

Romania's Defence Policy and Role in NATO and the Common Security and Defence Policy of the EU

Oana-Elena Brânda

Introduction

The Romanian defence policy is currently developing in a complex environment characterised by constantly emerging threats and unpredictable events. As a result of its membership within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union, Romania enjoys a strong umbrella of protection, which engenders, however, severe obligations on both sides.

The Romanian approach to national defence policy is two-folded: redefining military power and adapting its means of reaction to threats and risks. This approach is both a result, as well as an effort of the country's membership within NATO and the EU. Membership-related activities date back to the early 1990s, when Romanian authorities initiated proactive measures to clearly express their firm intention of joining the two organisations. However, the efforts have been rather disbalanced, given the intensity of action of the two targeted entities, and their very nature. While the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a collective defence entity, bound together by the Washington Treaty of 1949 and its strong Article 5, the European Union remained, until recently, a political and economic entity. Its creation of a military branch, although long envisioned, became a reality only recently, through Article 42 (7) of the Treaty on the European Union. As a result, the degree of Romanian military participation in the European defence effort is only recent and likely to be developed through the participation in PESCO. On the other hand, as far as NATO is concerned, Romania pledged its allegiance and support even before membership and engaged actively in military exercises, prior to 2004, seeking thus to show its strength and capability to become a trustworthy and dependable member.

A thorough investigation of the position held by Romania within NATO and the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy needs to take into consideration firstly the chronological evolution. Secondly, it needs to be focused on the manner in which Romania grew from a member state in need of assistance to a provider of security and stability in the region, as well as inside the two organisations. In order to be able to do that, Romanian military forces have undergone an acute process of change, which is primarily visible through the allotment of 2% of the GDP for defence, starting in 2017. Finally, the best expression of having fully embraced its position within NATO and the EU CSDP and the responsibilities deriving from it, is the participation in various EU and NATO missions and operations, providing experience and expertise, training and resources.



General perceptions of NATO and CSDP in the national security and defence policy

Both NATO and the EU represent organisations that have a strong security and defence-related dimension. Thus, all policies constructed by member states in this regard are a direct consequence of the major directions established by the defence-related bodies of the two organisations. This can be easily seen in the main defence policy documents issued by Romania in the past years:

- The National Defense Strategy for 2015–2019. A Strong Romania within Europe and the World
- The White Paper on Defense, 2015
- The Military Strategy of Romania – Modern Armed Forces for a Powerful Romania within Europe and around the World, 2016
- Government Program 2018–2020
- Annual activity reports issued by the Ministry of National Defence since 2004 onwards

Significant changes in the Romanian defence policy have occurred especially in the aftermath of the Warsaw Summit of July 2016, a decisive moment in the Alliance's policy-making altogether, as it emphasised, once more, and to all member states, the need to comply with the 2% of the GDP for defence purposes requirement as well as the necessity of enhanced cooperation not only between members, but with other organisations, in a fast-track process of accommodating a changing environment. Furthermore, the decision-makers present in Warsaw agreed on the need to have the countries situated on the borders of the Alliance, and thus the first to be confronted with the threats act as first responders (MATTELAER 2016). Romania fully embraced such a task, as can be seen from the Romanian Military Strategy and the reform performed within.

Romania has been experiencing major difficulties, in dealing with higher threats to the Alliance and its borders implicitly, such as weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, CBRN threats, hybrid and cybersecurity ones, as well as migration from the MENA countries, on account of its lack of equipment and additional funding for defence (SELDEN 2016).

At the time when NATO member states convened in Warsaw in 2016, the pressing danger came from the eastern flank. As Mihnea Motoc, Romania's former National Defence Minister put it, the major outcome of the Summit consisted in the establishment of a realist and correct evaluation of the threats emerging from the eastern flank (Romanian Government 2016), allowing thus all NATO members to have a unitary perspective on the deterrence measures to be taken.

Additionally, former Minister Motoc underlined the need to further efforts within the Alliance framework, engaging actively in negotiations and dialogue with individual allies that could render operational any future-devised response (Romanian Government 2016). This is highly important, given the considerable NATO presence in Romania that requires building adequate infrastructure and developing the appropriate policies to render it operational.

The *National Defense Strategy for 2015–2019. A Strong Romania within Europe and the World* provides a more general framework on how national defence should be devised in the near future. The need to act within the framework established by the NATO and EU membership is clearly stated in the Preamble: "The Strategic Partnership with the United

States, and membership in NATO and the EU are the fundamentals of Romanian foreign policy. The building of a strong Romania depends on these" (National Defence Strategy 2015).

The *Romanian Military Strategy* has an "active-defensive character" (MoD 2016a), aiming to ensure the appropriate response to constantly evolving threats. "The concept of expanded national security requires the training of military personnel in understanding the role of national power structures and of international organisations in order to ensure the synergy of action of all actors involved in the area of military action" (MoD 2016a).

The *National Defense Strategy 2015–2019* is followed to a great extent by the Government Program for 2018–2020, which has the power of law after receiving the vote of confidence from the Parliament. According to it, threats to national security are bound to create a wave of instability on the eastern and southern flanks of both NATO and the EU (Romanian Government 2016), and Romania is predisposed to them on account of its geographical position.

Accordingly, the *Government Program for 2018–2020* identified several directions of action to ensure a proper response:

- Strategic continuity within NATO and the EU
- Increasing the operational capacity of the armed forces
- The implementation of an optimal management of defence resources
- Changes in professional training and life quality of military personnel
- Revitalising national defence industry
- Population and territory training and inter-institutional management of military or security-related crises (Romanian Government 2016)

Unlike the *National Defense Strategy 2015–2019*, which is dogmatic in approach and applicability, the *Government Program* has the power of law and is able to effect tangible changes within the national defence policy, that would render the country able to implement the Alliance Action Plan and synchronise Romanian participation in the NATO Smart Defence and EU Pooling and Sharing initiatives with domestic priorities.

