ROMANIA
PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION

National Defence Strategy
2020-2024

„Together for a safe and prosperous Romania in a world marked by new challenges”

BUCHAREST
2020

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FOREWORD

Throughout the last 30 years, Romania has significantly evolved due to the individual and joint action of its citizens. Romania has accomplished national objectives that have been vital for its domestic development, as well as for its strengthened position abroad: ***joining NATO and the European Union.***

In addition to these desiderata, the Romanian people have stated, on numerous occasions, their attachment to safeguard the rule of law and democracy, independence of the judiciary, the fight against corruption, as well as their attachment to involvement in the public sphere, an indication of the development of a participatory political culture.

The journey does not end here. Romanians want a modern, prosperous and safer country. I believe that the desire for progress of the Romanian citizens must be the foundation of our action.

In my view, Romania must be the state that works for each of its citizens, endowed with institutions that work for the country's development, that promote and guarantee real democracy, its citizens' rights and liberties, which ensure the society's development and the country's affirmation. Hence, the citizen is at the heart of the public institutions' action, and ***the state-society-citizen triad*** *is achieved****,*** *as a constant feature of the public interest and endeavours. Our country is strongly committed to European values and plays a significant role in NATO and the EU, in ensuring security for their outer boarders, as well as and in the Black Sea region. It is also a solid partner for the US and our allies as a pillar for regional security.*

Functional Romania is tantamount to a safe country, which provides to its citizens all the prerequisites to lead a better, safe and secure life, a country which protects its identity, values, heritage and resources, as well as the guidelines of the rule of law.

The national security policy, together with the foreign policy, is one of the public policies whose elaboration and implementation is the constitutional and legal prerogative of the President of Romania.

The national security policy cannot be the expression of a single person's will, although it is the result of a process that falls under the duties of the President of Romania. It must be built, at least in principle, on fundamental values and guidelines, as it is ***the expression of consensus and common national effort.***

The National Defence Strategy for 2020-2024 provides answers to key questions about our main national objectives for ensuring the security of Romania and its citizens and underscores the necessary steps to achieve them. The national security public policies will be designed and implemented with ***the citizen as final beneficiary****, and under the principles of the national security and defence policy, the Strategy will guide and direct the activity of all public institutions with authorities and responsibilities in the fields of national security and defence.*

Continuity, predictability and decision making transparency *are essential conditions for the exercise of strategic leadership, which I have employed during my first term as President of Romania and which I will diligently continue to employ for the duration of my next term of office.*

Internally, they generate ***stability and credibility,*** *both in the political arena and among all the citizens who are thus aware of the expectations that they should have from the President of their country. Their outcome is also echoed internationally, as our allies, partners and other international actors can rely on Romania to behave in accordance with values and principles specific to functional democracies, in compliance with international law and with the rule of law.*

In terms of Romania's security, amid a dynamic, turbulent and unpredictable geopolitical context such as the current one, we need to have ***a tailored and efficient response*** *to the risks, threats and vulnerabilities that we are facing, based on:* ***continuity, adaptability, flexibility, resilience and predictability.***

Within NATO*, I will continue to act decisively, just as in the past, in order to increase Romania's relevance within the Alliance, so that the latter continues to be the strongest and most efficient collective defence organisation in history.*

The Black Sea region is of strategic interest for Romania and it must be a safe and predictable area *– these are vital aspects for the national security, as well as for the European and transatlantic security. Therefore, I will continue my endeavours for the development of the national defence posture and for the increase of the Allies' presence in NATO structures on Romanian territory, in addition to an enhanced efficiency of the efforts made by the Romanian State in support of consolidating national security.*

I will continue to support the firm implementation of Romania's commitment to ***ensure at least 2% of GDP funding for defence,*** *which, in addition to the appreciation of our allies, has also brought us tangible benefits in terms of our country's and our citizens' security. Due to this programme that we launched in the beginning of my previous term, we are now better protected against security risks and threats, far from hypothetical in our region.*

