

Ancuța Hansen

International democracy and governance expert

re:constitution Fellow 2026–2027 (Track 2 – Practitioners) · Visiting researcher, CEVIPOL, Université libre de Bruxelles

ORCID: 0009-0002-7420-1078 · www.perseveras.com · www.aer-civic.org

PROFILE

Ancuța Hansen is an international democracy and governance expert. She has designed and led programs on electoral integrity, civil society strengthening, and peacebuilding across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Central America, and the Pacific, including multimillion-dollar initiatives in fragile and post-conflict environments, working closely with governments, civil society, and international partners.

FELLOWSHIP

re:constitution Fellowship 2026–2027 — Track 2 (Practitioners) Forum Transregionale Studien / Democracy Reporting

International, supported by Stiftung Mercator

Research project: “Drawing the Line: Distinguishing Assistance, Influence, and Interference in European Elections.” Hosted as a visiting researcher by the Centre d’étude de la vie politique (CEVIPOL), Université libre de Bruxelles, associated with the Parties, Elections, and Representation research axis.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

VICE PRESIDENT FOR STRATEGY AND PROGRAMS — Asociația Evoluție și Responsabilitate — Jan 2026 – present · Romania

Shapes and oversees AER’s strategic direction and program portfolio, ensuring alignment with the organization’s mission, values, and long-term objectives. Leads strategic planning, program design, and performance monitoring across AER’s initiatives. Plays a key role in institutional development, risk management, and learning, strengthening AER’s capacity to deliver sustainable civic, social, and educational impact.

DIRECTOR AND PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT — Perseveras Consulting — Jun 2025 – present · Australia

Partners with purpose-driven organizations and leaders committed to strengthening democratic governance, civic participation, and empathetic leadership. Delivers strategic advice, communication and advocacy, and capacity building for government agencies, political organizations, non-profits, businesses, and community groups, in English, French, Spanish, and Romanian.

CHIEF OF PARTY — Democracy International — Sep 2024 – May 2025 · Conakry, Guinea

Provided technical and strategic leadership for a domestic and international election observation program implemented by the Advancing Democratic Elections and Political Transitions (ADEPT) Consortium. Led all program components, including technical assistance, budgeting, compliance, and donor reporting, and oversaw start-up activities, recruitment, operational setup, and external engagement. Acted as primary liaison with the Guinean government, UN agencies, the diplomatic corps, and local civil society.

RESIDENT PROGRAM DIRECTOR — International Republican Institute (IRI) — Jul 2023 – Aug 2024 · Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Provided overall leadership, management, and technical direction of IRI’s programs on civil society strengthening, governance, and the civic and electoral participation of marginalized groups. Developed annual and long-range country strategies with consortium partners; served as key liaison with donors, the international community, the Haitian government, and local partners. Conducted high-level political and policy outreach, including briefings for the U.S. Government, the U.S. Congress, and the U.N. Introduced public opinion research and trauma-informed capacity building, and developed security plans, risk mitigation strategies, and grants management procedures.

SENIOR DIRECTOR FOR THE PACIFIC ISLANDS — National Democratic Institute (NDI) — Jul 2020 – Jun 2023 · Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

Led an inaugural multi-year governance, peace, and security program across 12 Pacific Island countries, designing capacity-building initiatives, research, and policy recommendations on natural resource transparency, climate governance, and conflict dynamics. Provided technical assistance on women’s inclusion in the PNG–Bougainville peace process, candidate training, voter education, and domestic election monitoring. Led regional research on violence against women in politics and on the impact of the pandemic on civil society and marginalized populations. Represented the organization with the Australian, New Zealand, and U.S. governments, UN agencies, and national authorities.

SENIOR COUNTRY DIRECTOR — National Democratic Institute (NDI) — Oct 2016 – Jun 2020 · Baghdad, Iraq

Designed and led a multi-faceted program to promote sustainable peace and strengthen political and governance institutions. Established a nationwide gender-sensitive peace platform and provincial women's advisory bodies in five regions supporting women's participation in politics, governance, and post-ISIS reconciliation. Directed nationally representative research on conflict drivers and political trends. Provided electoral technical assistance on voter education, domestic monitoring coalitions, and observation methodologies. Delivered policy briefings to the Iraqi government, U.S. Congress, NATO, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and UN agencies. Oversaw operations in Baghdad and Erbil, leading a multicultural team of 20+ staff and managing a USD 28 million donor portfolio funded by USAID, GAC, FCO, and DFID.