Romania's stance within NATO and the EU on a military level is constructed based on efforts to deal with threats such as: Russian aggression in the Crimea, hybrid threats, regional tensions, the wave of migrations from unstable areas such as the MENA states, destabilisation in the Black Sea Extended Region, instability in the Western Balkans, increase in the number of short-notice or no-notice military exercises, terrorism, proliferation of WMD, intelligence operations, proliferation of high-precision weapons' system, cyberattacks, international organised crime, etc. Additionally, the existence of Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) capabilities in the Black Sea region presents one with the possibilities of a military aggression against Romania, which is considered by the Romanian Military Strategy to be the main threat against Romanian and regional security (MoD 2016b).

As a NATO and EU member state, Romania has the obligation to participate in providing national security and the security of allies (MoD 2016b, 7). According to the Romanian Military Strategy, participation in NATO and EU defence-related activities shall be achieved through two main directions: "Providing the capabilities committed to NATO, the EU and strategic partnerships, and participating in initiatives, programs, and projects of development in a multinational framework, including cyber and ballistic missile defence, and participating in maintaining and re-establishing security in NATO and the EU territory both within collective defence" (MoD 2016b, 10).

As far as the *White Paper on Defense of 2016* is concerned, the document is a comprehensive account of all efforts performed/intended to be performed in order to ensure that Romania complies with the demands of both NATO and the EU/CSDP. A major objective inscribed in the document is the need for the Romanian Army to be capable to participate in an Article 5 NATO operation or a high intensity EU operation based on the mutual assistance clause (MoD 2016b, 7). Additionally, the document introduced the concept of “extended national security” which deals with national defence in an integrative and multidimensional perspective, in an interdependence relationship with other dimensions of security – “public order, intelligence and counterintelligence, diplomacy, crisis management, education, healthcare and demography” (White Paper 2015). Such a compilation of elements highlights the complexity of devising a proper defence policy in a constantly changing environment, at the same time emphasising the existent interdependence between all fields of activity on a national level.

Due to its participation in NATO, Romania benefits from the strongest security guarantees ever. In this regard, and in light of its EU and NATO membership: “Romania [...] must continue and intensify its national efforts in the defence and security dimension, in agreement with the other allies and partners, [...] and maintain thus its status of security supplier” (MoD 2016b, 12). Furthermore, Romania needs to “capitalize on its geostrategic position with the aim of increasing its geostrategic role within NATO and the EU” (MoD 2016b, 16).

Institutional relations since 1989, with NATO and the EU

Institutional relations with both organisations began as early as the 1990s, almost immediately after the fall of communism. Romanian authorities considered that approaching both NATO and the then European Communities would be highly beneficial to the young democracy emerging in Romania and would stimulate a market economy and respect for the rule of law and human rights. Being already a member of the United Nations and the Council of Europe, the next step would be joining the two organisations that provided security and economic strength to the continent. However, as it entertained the membership idea, Romania had to comply with membership requirements, which generated profound changes within the Romanian society and the institutional system.

Negotiations with NATO

In October 1990, the Romanian ambassador in Belgium was authorised to enter diplomatic relations with NATO. A year later, in October 1991, President Ion Iliescu would send the NATO Secretary General a message stating the country’s availability to engage in a strengthened cooperation with NATO, as it was the only organisation able to provide stability and security for the newly emerging southeastern European democracies. It would be on 17 February 1993, during a meeting between President Ion Iliescu and NATO Secretary General Manfred Wörner that the former officially expressed the country’s intention to join NATO.

A first step in joining NATO was performed on 26 January 1994 when Teodor Meleşcanu, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs signed the Framework Agreement for the Partnership for Peace, Romania becoming thus the first state of Central and Eastern Europe to join in. Furthermore, Romania strengthened its commitment to participate in NATO activities by sending a military unit in the first NATO/PfP “Cooperative Bridge 94” exercise, in Biedruska, Poland, which took place between 12–16 September 1994. The following year, on 10–15 September 1995, Romania would host the first land force NATO/PfP exercise – “Cooperative Determination 95” (MFA 2018a).

The following years are extremely important as far as the country's commitment to NATO is concerned: on 29 November 1999, the Romanian Parliament validated the country's involvement in the NATO military efforts in Kosovo (KFOR), while on 19 September 2001, because of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the same Parliament convened that Romania would participate in the war on terror as a *de facto* ally of NATO, with all available means, including military ones. At the same time, the quota of participation in KFOR was augmented.

As a sample of the country's commitment to the Global War on Terror, on 21 December 2001, the Romanian Parliament agreed to the participation of military police forces and General Staff officers within ISAF (Afghanistan), followed by another participation in the Enduring Freedom Operation in Afghanistan, starting with 30 April 2002.

The official invitation for Romania to begin accession steps was launched during the Prague Summit of November 2002, followed by two rounds of discussion on the country's accession, held in Brussels on 13 December 2002 and 9 January 2003. It was during these rounds of negotiation that Romania would commit to all the prerequisites of becoming a member: supporting Allied consensus, promoting peace and stability, contributing with forces to all NATO operations. It also committed itself to contributing to the NATO civilian and military budget, including that of NATO Security Investment Program.

On 26 February 2004, Law No. 22/2004 on Romania's accession to NATO was enacted by the Parliament, followed by its signing into force by President Iliescu on 2 March 2004 (MFA 2018a).