Without strong Armed Forces, a state does not benefit from international and strategic credibility. The new defence architecture requires very well trained and equipped human resources, as well as interoperable capabilities in NATO's collective defence system. The existence of significant resources aimed at the Romanian Armed Forces' endowment and the guarantee of their long term allocation is also a necessary incentive for ***reinvigorating the national defence industry.*** *Coherent multiannual programmes may provide the Romanian industry with opportunities to rebound, particularly by means of industrial cooperation with our allies' respective companies.*

National security represents the very ***practical expression of normality*** *that I envisage for Romania, the country where every citizen lives in a safe environment and trusts that the institutions they support defend and protect them.*

INTRODUCTION

1. The two major national projects of the democratic Romania's foreign and security policy – joining NATO and the EU – have brought together, in an admirable way, the national consensus. Likewise, in the field of domestic policy, **the project aimed at rebuilding the institutions of the country and completing a democratic and strong Romania** has the necessary extent to entail the involvement of all relevant actors in the society and to ensure the support of the Romanian citizens.

2. In terms of a state's foreign policy, the basic quality benchmarks are given by **the predictability of its strategic options,** the compliance to principles and validity of its stances, **as well as by the responsible fulfilment of its commitments**. The essential objective of our foreign and security policy, which we will further promote, is **to enhance Romania's international profile**. It is an objective that we can achieve by reinforcing our defence capacity, as well as our capacity to project in our neighbouring areas and beyond the democratic values of the rule of law and stability, at the same time with the capacity to provide security in order to increase the Romanian citizens' safety and prosperity.

3. The foundation of our country's foreign and security policy will be the following action triad: Increasing Romania's role and efforts in the European Union, strengthening our strategic profile in NATO, as well as deepening and extending the Strategic Partnership with the US.

4. Global security developments, generated by reconfigurations of the balance of power, call for concrete, coherent and concerted actions from the Romanian state, which can and must continue its modernisation and adaptation process, including in the area of its institutions, and coping with the technological advance.

5. For the first time in the 21st century, **the world is facing a pandemic** that has affected all states and has triggered an economic crisis that will seriously affect the power relations among global players, a development increasing the already highly volatile and unpredictable character of the international security environment.

6. The Russian Federation's aggressive behaviour, the actions to militarize the Black Sea region, as well as their hybrid actions carried out with the purpose of maintaining a tense climate of insecurity in the proximity of our country, **prompt Romania to firmly continue** the extensive process **initiated in 2015** of building robust deterrence and defence capabilities. This process is concurrent with the increase of our Armed Forces' interoperability with the Allies, as well as with the strengthening of the institutional capacity to counter hybrid actions.

7. Consistent efforts are needed in order **to transform our country into a resilient state**, able to adequately relate to the unpredictability and magnitude of developments touching upon the security environment. This requires a **strong state** that is aware of the need to develop its own rapid and efficient response mechanisms and, inherently, a robustly sized security culture – including among its citizens. **Flexibility, adaptability, rapid response capacity in times of crisis** are principles of strategic leadership, allowing **anticipation and planning**, and preparing for the most unfavourable cases, in order **to avoid strategic surprise** and to ensure resilience and good governance for the benefit of all Romanian citizens.

8. Technological developments generate a diversified and increased complexity of the security risks and threats, such as cyber-attacks, information-related activities (hostile/influence actions carried out in the public space, disinformation, spread of fake or false news, etc.), as well as potential harmful and destabilising effects triggered by bringing in some civilian used technologies within asymmetric and hybrid actions, thus entailing new security challenges.

9. In **the social field**, the security environment is influenced by the asymmetric demographic development, by the rapid urbanisation, the societies' polarisation, by increasingly ageing

population, enhanced individualism and isolation in the virtual space, increased vulnerabilities of online social media to information war actions, as well as by the development of the migration phenomenon. At the same time, urbanisation is also turning cities more vulnerable, especially from the perspective of the climate changes and providing the minimum standards for living conditions.