GOVERNANCE PROGRAM DIRECTOR — National Democratic Institute (NDI) — Apr 2015 – Sep 2016 · Erbil, Iraq

Formulated and implemented programs to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Iraqi Council of Representatives and the Kurdistan Parliament. Enhanced legislative oversight, legal analysis, and communications through strategic advice, training, and policy support. Contributed to data-informed programming through public opinion research and provided expertise on conflict transformation and governance reform.

SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER, POLITICAL PROCESSES — National Democratic Institute (NDI) — Sep 2014 – Mar 2015 · Pakistan (remote)

Designed capacity-building resources and managed NDI Pakistan's Political Party Training Fellowship Program, delivered remotely under security constraints. Designed performance assessment tools and knowledge management systems for offshore programming across multiple time zones. Conducted field deployments to Haiti and Morocco to advise political party leaders and train women candidates.

PROGRAM MANAGER, POLITICAL PROCESSES — National Democratic Institute (NDI) — Aug 2012 – Aug 2014 · Tripoli and Benghazi, Libya

Designed and implemented programs on women's participation, internal party democracy, policy development, multiparty dialogue, civil society-party collaboration, and conflict resolution. Organized high-level political conferences and consultations and provided electoral technical assistance on voter education, domestic monitoring coalitions, and observation methodologies. Undertook short-term assignments in Tunisia and Guatemala advising political leaders and supporting women candidates.

PROGRAM MANAGER, CIVIL SOCIETY — National Democratic Institute (NDI) — Oct 2010 – Aug 2012 · Erbil, Iraq

Designed and implemented programs promoting transparent and accountable governance by strengthening civil society oversight capacity. Facilitated nationwide CSO collaboration on community development and conflict resolution and advanced youth civic engagement through debate and critical thinking initiatives. Supported policy advocacy, including monitoring of provincial education directorates and enforcement of the law criminalizing honor killings in Kurdistan. Negotiated MOUs introducing academic debate in 54 secondary schools across Iraq.

PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER — Romanian Institute for Evaluation and Strategy (IRES) — Jan 2010 – Oct 2010 · Cluj, Romania

Led start-up operations as part of the launch team, establishing a research facility with 300 CATI stations, focus group rooms, and a media center. Supported the CEO with strategic planning, research reporting, and communications development. Managed corporate communications, branding, and public outreach, including dissemination of the 2009 presidential election exit poll.

MEMBER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL — Cluj County Council — Aug 2007 – Sep 2008 · Cluj, Romania

Participated in legislative deliberations through committee and plenary work and maintained regular outreach with constituents. Contributed to oversight of county civil service, public institutions, and council-owned enterprises. Monitored management and expenditure of county-level public services, promoting accountability in education funding, healthcare budget transparency, and anti-corruption reforms in the privatization of state-owned enterprises.

ASSISTANT TO A MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT — Office of Vasile Dâncu, MEP — Jan 2007 – Aug 2008 · Bucharest, Romania

Drafted policy reports and edited official documentation. Prepared political communication materials, managed media relations, and conducted constituency outreach. Organized public engagement campaigns to increase awareness of EU institutions.

TRAINER AND CONSULTANT — Friedrich Ebert Foundation — Apr 2006 – Oct 2010 · Romania and Republic of Moldova

Developed and delivered training courses for FES programs, including the Friedrich Ebert Fellowship for Young Political Leaders. Designed content on democratic governance, public policy, value-oriented politics, constituency outreach, and campaign communications. Trained and coached more than 150 politically engaged young people.

POLITICAL ADVISOR — Ioan Rus, Vice President of the Social Democratic Party — Apr 2004 – Oct 2010 · Cluj, Romania

Provided strategic advice and analysis on political strategy, public policy, and communications. Liaised with diplomats, political leaders, elected officials, and media, and organized stakeholder consultations. Drafted speeches, communiqués, and talking points, and supported policy advocacy on constitutional reform and political decentralization.

SPOKESPERSON — Social Democratic Party, Cluj Branch — Apr 2004 – Mar 2009 · Cluj, Romania

Drafted annual communication strategies, campaign messages, and speeches for local, national, and EU election campaigns. Managed public communications, media relations, and campaign advertising; coached candidates and party leaders for media appearances. Oversaw campaign budgets, supervised press office staff, and trained party spokespersons.

ELECTION OBSERVATION

EU Election Observation Mission, Peru — Mar – Jul 2026

Long-Term Observer. Monitored the pre-electoral, electoral, and post-electoral environment across assigned regions, including campaign activities, media, and electoral preparations. Liaised with electoral authorities, political parties, civil society, and vulnerable groups. Contributed to the mission's analytical reporting through field reports, incident tracking, and qualitative analysis, and briefed short-term observers.