Efforts made towards joining NATO have been enhanced in the background by the country's Strategic Partnership with the United States, which was established back on 11 July 1997. Ever since its signing, the Partnership has become an instrumental agreement helping shape the country's major foreign policy directions as well as its inner reforms in the political, economic, military and administrative sectors (MFA 2018c).

On 6 December 2005, the two countries signed the Access Agreement regulating the activities of U.S. forces stationed on Romanian soil. Another significant moment was the signing of 13 September 2011 of the Agreement between the U.S. and Romania on the deployment of the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense System in Romania (U.S. Mission 2016). On the same date, a Joint Agreement was signed between the two countries on the Strategic Partnership for the 21st Century (MFA 2011), which led to the creation of a Task Force divided into several working groups. These working groups have been reuniting annually ever since focusing on both domestic and foreign affairs of interest to both nations. More recently, the measure of U.S.–Romanian cooperation can be derived from the fact that during the visit performed by the Romanian Minister of National Defence in Washington in September 2017, a request was made that the American military presence in Romania become a permanent one, instead of a rotational one (MFA 2018c).

Negotiations with the European Union

Negotiations with the European Union began as early as 1993, with the signing of the Association Agreement to the EU on 1 February. Two years later, on 1 February 1995, the Agreement took effect (MFA 2018b). Official accession negotiations were opened in December 1999, during the European Council of Helsinki, with the process being effectively launched in February 2000, during the Romania–EU Intergovernmental Conference.

The official calendar of the country's accession to the EU was established during the European Council of Brussels in December 2003, as follows: 2004 – ending the negotiations, 2005 – signing of the accession treaty and January 2007 – effective accession. The conclusions of the European Council clearly featured the accession of Romania and Bulgaria as a common goal of the EU25. During the European Council of Brussels of 16–17 December 2004, the negotiations with both countries were officially closed. Romania's Accession Treaty was ratified by the European Parliament on 13 April 2005. Finally, on 1 January 2007, Romania became an EU member state.

Accession-generated changes

The country's accession to both NATO and the EU produced significant domestic changes, especially as far as legislation is concerned. One of the basic accession requirements consisted of the need to harmonise Romanian legislation with EU legislation. There were several fields within the constitution that required aligning with the community *acquis*: international treaties on human rights, the possibility of foreigners to achieve private property rights over land, equality of rights between European citizens and community ones, the rights of EU citizens to candidate and occupy public positions, expulsion and extradition. Moreover, the principle of EU law supremacy was consecrated within the Romanian Constitution.

To accommodate the changes brought forward by the country's accession to the European Union and NATO, a referendum was held to validate the changes brought forward to the Romanian Constitution on 18–19 October 2003 and confirmed by Decision No. 3/22 October 2003 of the Constitutional Court. All the changes brought to the Constitution have been integrated in Title VI, "Euro-Atlantic Integration", Article 148, referring to the EU accession and Article 149, concerning NATO accession (Constitution of Romania 2003).

As far as the country's accession to NATO is concerned, the changes brought along by the Alliance were more consistent in the field of equipment and endowment as Romania had to overcome the setbacks and gaps in its military personnel, finances and equipment, to be able to provide the necessary troops upon request, gradually become a supplier of regional security and participate in all NATO missions and programs. The evolution of institutional relations with the two organisations is visible through the country's participation in the decision-making process for the fulfilment of political and military goals within NATO and the EU.

As a NATO member, Romania adapted rapidly to the prerequisites issued during the major Summits and capitalised its assets to participate in several key sectors of the Alliance, such as the establishment of the strategic transport unit, the anti-missile defence system, the land surveillance system, the cyber-defence system (MAPN 2010, 3), etc., back in 2009. In 2011, the signing of the Statement on the support of the Allied Joint Command

Forces in Naples for the integration of the Romanian Army in Allied structures marked the ending of the gradual reform process of the Romanian Army (MAPN 2010, 2). Once Romania proved to be a capable and supporting partner, other types of cooperation followed, such as the establishment of the Anti-Ballistic Missile System in 2012, a part of the Aegis Ashore NATO Ballistic Missile Defence System (MAPN 2013, 2), participating in the land dimension of the tailored Forward Presence (tFP), featuring the “Rovine” Infantry Brigade 2 from Craiova which was later affiliated to the Headquarters Multinational Division South-East (MAPN 2017, 3), in 2016, and the deployment in Poland, a year later, of a Battle Task Force under US command, participating thus in the enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) (MAPN 2017, 4). More recently, in 2017, Romania participated in the development of both the eFP, through the enhanced Air Police and the tFP, through the development of the Black Sea strategic profile (MAPN 2018, 3). The Multinational Brigade achieved Initial Capacity in April 2017 and was able to participate in 2 multinational exercises – Noble Jump 2017 and Saber Guardian 2017 (MAPN 2018, 3). Finally, as a result of the NATO–EU Joint Statement of 2017, Romania participated in the development of transborder military mobility (MAPN 2018, 5).

As far as Romanian participation in CSDP mechanisms is concerned, one can easily observe a rather scarce involvement of the country. The definition of the legal framework of the Romanian participation in the European Defence Agency and European Union Satellite Centre budget, as well as in the Athena Mechanism handling common costs’ financing related to EU military operations under the EU’s CSDP (MAPN 2007, 4) took place almost immediately after 2007. In order to be better equipped, Romania subscribed to the Intergovernmental Regime to Encourage Competition in the European Defence Equipment Market and the Code of Conduct on Defence Procurement of the EU member states (MAPN 2007, 5).