10. The National Defence Strategy represents, naturally and legitimately, the synthetic collection of aspirations, desires, visions and ideas of freedom, dignity and prosperity meant to build **a normal Romania, a 21st century Romania**. The strategy reflects the need to ensure a natural balance between **national security and other vital areas** such as economy, health or education.

11. The document has multiple dimensions:

- On one hand, it is a **strategic-applicative** instrument, which sets out guidelines, according to which national security system institutions will act in the upcoming period of time, targets a well-defined timeframe, i.e. 2020-2024, which entails the planning of concrete actions. **The strategy** also incorporates a necessary degree of **flexibility** in order to have the ability to keep its adequacy until the end of the reference timeframe; yet, it does not stray away from its generally applicable objectives;
- On the other hand, it is a document which also addresses **the public opinion towards which it performs an extremely important function**: it transparently enables it to be informed on how the institutions carry out their missions for the benefit of citizens. Through its comprehensive approach, **the Strategy** provides **a platform to strengthen the citizens' support** for the state institutions' action, cohesively rallying them to it. For the international public opinion, **the Strategy** shows how Romania conceptualises the topic of security and how it aims to act opened towards cooperation with foreign partners, in a predictable and transparent way.

12. The National Defence Strategy forwards a management of the national security issue focused on the **integrated management of risks, threats and vulnerabilities performed by the Romanian state**. **The integrated management has a twofold nature:**

- The first is **domestic, national**, in the spirit of building a genuine community of security, defence and public order;
- The second relates to the **European, Euro-Atlantic and international** dimensions, with Romania assuming the responsibilities entailed by its membership to EU, NATO, OSCE, UN and other international organisations.

13. The National Defence Strategy for 2020-2024 will operate on the same **extended national security concept** which was introduced and defined in the prior document. In addition to **armed defence** - understood from two perspectives: as national defence and collective defence, **the Strategy** also aims at other areas, such as foreign policy, public order, intelligence, counterintelligence and security, crisis management, education, culture, health, economy, demography, finance, environment, energy security or cyber security, critical infrastructure security and the security of the historic and cultural heritage.

14. The Strategy relates to a **multi-dimensional security concept, based on the security-prosperity-rule of law-democracy-identity relationship, the balance between the state and the individual as beneficiaries of national security, the integrated management of security and the idea of a security community.**

15. The citizen's safety is a key element of the approach since the state has the duty to identify efficient sectorial strategies for its protection. Consequently, **security management involves participation of the civil society, as well.**

16. The National Defence Strategy for 2020-2024 will guide and direct the activity of all public institutions with powers and responsibilities in the country's national security and defence and will be subject to Parliament approval within the legal term of 6 months as of the commencement date of the new term in office as President of Romania.

Chapter 1

ROMANIA ACTIVE NATO AND EU MEMBER, RESILIENT STATE, REGIONAL PILLAR OF STABILITY

1.1. Romania – promoter and actor involved in sustainable international partnerships, regional pillar of stability

17. The vision for a modern Romania is being built around several guidelines, with continuous applicability, whose implementation requires constant and consistent steps. A collective and thorough effort is needed to turn these ideas into reality, for a prosperous and democratic state, with efficient public institutions, capable to guarantee that the future generations will have the opportunities to develop in a country endowed with a **professional, efficient, citizen and public interest - oriented administration, as well as with a modern infrastructure**, in line with technological progress, stimulating creativity and innovation.

18. All of the above invariably require the existence of an efficient, predictable and safe state, respected both internally and abroad, while preserving awareness of its potential and heritage; such a state can only be founded through the collective and synergistically articulated effort of its public institutions and citizens. Romania that acts consistently for the security of its citizens and its values, as well as its allies', can only be **a strong, developed, capable and respected Romania**. These desiderata can only be achieved by means of sustainable, transparent and consistent public policies, **with the citizen as its ultimate beneficiary;** and these policies must be firmly anchored in nowadays reality which features wide and complex strategic challenges worldwide.

