

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the 9th Annual Conference of the European Association of Israel Studies. I am honoured and happy to greet all conference participants. We are again privileged to be hosted by an excellent and prestigious European University: National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (SNSPA) in Bucharest, which is a seat of the “Theodor Herzl” Centre for Israeli Studies.

This year’s conference is special for at least two reasons. First, the Association has gone through a transition process. The seat of EAIS was moved in November 2020 from SOAS, University of London, to the Institute of the Middle and Far East, Jagiellonian University in Krakow (Poland). EAIS has been registered as an independent NGOs with legal personality. We are pleased to invite all association members to join the EAIS General Assembly meeting, scheduled for October 12th 2021, before the morning session. Second, for the first time in the EAIS history the Annual Conference is being held, to a great extent, online. We hope that the world will be coming back to the old routine of people-to-people contact, and traditional in person meetings. However to highlight the importance and uniqueness of this year host University we jointly decided to make an effort to come to Bucharest and together with our Bucharest friends and our distinguished keynote speaker Prof. Ayelet Harel-Shalev run the opening ceremony from the SNSPA in Bucharest.

The openness and hard work from our friends in Bucharest made the conference possible in this difficult pandemic time. I wish to thank Prof. Remus Pricopie, Rector of the SNSPA, as well as Prof. Liviu Rotman, Prof. Liliana Popescu and Dr. Daniel Gheorghe for their input and constant support in this conference organisation. Let me also express my deepest appreciation to the members of the Association’s Academic Council and Executive Board.

The Association is also truly fortunate to be continuously and generously supported by the Israel Institute. No doubt, the Association’s contribution to the development of Israel Studies in Europe is possible thanks to this engagement. We are also extremely thankful to Pears Foundation which played a key role in creation of the EAIS in 2010 and has continuously supported the organisation and development of Israel Studies in Europe.

On behalf of the entire Conference Organising Committee, I wish you a productive and enjoyable conference.

Joanna Dyduch

Chair of the EAIS