Probably the most significant aspect of the Romanian involvement in CSDP structures and policies is its participation in PESCO, the European Defence Fund (EDF), the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) and in the EU Defence Industrial Development Program (MAPN 2017, 3). With regard to PESCO, Romania’s participation was agreed to during the 17 October 2017 reunion of the Supreme Council of National Defence and would be signed a month later, in November 2017, in Brussels, during the Foreign Affairs Council reunion, by the Romanian Minister of National Defence Mihai Fifor and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Teodor Meleşcanu (ANDREESCU 2017). The Romanian involvement in the European cooperation on a structured basis is an acknowledgement of the country’s sufficient and effective capabilities to be engaged in future missions and operations. As president Klaus Iohannis put it: “Romania will express its preliminary intention to participate in the initial set of 10 projects, the ones advanced to date by the Member States, subject to their acceptance in the framework of PESCO and whose subsequent development corresponds to the national priorities for the development of military capabilities” (BĂNILĂ 2017).

The role of the CSDP and NATO in domestic and military transition and reform

According to General Nicolae Ionel Ciucă, General Chief of Staff, in the 14 years since NATO accession, the transformation process of the Romanian Armed Forces “has evolved in full compliance with the commitments undertaken within the Alliance” (CIUCĂ 2017, 2). There are

three main stages, two of which have already been completed: the main downsizing stage (2005–2007), NATO and EU operational integration (2008–2015) and full integration into NATO and EU (2016–2025) (CIUCĂ 2017, 2). Furthermore, “the desired end state is to achieve the joint action capacity of the Romanian Armed Forces and of the force structure required to achieve the level of ambition [...] and participate in accordance with assumed obligations in a NATO collective defence major joint operation, or in an EU-led high-intensity operation under the mutual assistance clause” (MoD 2016b, 11).

There was a pressing need for the Romanian army to engage in a process of restructuring and modernisation that led to severe changes within the inner hierarchy as well as in army capabilities. The main goal of the transformation and reform process was to establish a small, flexible, mobile and professional army, endowed with high precision equipment, able to guarantee “state sovereignty, independence and unity, territorial integrity and constitutional democracy”. Additionally, a major goal was achieving interoperability status with the NATO military forces. Furthermore, national interests, the changing security environment, the rise of new challenges to security and defence and the need to modernise military institutions proved good enough reasons to enhance the transition and reform process.

The reform process began in the early 1990s and was a top-down endeavour, producing a complete makeover of the military institutions, including the Ministry of National Defence and the Supreme Council of National Defence. Foreseeing the country’s accession to NATO, its decision-makers coupled it to the Alliance through the Initial Partnership Goals (IPGs), aiming thus to expedite the reform process. For instance, upon NATO suggestions, in February 2000, the Romanian army took on 84 IPGs, of a total of 88. All efforts consisting of re-dimensioning the army, professionalising army personnel, establishing a credible defence capability and achieving interoperability with NATO members’ armies were guided through the *Partnership Goals’ Implementation Plan for 2001–2007*. The Plan consisted of two phases: re-structuring army personnel and then achieving operational capabilities and endowment on a planned basis, to reach NATO requirements.

A main asset in the transition and reform process was the engagement within the Partnership for Peace framework, which was essential in using the Alliance’s good practices and counselling in order to capitalise on Romanian expertise and training and reach thus Alliance targets in a very brief period of time.

Currently, the re-structuring of the army personnel was completed and the Ministry of National Defence is rather focusing on procurement programs that would endow the Romanian Army to Alliance standards. The Romanian Armed Forces’ Procurement Program for 2017–2026 comprises 8 key aspects to be further acquired, integrated and developed within the Romanian Army:

- Acquisition of 4 multi-purpose corvettes and the adjoining equipment
- Mobile anti-ship missile launchers
- Modernisation of the MLI-84 infantry fighting vehicles
- 8 x 8 and 4 x 4 armoured personnel carriers
- C41 system with ISTAR integration capabilities
- Advanced surface-to-air missile (ASAM) systems
- SHORAD–VSHORAD integrated weapon systems
- Long-range Multiple launcher rocket systems (MoD 2017)

Policy field-specific relations

Contributions to NATO missions and operations

Both because of the NATO Warsaw Summit of 2016, and due to Romania's security and defence in the close neighbourhood of the Western Balkans and the Wider Black Sea Area, one of the country's key objectives is "to enhance the Alliance's role as security and stability provider, by holding up the implementation of defence reforms and fostering regional cooperation" (MoD 2016a).

However, apart from the regional involvement, Romania is also active within the Middle East. Thus, Romania participates lately in the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan and in the U.S. Global Coalition to counter ISIL, contributing with training efforts of the Iraqi Security Forces, to mention the most recent.

The country's commitment to joining the Alliance and advancing rapidly to a full-fledged partner is visible in the evolution of its contribution to NATO operations. Thus, in 2005, one year after joining the Alliance, Romania was contributing 1 frigate in the "Active Endeavour" operation and 2,300 troops in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq (MAPN 2006, 3–4). The evolution of troops deployed abroad was according to the needs of the moment – increasing when necessary and decreasing in recent years. Apart from troops, Romania contributed to the NATO Reaction Force in 2008 (MAPN 2009, 3), Counselling and Liaison Operational Teams as well as instructors in the ANA TRAINING Program in 2010 (MAPN 2010, 3), intelligence structures and General Staff personnel in NATO KFOR in Kosovo and EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2011 (MAPN 2011, 3), and instructors for the Training Advise and Assist Command South/TAAC-S mission and TAAC-North in the latest NATO Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan (MAPN 2016, 3).

At present, the Romanian presence in NATO missions remained consistent with the previous years.