19. The security and economic developments generated by changes in the power balance abroad require concrete and concerted actions from the Romanian state, which will continue to implement and promote the concept of extended national security. Romania can and must continue its process of modernization, adaptation and alignment to technological advances in all areas, to the dynamics and turbulence of the international environment, as well as to the processes entailed by the international system's reshaping.

20. Romania has had to cope in a short period of time with its most serious challenge since 1989, the **Covid-19 pandemic**. Its effects are felt at their full extent globally, especially in terms of economy, and the prospect of a cyclical development of the virus compels the Romanian state to continue applying measures in order **to increase the capacity to manage such a crisis on multiple levels:** medical, public order, education system-wise, providing public services and especially in terms of increasing economic resilience.

21. Consistent efforts are needed to further transform our country into a resilient state **capable of an effective, proactive and adequate response to the unpredictability of the global security environment developments** (conventional, economic-financial, but also cyber, hybrid-type developments or related to pandemics and environmental changes); this state should be able to manage, consistently and efficiently, any related risks and threats. This requires a strong state, a state that ensures an adequate framework for the development of participatory democracy, where citizens' rights and freedoms are ensured, and the participation of people and civil society in the resolution of all problems of society, including national security-related issues, is encouraged. **Competent, dedicated and responsible politicians** will ensure the strategic leadership necessary for a synergy of joint and individual efforts in order to enhance Romania's security.

22. For all these reasons, in the upcoming future, **Romania's foreign and security policy** will be, as before, under the sign of **continuity**, **in terms of vectors and strategic options**, yet, some adjustments and details will necessarily be added to it, in order to render it more coherent and consistent.

23. Given its assumed posture since our country's membership to the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, as well as its status as a privileged strategic partner of the USA, Romania is, at this historic moment, in a strengthened institutional framework meant to **ensure its extended national security**, with a high degree of strategic credibility and stable and consistent national security values, with favourable premises for the sustainability of this strategic position. **This enhanced national posture**, with a positive impact on the foreign dimension of national security, is accompanied by a strong and complementary anchorage in a wide array of bilateral, regional and multilateral partnerships, as well as in various consultation formats with partners having similar orientations, primarily in terms of security.

24. Membership to **the European Union and NATO, as well as the Strategic Partnership with the USA**, is the foundation of Romania's foreign policy, as well as the path that the Romanian state has committed to follow consciously and irreversibly.

25. The European Union membership generated in 2019, especially due to the smooth and with good results mandate of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, extra visibility, prestige, as well as enhanced capacity to exercise responsibilities, which is a positive prerequisite for developing and consecrating Romania's role within an European project forced to cope with an increasing pace of changes and additional sources of pressure.

26. The sequence of actions and activities at NATO level has been the solid proof of the Allies' renewed commitment towards the solidity of the Organisation by reaffirming its fundamental values, missions and objectives. The North Atlantic Alliance remains firmly committed to its fundamental values, whereas the processes of adaptation and reflection on various perspectives aim to ensure the consistency and relevance of NATO in the future, by identifying appropriate organisational responses to new security developments.

27. At the same time, **the Strategic Partnership with the US** has, especially following the highest level contacts occurred during recent years, better premises than ever to deepen and expand its role as strategic anchor of the Euro-Atlantic posture, as well as its role as point of reference for the other objectives and efforts made in order to ensure Romania's national security. The development of the Strategic Partnership with the US, especially in economic terms, with a focus on the area of cutting-edge technologies, will give even more consistency to the bilateral relationship, as well as increased significance to Romania's strategic relevance.

28. Romania builds its security strategy based on the premise that its main guarantees **are NATO membership and the privileged relationship with the US**, a partner that shares its perception on the level of threats in the area of the Alliance's eastern border.

29. Another role undertaken by our country in terms of foreign policy is the one of **strengthening the transatlantic partnership** and the **NATO-EU coherence of action**, citing the argument that a single and functional transatlantic security community is – in all respects – superior to players acting separately.