EU International Election Observation Mission, Guyana — Aug – Sep 2025

Short-Term Observer. Monitored polling, counting, and tabulation in line with EU methodology; assessed compliance with international standards and national law. Documented incidents, irregularities, and good practices through structured checklists and daily reports.

Vot Corect Coalition, Romania — May 2025 · Cluj

Domestic short-term observer for both rounds of the 2025 Romanian presidential elections. Observed opening, voting, closing, and counting in multiple polling stations and submitted structured reports through the coalition's reporting platform.

International Republican Institute, Dominican Republic — Apr 2024 · Santo Domingo

International observer at the invitation of the Dominican Republic Election Commission for the 2024 presidential and congressional elections. Participated in high-level briefings and stakeholder meetings and observed all phases of election day operations.

National Democratic Institute, Papua New Guinea — Jul 2022 · Bougainville Region

Mobile international observer in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. Developed a strategic deployment plan with fellow observers and coordinated with the Bougainville Women's Federation observation team.

NDI-IRI International Election Observation Mission, Tunisia — Sep 2019 · Tunis

Short-Term Observer. Assessed the pre-election environment, including campaign silence, distribution of materials, and polling readiness; interviewed electoral commission officials, polling staff, and domestic observers; observed the full election day process.

Fiecare Vot, Romania — May 2019 · Cluj

Mobile domestic observer for the 2019 European Parliament elections. Observed all phases of election day proceedings and submitted findings through the Vote Monitor application developed by Code for Romania.

National Democratic Institute, Iraq — Sep 2018 · Erbil

International observer in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq as part of a seven-team deployment monitoring polling, closing, and counting.

National Democratic Institute, Iraq — May 2018 · Baghdad

Short-term observer for the 2018 federal elections. Monitored compliance with opening, voting, closing, and counting procedures and interviewed electoral officials, party agents, and domestic observers.

National Democratic Institute, Libya — Feb 2014 · Tripoli

International short-term observer for the Constitutional Assembly elections. Observed proceedings in designated polling centers and reported findings through structured observation forms.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Full list of works: [ORCID 0009-0002-7420-1078](https://orcid.org/0009-0002-7420-1078).

Research and reports

Kabuni, M. & Hansen, A. (2022). *"Women's Inclusion in the Post-Referendum Consultation Process between Papua New Guinea and Bougainville."* DPA In Brief, Department of Pacific Affairs, Australian National University. DOI: 10.25911/2FD3-A648

Kitau, R., Yangin, R., Kakarere, M., Pamu, O., Okole, M. & Kabuni, M. (2022). *The Openness and Transparency of Election Data in Papua New Guinea*. Working paper, University of Papua New Guinea. (Research direction and editing: A. Hansen.)

Hansen, A. & Socci, C. (2021). *Promoting Election Integrity in the Pacific Island Countries — Open Election Data Assessment*. Washington, DC: National Democratic Institute.

National Democratic Institute (2022). *Violence Against Women in Politics in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and Solomon Islands*. Washington, DC: NDI. (Research direction and editing: A. Hansen.)

National Democratic Institute (2020). *Political Exclusion in Iraqi Political Parties: How Women, Youth, and Components Strive to Change Politics*. Washington, DC: NDI. (Research direction and editing: A. Hansen.)

Commentary and analysis

Hansen, A. (2026). *"The New Fight Over Election Observation."* The Fulcrum, 7 July 2026.

Hansen, A. (2026). *"When Rivals Converge: Electoral Influence Beyond the Cold War."* The Fulcrum, 25 February 2026.

Hansen, A. (2025). *"How Russia Tried to Manipulate Moldova's Election — and What It Reveals."* The Interpreter, Lowy Institute, 27 November 2025.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE40122) — RAM Training Services · Gold Coast, Australia · 2025–2026

Certificado en Gerencia del Cambio Político Exitoso — Graduate School of Political Management, George Washington University · Washington, DC · 2019

Professional Qualification in Training of Trainers — Romanian Ministry of Labor and Ministry of Education · Cluj, Romania · 2008

Master of Arts in International and European Law — "Dimitrie Cantemir" University, Faculty of Law · Bucharest, Romania · 2006–2007

Master of Arts in Communication and Public Relations — National School of Political and Administrative Studies · Bucharest, Romania · 2003–2005

Professional Qualification in Political Management — Council of Europe, Schools of Political Studies · Sofia, Bulgaria · 2004–2005

Bachelor Degree in Law — "Dimitrie Cantemir" University, Faculty of Law · Cluj-Napoca, Romania · 1996–2001

LANGUAGES

Romanian (mother tongue) · English (C2) · French (C1) · Spanish (C1) · Portuguese (B2 understanding, B1 speaking and writing)