

# Alexandra Columban

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<b>Contact information</b>	Aarhus University Center for the Philosophical-Experimental Study of Discrimination (CEPDISC) Department of Political Science Bartholins Allé 7, Building 1340 8000, Aarhus Denmark E-mail: alexandra.columban@ps.au.dk
<b>Research interests</b>	Discrimination, Ethnic and racial attitudes, Social identities, Experimental methods, Intergroup conflict, Gender and intersectionality.
<b>Education</b>	<p><b>Aarhus University, School of Business and Social Sciences, Department of Political Science, Aarhus</b> PhD candidate at the Center for the Philosophical-Experimental Study of Discrimination (CEPDISC)   February 2024 – present (expected 2027) Research topic: Ethnic bias and discrimination</p> <p><b>Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca</b> MA in History of Ideas and History of Images. Valedictorian   October 2011 – July 2014 Thesis: <i>Grotesque. Carnavalesque. Performativity. Feminine monstrosity as a feminist strategy of affirming identity fluidity</i> Subjects covered: comparative literature, gender studies, arts, cinematography, comparative architecture</p> <p><b>Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca</b> BA in Norwegian and English Language and Literature. Valedictorian   October 2008 – July 2011 Thesis: <i>Björg Vik. Feminisme, samfunn og litteratur</i> Subjects covered: theory of literature, Norwegian language, literature and culture, Anglo-Saxon literature and culture, English language</p> <p><b>University of Bergen (UiB)</b> Erasmus study abroad semester   Winter semester 2010 Subjects covered: Norwegian language and literature, American literature</p> <p><b>NTNU: Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim</b> Research scholarship offered by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs   March - April 2010 Research topics: gender studies, second wave feminism in Scandinavia</p> <p><b>Faculty of European Studies, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca</b> BA in International Relations and European Studies (program in English)   October 2007 – July 2011 Thesis: <i>Discourse Theory and Populism. A Case Study on the 2009 Romanian Presidential Elections</i> Subjects covered: comparative politics, European law and institutions, international relations, geopolitics, discourse theory, philosophy</p>
<b>Professional experience</b>	<p><b>Equality and Human Rights Action Centre (ACTEDO), Cluj-Napoca</b> Executive Director   2020 – January 2024</p> <p>Led the organization's core programs—<i>Gender Equality, Antidiscrimination,</i></p>

and *Access to Justice*. Responsibilities included strategic program coordination, project management, grant writing (EEA, EC, and national funds), fundraising, and human resource management.

Gender and policy expert, Project manager, Trainer and Researcher | 2014 – January 2024

Coordinated and contributed to over 10 human rights projects, with a strong emphasis on gender equality, non-discrimination, LGBTQIA+ rights, Roma rights, victims' rights, and intersectionality. Skilled in all aspects of project lifecycle management, including grant writing, project initiation, implementation, quality assurance, and reporting.

Nominated as a candidate and runner-up for Romania's representation on GREVIO in 2022. GREVIO is the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

Co-founded and managed The Pro Bono Network for Human Rights, Romania's largest clearinghouse for facilitating access to justice for vulnerable groups, in collaboration with a nationwide network of pro bono lawyers.

Authored and co-authored a variety of reports, policy briefs, and handbooks on topics such as gender equality, gender-based violence, victims' rights, and non-discrimination in education. Conducted qualitative and quantitative research, including expert and victim interviews and surveys.

Designed and delivered training sessions for public officials and practitioners. Organized and participated in numerous local, regional, and national conferences, serving as both a moderator and panellist at national and European levels.

Coordinated a coalition of 20 feminist NGOs in an advocacy campaign that successfully secured Romania's ratification of the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe's treaty on combating gender-based violence) and the establishment of integrated services for survivors of sexual violence.

## **Publications**

Columban, A., Bușe, M., & Macarie, F. (2020), Students' Sense and Sensibilities. An Exploratory Study of Gender Perceptions at Romania's Largest University. [Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences](#), 61E/ October, 5-24. (peer-reviewed)

Moldovan, O., Columban, A., & Macarie, F. (2020). Gender Biases in Student Evaluations of Teaching Abilities. An Experimental Approach. In Hîntea, C., Radu, B., Suci, R. (Eds), *Collaborative Governance, Trust Building and Community Development. Conference Proceedings 'Transylvanian International Conference in Public Administration October 24-26, 2019, Cluj-Napoca* (pp. 247-256). [Accent](#).