30. Romania aims **to strengthen its military cooperation with the US**, not only as a line of action aimed at generically in the allied format, but especially as an operational objective to implement on the national territory. Subsequently, the efforts of the Romanian state are directed towards the establishment on the Romanian territory of several solutions meant to **strengthen NATO** enhanced forward presence and, implicitly, to deter potential aggressive actions carried out by some state actors. These efforts will be combined with those undertaken at the national level to increase the **military mobility capacity, an objective assumed by NATO, in relation to Europe, and among EU's main concerns as well.**

31. Raising the awareness among allies on the role of the Black Sea and on the importance of securing this area is another objective that channels articulated efforts made by the Romanian state. Romania has the interest to support and contribute to developing policies and solutions aimed at putting out existing outbreaks of tension and conflict, as well as to support regional development towards an area of security, stability and progress. At the same time, it must create the necessary

premises for the efficient use, for its own interest as well as for the interest of its allies/partners, of its potential as energy and transport corridor in the Black Sea region, as well as of its energy resources in the Black Sea, so that our county may become a relevant actor in the energy sector.

32. In relation to the **security challenges at the eastern border of NATO and the EU,** Romania will act towards establishing a stronger anchorage of the two organisations in the region, towards an applied cooperation with regional allies, but also to support the Western Balkan states and the Eastern neighbourhood, in their own transformation processes in terms of domestic institutions, democracy and connection to European economic flows. Romania believes that the path towards a future EU accession of all Balkan states will provide the framework for development and achievement of a decent living standard for all their inhabitants. **Military cooperation within the formats established in the region**, development and enhancement of some broad, innovative concepts with European and regional allies and partners, rendering operational the national initiatives adopted at the allied level may contribute in putting into practice the objective **to maintain regional and European security**.

33. Supporting **the European path of the Republic of Moldova**, participating in bilateral strategic interconnection projects and supporting the efforts of the neighbouring state to strengthen its democratic institutions and increase its resilience is also part of Romania's strategy to contribute to the political, economic and security stabilisation of the NATO/EU neighbourhood, with direct benefits for all citizens of the Republic of Moldova and for the entire community of Romanian language, identity, history and culture.

34. In parallel, Romania regards as important to intensify its **bilateral and multilateral cooperation with allies located along and in the proximity of NATO's eastern flank.** The current dialogue frameworks may increase their relevance, should the other parties involved increase their efforts to consistently promote economic and security objectives at regional level, as Romania does.

35. The Romanian state is relying on increasing its credibility abroad in order to achieve all these objectives, by building up the image of a partner fully committed to its engagements. Thus, Romania has confirmed and strengthened its **image and status as a regional stability pole** in relation to the previous years, increasing its concrete capabilities and national resilience in the new security environment, which is rapidly changing and featuring a high degree of complexity, in line with our partners taking up similar directions.

36. As a result, **the degree of security and prosperity of the Romanian citizens**, revolving around a mature, functional and participatory democracy, has increased, and this fact is further solid and sustainable foundation for the development of our country's role abroad, within its fundamental affiliations and partnerships, as well as in terms of its stance as a visible, effective, principled, consistent and predictable actor in the field of international relations and multilateralism.

37. In **the current global security environment**, the interdependence between **the foreign perspective** of pursuit of Romania's security objectives and **the domestic perspective** of national public policies in areas defining extended security, is more relevant than ever before and is the key for the effective implementation of this Strategy.

38. As a result, but also as an essential enhancer of these affiliations and capabilities which are highly significant for Romania, and of our own state resilience, **national security values** must be carefully protected and further promoted, and the security culture must follow an upward trend of development and inclusion of as many society and generation segments as possible.

39. Romania also benefits today from the advantage of **its geostrategic position** and the elements related to its profile and role at regional, European and international levels.