Table 1.
International participation of the Romanian armed forces in NATO

No.	Type of Mission	Number of troops
1.	Kosovo–KFOR	59
2.	Afghanistan	625
3.	Anti-Aircraft Detachment Poland	120
4.	Active Endeavour	16
5.	General Staff and Liaison Personnel	9
Total		829

Source: Defence Staff 2018.

Contribution to EU CSDP missions

European crises pose the need for an enhancement of the CSDP framework. Romania is an active contributor to EU missions in the Western Balkans, South Africa and Eastern

and Southern Europe, as well as to the European Defence Agency's initiatives to develop strategic capabilities.

A year prior to the very accession, in 2006, Romania demonstrated its commitment to enhanced European security within the EU and along its borders by active participation in 2 EU Battlegroups (EUBGs), and providing transport subunits, military police, HUMINT, General Staff personnel, totalling 81 troops in Operation Althea (MAPN 2016, 2). Romania's stance in the CSDP framework is visible nowadays all throughout missions and operations in the Western Balkans, the Caucasus and Africa.

Table 2.
Participation of the Romanian armed forces in EU missions

No.	Type of Mission	Number of troops
	Observation and Monitoring Missions	
1.	EUFOR Althea – Bosnia and Herzegovina	39
2.	EUMM Georgia	1
Total		40
	Training and Counselling Missions	
1.	EUTM–CAR	8
2.	EUTM–Somalia	1
3.	EUTM–Mali	1
Total		10
	EUNAVFOR NFM SOPHIA – managing migration	2
Total		52

Source: Defence Staff 2018.

Compared to the participation in NATO missions, the Romanian involvement in EU ones is more restricted at present. Given the fact that the EU is an economic and political structure, compared to a collective defence alliance, such a limited presence is fully justified.

Contribution to NATO defence and deterrence

To be able to comply with Alliance requirements, the Ministry of National Defence launched the *Program for the transformation, development and endowment of the Romanian Army until 2027 and beyond*. A major prerequisite listed by the Warsaw Summit was the achievement of the 2% allotted from the national GDP for defence. As a result, Romania chose a double-folded path, focusing its reaction to the Summit on expenditure and participation. Thus, in 2017, Romania fulfilled the demand of 2% of the GDP allotted to military spending. As far as participation is concerned, this manifested in the form of the NATO Force Structure of which Romania hosts the following: The Multinational Division Southeast Headquarters; the NATO Force Integration Unit; the Deployable Communications Module Element; and the Deveselu Missile Defence Base (MoD 2016b), followed by the deployment of troops in Afghanistan and the Western Balkans, along with a training mission in Iraq.

In Warsaw, Romania committed itself to creating a multinational brigade, and an intensified instruction Program – SGT (Romanian Government 2016) that would combine

air, ground and naval training, their existence resulting from a series of scenarios likely to occur in the near future in the Black Sea area and on the much-dreaded eastern flank of the Alliance. Another commitment made in Warsaw, the Headquarters Multinational Brigade South-East, located in Craiova, became operational during the Saber Guardian multinational exercise that took place in Cincu in July 2017, in the presence of the Romanian President Klaus Iohannis and the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, Petr Pavel. In the initiation stage, 8 NATO member states pledged to contribute to the Brigade with troops (Poland, Bulgaria and the United States, to name a few) and General Staff officers (Germany and the Netherlands) (LUPITU 2017). In the larger framework of the Alliance, this added to the Romanian contribution to the NATO battalion in Poland and the British, Canadian and Polish air force patrol of the eastern border (LUPITU 2016).

Romania's stance as a security provider was increased by the activation of the Aegis Ashore site in Deveselu and the allotment of 2% of the GDP for defence. In the first case, the Ballistic Missile Defence System is a core-NATO capability, intended to offer protection against threats that might emerge from outside of the Euro-Atlantic border and increase the security of troops stationed in Romania. In the second case, allotting 2% of the GDP for defence purposes meant a compliance with NATO requirements but also a great challenge for the country, as it will have to struggle to maintain this quota for at least a decade (BASSARABESCU 2016), to be able to provide for effective military endowment and training. Although enthusiastic, the 2% quota is highly controversial, especially in the current economic landscape of European crises and increased economic obligations.

As a result of the allotment of the 2% quota, Romanian authorities made immediate efforts to correlate the need of modern military equipment endowment and the current threats of the security environment. Consequently, Defence Planning Directive 15/2017 and Supreme Council of National Defence Decision No. 174/2016 (Romanian Government 2017) allocated 100 million euros in the form of acquisitions. These add to the already existing "Army 2026" Program (BASSARABESCU 2016) intended to achieve the following: modernisation of two frigates, advancement on the "Multi-Purpose Plane" Program (consisting of pilot and support personnel training for F-16s), acquisition of multi-purpose corvettes and framework agreements on the purchase of other military vehicles.

Capabilities development

It is a fact that Romania needs to have a pragmatic approach in the new context of security, even though at present, the country is not confronted with a direct, imminent and explicit threat, be it terrorist or of any other kind. In this regard, Romania needs to enhance the political and military cooperation, continue to modernise the armed forces and enhance defence capabilities that would offer the possibility to provide an adequate response to challenges.

One of the main objectives of Romania's defence policy for the period 2015–2019 is to "increase its strategic credibility within NATO and the EU" (White Paper 2015, 15). A key element is to respect and obey the commitments made within the two organisations.

