect and who – as the Swiss Ambassador pointed out at the inauguration ceremony of the new building – conducted the renovation and the extension of the premises “with an iron fist”. Mrs. HASNAȘ knew how to arouse in all her colleagues a community spirit which is uncommon even by Western standards. Every employee feels highly responsible for the house, just as if it belonged to herself/himself. Thus, this house lives through the Rector to the handyman in a what one may define an almost charismatic atmosphere of solidarity; it is a space in which everything is arranged such as to offer the Fellows the best working and living conditions.

* - The painting “Garden 4” (1994) by Horia Bernea, donated by Mrs. Christa Kamm to the *New Europe College*.
- The tapestry “Gate of Night” (1970s), donated by the *VolkswagenStiftung* and the *Marga-und-Kurt-Möllgard-Stiftung* to the *Wissenschafts- und Kulturzentrum NEC Bukarest-Zug*.
- Graphic works by Eugène Ionesco, donated by the *Stiftung Franz Larese und Jürg Janett* to the *Wissenschafts- und Kulturzentrum NEC Bukarest-Zug*.
- Lithographies of outstanding Western artists, loaned by the *Kulturstiftung Landis & Gyr* to the *New Europe College*
** A Bechstein concert piano (Berlin 1939), donated by Mr. Heinz Hertach to the *Wissenschafts- und Kulturzentrum NEC Bukarest-Zug*.