40. The attachment of Romanian citizens to the values of our affiliation community is a factor favouring the objective of ensuring extended national security; yet, this must be correlated with measures and actions aimed at increasing citizens' confidence in national institutions and values, in

the rationality and efficiency of the act of governance, in the values and capacity of the Romanian society to survive and to progress politically, economically, socially, culturally, following the democratic coordinates of the rule of law, of a free, economically, socially and culturally efficient society, sustainable from the point of view of the environment, and inclusive in relation to all its citizens.

41. Romania has the premises and a promising potential as a participant and contributor in the debates and transformation processes carried out by the institutions and organisations to which it is related by membership, including on fundamental topics such as **the future of the EU** or **NATO adaptation**, but also in terms of its strategic potential in promoting the extended national security brought by innovative formats, in whose initiation and development Romania has taken part during recent years, such as Bucharest 9 format, the Three Seas Initiative, or the various trilateral formats.

1.2. Romania - a state resilient to threats, security and prosperity provider for its citizens

42. At the internal level, **the National Defence Strategy 2020-2024** supports the national effort to modernise the state. Good governance remains the instrument used for democracy to make the shift from the level of concepts and theories to the level of real life, taking up the status of an essential condition for the insurance of security and prosperity, with both the state and civil society being involved in the process of good governance.

43. **Romania is a stable state in terms of politics, economy and security,** investing resources to consolidate and project this profile in the region and throughout Europe.

44. It is important for Romania to be able to adapt, anticipate and respond adequately to challenges generated by a world in a continuous and accelerated transformation. Against this background, knowledge and prospective assessment of domestic and international processes, as well as of major trends in international security developments become essential.

45. Efforts are needed to speed up the transformation of our country into a **resilient state**. Romania can and must continue its process of modernisation and adaptation to technological advances at all levels.

46. The concept of Romania's resilience is addressed from a double perspective: the inherent capacity of entities – individuals, communities, regions, state – to resist and adapt articulately to violent, stress-causing events, shocks, disasters, pandemics or conflicts, on one hand, and the ability of these entities to return, as soon as possible, to a functional, normal state, on the other hand.

47. Strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerabilities require a flexible multi-dimensional strategy as well as a broad perspective on all systems, in order to limit the risks related to a crisis, but also to improve the capacity to quickly manage the adjustment mechanisms at local, national and regional levels. **Resilience covers all stages of a crisis situation**, from prevention (where possible) to adjustment and limitation of effects (when necessary), and includes positive transformations that strengthen the ability of current and future generations to provide for what they need.

48. In the 2020-2024 period, more than ever, **efforts to strengthen resilience** need to be calibrated in order to respond to new types of subtle and subversive threats, including those generated by technological developments. **A central role is therefore given to multi-faceted collaboration**: public-private, citizen-community and civilian-military aimed at strengthening society and critical infrastructures' resilience, as this responsibility is at the junction point between the society and the individual levels with the institution-public and private levels.

49. The strategy to develop effective tools **to strengthen society and critical infrastructures' resilience shall include**:

- enhancing awareness of hostile/influence actions carried out in the public space via classic or online media or think-tanks, increasingly difficult to manage when new security impact factors such as fake news, whose source of provenance is often hard to identify and assign, occur;
- facilitating the setup of accessible and transparent public instruments to expose the sources of disinformation, their products and their narratives;
- increasing the capacity of education, research, think-tanks and media institutions to identify and counter disinformation movements supported by hostile state or non-state actors;
- increasing the level of functional literacy in order to develop critical thinking and downsizing the population's vulnerability to the phenomenon of spreading false or fake information, which may have negative consequences for national security;
- supporting health education and education programmes for emergency situations;
- adopting measures to help reduce the brain drain phenomenon coupled with the implementation of programs meant to attract talents from abroad;
- the start of comprehensive secondary and higher education programmes, e-skills and online security, as well as the development of the skills needed to combat false/fake information in order to make younger generations less vulnerable to such hybrid challenges, with the effect of increasing society's resilience;
- enhancing the awareness of the population, central and local public institutions, as well as of the business environment on the importance of measures to protect critical infrastructures in order to provide for the continuous and safe operation of basic public services and utilities (electricity, water, heat, sanitation, public transport, social services).