As far as NATO is concerned, Romania needs to continue its participation in the capability development initiatives in a multinational framework, including the

“Smart Defence”. The Romanian involvement in “Smart Defence” began in 2013, by its participation in 3 multinational-related Programs: NATO Airborne Early Warning (NAEW), NATO Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) and NATO Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC) (MAPN 2014, 2). In the following years, troop participation was doubled by expertise: participation with a soft decontamination unit to the CBRN Multinational Battalion project in 2014 (MAPN 2015, 3), filling in 3 positions of General Staff Officer within the Joint Multinational Commandment in Ulm, Germany (MAPN 2016, 5) in 2015, and involvement in 4 new projects in 2017, such as Training and Evaluation Camp in the field of Smart Energy, International Joint Center of Excellence for Logistics, Center of Excellence for Unmanned Systems, Center of Excellence for Urban Operations (MAPN 2017).

Although Romanian forces are committed to the NATO Defence Planning Process through the Capability Targets, in order to better enhance the country’s participation within the Alliance, there are several steps that need to be pursued:

- A coherent implementation of the Readiness Action Plan measures, in order to increase the operational capacity
- Intensifying efforts for the rendering operational and optimal functioning of command and control of Allied structures
- Increase the Black Sea Area’s strategic profile
- Continue to participate in the capability development initiatives within a multinational framework, such as “Smart Defence” and “Framework Nation Concept”
- Optimise national contributions to major Alliance capabilities, such as the Allied Ground Surveillance, Strategic Airlift Capability and NATO Airborne Early Warning (White Paper 2015, 18–19)

Since 2013, Romania has been active in the “Pooling and Sharing” EU Program, providing training and expertise when appropriate. In the beginning, Romania manifested interest in participating in 8 fields of operational capability development: medical support for operations, counteract improvised explosive devices, CBRN capabilities, strategic air transport, logistical support for operations, pilot training, shooting range and establishing a joint multinational commandment (MAPN 2014, 2). At present, Romania participates in the following projects: EU SatCom Market, European Air Transport Fleet (EATF), Diplomatic Clearances (DIC), Multinational Medical Modular Units (M3U), Sharing of Spare parts (SoSP), Joint Deployable Exploitation and Analysis Laboratory (JDEAL), C27J Spartan Cooperation (MAPN 2018, 7), and after the launching of PESCO it has manifested its intentions to participate in 5 PESCO-integrated projects: European Medical Command; Military Mobility; EU Training Mission Competence Centre (EU TMCC); Maritime (semi-) Autonomous Systems for Mine Countermeasures (MAS MCM); Cyber Rapid Response Teams and Mutual Assistance in Cyber Security (MAPN 2017, 7).

Romania was bound to take over the semesterly presidency of the European Union Council in the second half of 2019 and the country still needs to step up its efforts within the CSDP framework and increase its participation in the multinational cooperation formats of the European Defence Agency, including the EU Capability Development Plan. Activities in this regard include the following:

- Consolidating Romania’s position within the decision-making mechanisms of CSDP
- Providing military and civilian forces and capabilities to EU operations and missions

- Identifying and promoting national priorities in the CSDP field
- Optimising its participation in the European Defence Agency's initiatives in the field of capabilities, including the strengthening of its participation in the Pooling and Sharing Initiative
- Continue and adapt its participation to the European Union's Reaction Force through the EU Battlegroups format (White Paper 2015, 20–21)

Another significant aspect to be considered is that of financing defence and Romania has been struggling to upgrade its contribution to national defence to the target of 2% as mentioned above. A significant document is Law No. 203/2015 concerning the planning of defence, the legal framework in which the Romanian Army continued its alignment with the defence planning system of NATO and the EU.

Defence planning is performed “through a coherent integration of specific objectives and actions for the following fields: force planning; armament planning; command, control, communications; logistics; civilian emergencies; resources; aerial defence; air traffic management; medical information; research-development and standardization” (White Paper 2015, 41). In this regard, a great role is played by the Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Evaluation System, a robust body that focuses on both the elaboration and implementation of defence policy, as well as effective auditing of its means of implementation (White Paper 2015, 41–42).

Table 3.
Romanian GDP allotment for defence purposes

2008	1.5%
2009	1.3%
2010	1.30%
2011	1.25%
2012	1.25%
2013	1.38%
2014	1.4%
2015	1.42%
2016	1.49%
2017	2%

Source: Compiled by the author.

Because of the strong investments made in the Romanian military concerning troops and endowment, Romania has to and must continue to consolidate its profile within NATO and the EU through both conceptual and operational contributions (White Paper 2015, 8).

Conclusions and outlook

Taking everything into consideration, Romania's pledge to reach interoperability and an interdependence status within both NATO and the EU has materialised in the most tangible

manner: through the many operations, missions and exercises the Romanian forces took part in, as well as the increase in the GDP allotment for defence. It is a fact that Romanian efforts to cope with the challenges posed by the international community, as well as by the emerging threats and the demands of the two organisations, have not yet come to an end, the 2% of the GDP for defence being merely the completed starting point. It will be a challenge for the country to maintain itself at this rate and even increase it in the years to come.

The complexity of the Romanian role in the NATO and CSDP policies is visible through the steps taken by the country both prior and after the accession, in both cases. While efforts made in the participation to the European Defence Agency and to CSDP altogether were rather timid, they were compensated by the boldness manifested in the active participation in NATO activities. The commitment to participate in the achievement of political and military goals, as well as within the decision-making process has prompted Romania into the role of security provider, a position it has aspired to ever since the accession.

Both within NATO and CSDP, Romania has manifested as a strong country, eager to step over the label of “new member state” and become an active participant in the programs developed by the two organisations. This is most visible in the country’s participation in NATO, as Romania is currently able to host several NATO structures, and contribute to NATO missions with troops, expertise and training.