Columban, A., & Macarie, F. (2019). Breaking the Cycle of Gender-Based Violence in Romania. How Integrated Victim Support Services Lead to a more Sustainable Society. In Haruța, C., Hîntea C.M., & Moldovan, O. (Eds), *Sustainable Development and Resilience of Local Communities and Public Sector Organizations. Conference Proceedings. 'Transylvanian International Conference in Public Administration', 16-18 November 2018, Cluj-Napoca, Romania* (pp. 151-167). [Accent](#).

## **Policy papers and reports**

Columban, A., et al (2022). *Teaching and Integrating Gender Equality in the Classroom. Handbook for Teaching Staff*. [Fractalia](#).

- Chertes, D, Iorgulescu, G., & Columban, A. (2022). *Free access to justice for vulnerable groups in a democratic judicial system*. [ACTEDO](#).
- Pascu, I., Tuță, I., & Columban, A. (2021). *Hate Speech against Roma and LGBT+ People in Romania 2019-2020*. Policy Paper. [ACTEDO](#).
- Columban, A. (2020). Gender Equality in the Romanian Educational System. In David, C. (Ed), *Nondiscrimination in Education: An Analysis of Several Sectors of the Romanian Educational System from the Perspective of Nondiscrimination* (pp. 14-53). [Center for Legal Resources](#). (in Romanian)
- Columban, A. (2020). Gender Equality. In David, C. (Ed), *The ABCs of Antidiscrimination. Ethnicity, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity from an Intersectional Perspective* (pp. 27-31). [Center for Legal Resources](#). (in Romanian)
- Columban, A. (2019). *VOCIARE: Victims of Crime Implementation Analysis of Rights in Europe - The Transposition of the Victims' Directive in Romania*. National Report ROMANIA. [Victim Support Europe](#).
- Columban, A. (2019). *The Referral, Needs Assessment, and Informing of Victims of Crimes. Report on Romania*. [Center for Legal Resources](#). (in Romanian)
- Pascu, I., & Columban A. (2017). *Submission by the Equality and Human Rights Action Centre (ACTEDO) to the 29th Session (Jan 2018) of the Universal Periodic Review. State under Review: Romania*. [ACTEDO](#).

**Conferences:  
Academic  
presentations**

- Annual conference of the Danish Political Science Association (DPSA), Nyborg, Denmark, 08/11/2024: *Mechanisms of Marginalization: A Theory of Anti-Roma Bias*
- CEPDISC'24 Conference on Discrimination, Aarhus, Denmark, 20/09/2024: *Mechanisms of Marginalization: A Theoretical Framework of Anti-Roma Bias*
- Transylvanian International Conference in Public Administration (TICPA), Cluj-Napoca, Romania, 25/10/2019: *Gender Biases in Student Evaluations of Teaching Abilities. An Experimental Approach*
- The 27th NISPAcee conference – The Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe, Prague, Czech Republic, 26/05/2019: *The Role of Civil Society Organisations in Promoting Gender Equality and Combatting Violence Against Women and Girls in Post-2010 Romania*
- Transylvanian International Conference in Public Administration (TICPA), November 17, 2018, Cluj-Napoca: *Breaking the cycle of gender-based violence in Romania. How integrated victim support services lead to a more sustainable society*

**Conferences:  
Policy and  
advocacy  
presentations**

- Global Pro Bono Forum, Dublin, October 17, 2022: *Child Justice: Best Practices for Pro Bono Lawyering*
- ROAR: Challenges in Providing Support to Victims of Cybercrime, Lisbon, Portugal, 3/11/2020: *Difficulties in the criminal investigation of child sexual abuse material*
- Public Policies on Human Rights, Bucharest, Romania, 12/12/2019: *Gender Equality in the Romanian Educational System*

Global Pro Bono Forum, Berlin, Germany, 12/11/ 2018: *Closing Space for Civil Society as Global Phenomenon*

Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Pre-session on Romania, UN, Geneva, Switzerland, 14/12/2017: *Human Rights in Romania*

**Awards**

Best Graduate Student Paper Award. [NISPAcee](#), Prague | 2019  
Paper: *From silent witness to vocal advocate. The role of civil society organisations in promoting gender equality and combatting violence against women in post-2010 Romania*, [NISPAcee](#)

European Local Pro Bono Impact, European Pro Bono Forum, Amsterdam | 2016. Collective award for the implementing team of The Pro Bono Network for Human Rights, a pro bono clearinghouse coordinated by [ACTEDO](#)

**Methods training**

Quantitative and qualitative research methods, Faculty of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences, Babeş-Bolyai University, July-August 2019

Causal Inference: Advanced Quantitative Methods. MA and PhD Course at Aarhus University, Department of Political Science, February – May 2024.

**Languages**

Romanian (native), English (proficient), Portuguese (advanced), French (intermediate), Norwegian (beginner).