50. New challenges at the level of the international security environment also generate the need to develop mechanisms for citizens' understanding, prevention and response when faced with threats, risks or vulnerabilities impacting national security. From this perspective, the national aspiration to create a strong and resilient state is interdependent with its citizens' level of security culture.

51. Since a precarious security culture is a societal vulnerability**, strengthened partnerships** of the national security institutions with public and private entities contribute to understanding the role that every societal actor – state, public institutions, but also private entities (corporations and individuals) – has in the process of ensuring national security.

52. In order to ensure a high level of security and prosperity for its citizens, the Romanian state needs to carry out sustained efforts in order to **strengthen the administrative capacity of its institutions so that they can act in a concerted effort for:**

- the development and implementation of public policies, in accordance to Romania's social, economic and strategic interests;
- ensuring the sustainable development with strict enforcement of the national legislation and the respective EU directives and programmes (by reducing development gaps, effectively combating climate change and improving environment's quality, linking to the new technologies, and research and innovation projects, simplifying taxation and starting up strategic investments);
- ensuring a high-performance, dynamic and competitive economic environment, in terms of investments and entrepreneurship, as well as of the state financial-budgetary stability;
- stimulating smart, sustainable and inclusive growth at national level, aiming at ensuring prosperity for the citizens;

- ensuring uninterrupted functionality for public macro-systems;
- developing an education system that contributes in meeting current and prospective labour market requirements, Romania's international competitiveness and enabling access to quality education for all people;
- strengthening and developing technological capacities and capabilities, i.e. research infrastructures and human resources in the field of R&D-innovation, involving all actors in the academia, research and economic environments.

53. Respect for the firm commitment to law and justice, the values of democracy and the principles of the rule of law, as well as the modernisation of the state and its institutions are foundations that provide citizens with the security and prosperity they are entitled to.

Chapter 2

NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1. Fundamental values and principles for defining national security interests and objectives

54. National values, interests and objectives are paramount for defining the national defence strategy, thus granting its legitimacy. National interests are perennial and are primarily defined in the Romanian Constitution.

55. National interests and objectives are based on adherence to values similar to those shared by the other EU and NATO member states, as well as on the fundamental rights and liberties of citizens, as defined in the Romanian Constitution.

56. As European country, EU and NATO member, Romania shares the same **values** as the other member states, **which are expressed by**:

■ **the characteristics and attributes of the Romanian state,** as a national, sovereign and independent, unitary and indivisible entity;

■ **the fundamental constitutional values:** democracy, dignity, citizens' rights and liberties, justice and political pluralism, as manifested in a democratic social system based on the rule-of-law;

■ **civic cohesion and interethnic climate** based on good cohabitation and common support for the state's shared values and interests;

■ **rule of law**;

■ **national identity**;

■ **strong and competitive market economy,** as a foundation for the efficient production and best use of the national resources needed to ensure the functioning of the state, the security and welfare of the citizens.

57. In order to promote these values effectively and efficiently, the Strategy relies on observance of certain **principles**, the most important of which are **continuity** and **predictability**. In a **dynamic geopolitical context**, it is essential that:

■ the commitments made by our country to our allies and partners must be characterized by **continuity**, which implies a high degree of readiness to cooperate and coherence within the EU, NATO and strategic partnerships, particularly with the US;

■ Romania's position and decisions should be **predictable** and indicative of a responsible and trustworthy behaviour towards its allies and partners, as well as towards its own citizens, as a state located in a region of significant geopolitical interest.