References

- Agenda 2000 (1997): *Agenda 2000 – Commission Opinion on Romania’s Application for Membership of the European Union*. Brussels, 15 July 1997. Source: www.esiweb.org/pdf/romania_EC-Romania%20opinion-1997.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- ANDREESCU, Crişan (2017): PESCO. România, în proiectul cooperării militare. Statele care au refuzat semnarea acordului [Romania in the military cooperation project. States that have refused to sign the agreement]. *DC News*, 19 November 2017. Source: www.dcnews.ro/pesco-romania-in-proiectul-cooperarii-militare-statele-care-au-refuzat-semnarea-acordului_566705.html (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- BĂNILĂ, Nicoleta (2017): Romania to join EU’s defence initiative PESCO. *SeeNews*, 17 October 2017. Source: <https://seenews.com/news/romania-to-join-eus-defence-initiative-pesco-587373> (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- BASSARABESCU, Gabriel (2016): Ministrul Apărării, Mihnea Motoc, despre concluziile summitului NATO [Minister of Defence Mihnea Motoc about the conclusions of the NATO summit]. *Radio România Actualități*, 10 July 2016. Source: www.romania-actualitati.ro/ministrul_apararii_mihnea_motoc_despre_concluziile_summitului_nato-91863 (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- CIUCĂ, Nicolae Ionel (2017): Romanian Armed Forces: experience, enhanced capability, modernization. *Romanian Defence 2017*, Ministry of National Defence. 2–3.
- Constitution of Romania (2003): *Constituția României*. Source: www.cdep.ro/pls/dic/site.page?den=act2_1&parl=6#t6c0s0sba148 (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- Defence Staff (2018): *Misiuni internaționale* [International missions]. Statul Major al Apărării. Source: www.defense.ro/misiuni-internationale (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- ISPRI (2008): *România și integrarea euro-atlantică* [Romania and Euro-Atlantic Integration]. București, Editura Institutului pentru Științe Politice și Relații Internaționale.

- LUPITU, Robert (2016): România, din nou în centrul deciziilor NATO: Forțe aliate din șapte țări, printre care SUA, Germania și Canada, vin la Marea Neagră pentru a asigura securitatea/Spațiul aerian al României, apărât de avioane britanice [Romania again at the centre of NATO decisions: Allied forces from seven countries, including the U.S., Germany and Canada, come to the Black Sea to ensure security/Romania's airspace, defended by British aircraft]. *Calea Europeană*, 27 October 2016. Source: www.caleaeuropeana.ro/romania-din-nou-in-centrul-deciziilor-nato-forțe-aliat-din-sapte-tări-printre-care-sua-germania-si-canada-vin-la-marea-neagră-pentru-a-asigura-securitatea-spațiul-aerian-al-româniei-aparat-de/ (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- LUPITU, Robert (2017): Brigada multinațională NATO din România a fost activată în cadrul Saber Guardian 2017, cel mai mare exercițiu multinațional aliat din acest an [The NATO multinational brigade in Romania was activated within Saber Guardian 2017, the largest allied multinational exercise this year]. *Calea Europeană*, 17 July 2017. Source: www.caleaeuropeana.ro/fotovideo-brigada-multinatională-nato-din-romania-a-fost-activată-in-cadrul-saber-guardian-2017-cel-mai-mare-exercitiu-multinational-aliat-din-acest-an/ (Accessed: 03 September 2018.)
- MAPN (2006): Raport privind activitatea desfășurată de Ministerul Apărării Naționale în anul 2005 și direcții de acțiune pentru anul 2006 [Report on the activity carried out by the Ministry of National Defence in 2005 and directions for action for 2006]. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 822, 20 September 2006. Source: www.mapn.ro/rapoarte/rapoarte_activitate/2006.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MAPN (2007): Raport privind activitatea desfășurată de Ministerul Apărării Naționale în anul 2006 [Report on the activity carried out by the Ministry of Defence in 2006]. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 391, 18 June 2007. Source: www.mapn.ro/rapoarte/rapoarte_activitate/index.php (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MAPN (2008): Raport privind activitatea desfășurată de Ministerul Apărării Naționale în anul 2007 [Report on the activity carried out by the Ministry of Defence in 2007]. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 341, 06 June 2008. Source: www.mapn.ro/rapoarte/rapoarte_activitate/index.php (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MAPN (2009): Raport privind activitatea Ministerului Apărării Naționale pe anul 2008 [Report on the activity carried out by the Ministry of Defence in 2008]. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 227, 24 June 2009. Source: www.mapn.ro/rapoarte/rapoarte_activitate/index.php (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MAPN (2010): Raport privind activitatea Ministerului Apărării Naționale în anul 2009 [Report on the activity of the Ministry of National Defence in 2009]. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 386, 18 November 2010. Source: www.mapn.ro/rapoarte/rapoarte_activitate/index.php (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MAPN (2011): Raport asupra activității desfășurate de Ministerul Apărării Naționale în anul 2010 [Report on the activity carried out by the Ministry of National Defence in 2010]. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 144, 09 May 2011. Source: www.mapn.ro/legislatie/rapoarte_activitate/raport_de_activitate_2010.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MAPN (2012): Raport asupra activității desfășurate de Ministerul Apărării Naționale în anul 2011 [Report on the activity carried out by the Ministry of National Defence in 2011]. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 358, 11 October 2012. Source: www.mapn.ro/legislatie/rapoarte_activitate/raport_2011.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MAPN (2013): Raport asupra activității desfășurate de Ministerul Apărării Naționale în anul 2012 [Report on the activity carried out by the Ministry of National Defence in 2012].

- Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 408, 10 October 2013. Source: www.mapn.ro/rapoarte/rapoarte_activitate/Raport_privind_activitatea_desfasurata_de_Ministerul_Apararii_Nationale_in_anul_2012%20_-_M.O._partea_a_III-a_nr.408_din_10.10.2013.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MAPN (2014): Raport asupra activității desfășurate de Ministerul Apărării Naționale în anul 2013 [Report on the activity carried out by the Ministry of National Defence in 2013]. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 457, 07 August 2014. Source: www.mapn.ro/rapoarte/rapoarte_activitate/raport_activ_2014.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MAPN (2015): Raport asupra activității desfășurate de Ministerul Apărării Naționale în anul 2014 [Report on the activity carried out by the Ministry of National Defence in 2014]. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 491, 19 May 2015. Source: www.mapn.ro/rapoarte/rapoarte_activitate/raport_activitate_2015.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MAPN (2016): Raport asupra activității desfășurate de Ministerul Apărării Naționale în anul 2015 [Report on the activity carried out by the Ministry of National Defence in 2015]. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 703, 07 June 2016. Source: www.mapn.ro/rapoarte/rapoarte_activitate/Raport_privind_activitatea_desfasurata_de_Ministerul_Apararii_Nationale_in_anul_2015_M.O.partea_a_III-a_nr.703_din_07.06.2016.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MAPN (2017): Raport asupra activității desfășurate de Ministerul Apărării Naționale în 2016 [Report on the activity carried out by the Ministry of National Defence in 2016]. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 533, 21 April 2017. Source: www.mapn.ro/rapoarte/rapoarte_activitate/Raport_activitate.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MAPN (2018): Raport privind activitatea Ministerului Apărării Naționale în anul 2017 [Report on the activity carried out by the Ministry of National Defence in 2017]. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, Third Part, No. 650, 07 July 2018. Source: www.mapn.ro/rapoarte/rapoarte_activitate/Raport_activitate_2017.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MATTELAER, Alexander (2016): The NATO Warsaw Summit: How to Strengthen Alliance Cohesion? *Strategic Forum*, No. 296. Source: <http://inss.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/stratforum/SF-296.pdf> (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MFA (2011): *Declarația comună privind parteneriatul strategic pentru secolul XXI între România și Statele Unite ale Americii* [Joint Statement on the Strategic Partnership for the 21st Century between Romania and the United States of America]. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Source: www.mae.ro/sites/default/files/file/2011.09.13_declaratie.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MFA (2018a): *Cronologia relațiilor România–NATO* [Chronology of Romania–NATO Relations]. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Source: www.mae.ro/node/5346 (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MFA (2018b): *Cronologia relațiilor România–UE* [Chronology of Romania–EU Relations]. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Source: www.mae.ro/node/1542 (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MFA (2018c): *Parteneriatul Strategic România–SUA* [Romania–USA Strategic Partnership]. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Source: www.mae.ro/node/4944 (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- MoD (2016a): From Wales to Warsaw: A Romanian Outlook. *Romanian Defence 2016*, Ministry of National Defence. 3–4.
- MoD (2016b): *The Military Strategy of Romania – Modern Armed Forces for a Powerful Romania within Europe and Around the World*. Bucharest, Ministry of National Defence. Source: www.eda.europa.eu/docs/default-source/Defence-Procurement-Gateway/ro_milstrategy.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)

- MoD (2017): Major Procurement Programs – Top priority of the Romanian Ministry of National Defence. *Romanian Defence 2017*, Ministry of National Defence. 16–19. Source: www.mapn.ro/publicatii/2017/revista_2017.pdf (Accessed: 03 July 2018.)
- National Defence Strategy (2015): *National Defense Strategy 2015–2019. A Strong Romania within Europe and the World*. Source: www.presidency.ro/files/userfiles/National_Defense_Strategy_2015_-_2019.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- Romanian Government (2016): Declarații de presă ale ministrului Apărării Naționale, Mihnea Motoc, și ale ministrului Afacerilor Externe, Lazăr Comănescu, privind angajamentele României, în urma Summitului NATO de la Varșovia [Press statements by the Minister of National Defence, Mihnea Motoc and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lazăr Comănescu, on Romania's commitments, following the NATO Summit in Warsaw]. *Guvernul României*, 28 July 2016. Source: <http://gov.ro/ro/media/video/declaratii-de-presa-ale-ministrului-apararii-nationale-mihnea-motoc-i-ale-ministrului-afacerilor-externe-lazar-comanescu-privind-angajamentele-romaniei-in-urma-summit-ului-nato-de-la-var-ovia> (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- Romanian Government (2017): Măsuri necesare începerii investițiilor pentru opt programe de înzestrare a Armatei Române [Measures Needed to Start Investments for Eight Endowment Programs of the Romanian Army]. *Guvernul României*, 30 March 2017. Source: <http://gov.ro/ro/print?modul=sedinte&link=masuri-necesare-inceperii-investitiilor-pentru-opt-programe-de-inzestrare-a-armatei-romane#null> (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- SELDEN, Zachary (2016): Looking forward from the Warsaw NATO Summit: What next for the Alliance? *College of Europe Policy Brief*, No. 13. Source: www.coleurope.eu/system/files_force/research-paper/selden_cepob_13-16_final.pdf?download=1 (Accessed: 21 March 2018.)
- U.S. Mission (2016): Agreement Between the United States of America and Romania on the Deployment of the United States Ballistic Missile Defence System in Romania. *U.S. Mission Romania*, 17 April 2016. Source: <https://ro.usembassy.gov/agreement-between-the-united-states-of-america-and-romania-on-the-deployment-of-the-united-states-ballistic-missile-defense-system-in-romania/> (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)
- White Paper (2015): *White Paper on Defense – Romania*. Bucharest, Romanian Government. Source: www.eda.europa.eu/docs/default-source/Defence-Procurement-Gateway/ro_white-paper-on-defence.pdf (Accessed: 20 March 2018.)