58. In order to make sure that **these values and principles are fully observed**, the Strategy will facilitate the implementation of security and defence policies, by promoting the following qualities: efficiency, trust, pragmatism, professionalism, prevention and anticipation, proactive attitude and judicious management of national wealth;

■ **efficiency**, aiming at continuously adapting the response to the existing security threats and challenges, as part of a comprehensive approach that is meant to ensure an adequate response to various challenges and threats, regardless of where they come from. In order to implement the Strategy, the institutions with national security responsibilities need to develop a strong, balanced and flexible set of capacities. In order to promote and protect national security interests and to manage the risks, threats and vulnerabilities that it faces, **Romania must have its own resources, forces and means, in line with its interests, profile and potential**;

■ **trust**, defined in a broad societal sense, both from the point of view of the citizens' trust in the institutions of the Romanian state and these institutions' trust in their own mission, as well as from the point of view of relations with the international environment, should translate, on the one hand, into Romania's trust in its partners and in the alliances and communities of values to which it belongs and, on the other hand, in the foreign partners' trust that Romania will fulfil its responsibilities and obligations;

■ **pragmatism**, which entails tailoring decisions to the concrete development of the situation and bringing together in a realistic and rational manner the efforts of all institutional actors in order to efficiently implement the defence and security policies, with the citizen as end-beneficiary;

■ **professionalism** and compliance with the experts' knowledge when shaping public policies in the field of national security;

■ **prevention and anticipation**, stemming from the need to identify and employ the necessary means to rapidly and efficiently counter any risks, threats and vulnerabilities to national security, through an integrated civilian-military approach, according to the situation;

■ **pro-active attitude**, which entails initiative and aims at identifying and taking responsibility for choosing the appropriate response in accordance with the evolving and dynamic forms of manifestation of threats, risks and vulnerabilities. Security challenges will be addressed as early as possible. Thus emphasizing the need to improve the means to identify as soon as possible future security risks and to develop preventive action capabilities;

■ **judicious management of national wealth**, which refers to the entirety of the material and spiritual values of Romania, including our cultural heritage, which must be used or turned to advantage for the benefit of the Nation and the citizens of our country.

2.2. National security interests

59. The national security interest is the desirable state of a nation, of an organic and inclusive community, aiming at defending and promoting fundamental national values, ensuring prosperity, guaranteeing the observance of the democratic rights and liberties, as well as the safeguard and security of its members. It is the basis for the development of the domestic and foreign national objectives which guarantee the state's existence and identity, stability and continuity, and defines its mission/purpose by:

■ guaranteeing the sovereignty, the national character, the independence, the territorial integrity, unity and indivisibility of the State;

■ defending and strengthening constitutional democracy and the rule of law;

■ safeguarding, defending and guaranteeing the fundamental rights and liberties of all citizens and ensuring their individual and collective security and safety;

■ guaranteeing the right to preserve, develop and express the ethnic, cultural and religious identity of persons belonging to national ethnic groups, in the framework of the rule of law and constitutional democracy;

■ ensuring sustainable economic development by means of a judicious management of resources in order to provide well-being for the citizens;

■ guaranteeing the right to education and health care;

■ bridging development gaps and upgrading the major public systems, such as health, education, social care and transport, in order to ensure the provision of high-quality services to citizens;

■ strengthening Romania's profile within the transatlantic system of alliances, partnerships and collective defence;

■ actively participating in the strengthening of the European Union, as well as in the development of the EU integration processes;

■ strengthening NATO's capacity to efficiently respond to current and future security threats and challenges, based on a strong transatlantic relationship and the indivisible security of the allied states;

■ enhancement of the European Union's contribution to security and defence in complementarity and synergy with NATO;

■ continuing to welcome the active and central role played by the two organizations in managing security threats and challenges that directly affect Romania;

■ strengthening the transatlantic relationship, in the spirit of the EU - USA cooperation, in order to ensure the security and stability of Europe;

■ strengthening multilateralism and an international order based on the rules consecrated by the UN Charter and by the OSCE founding documents;

■ effectively using the advantages derived from Romania's geostrategic position.

2.3. National security objectives

60. The national security objectives are represented by objective benchmarks (such as territory's size, resources, population, and geographical location) as well as by subjective benchmarks (such as values, intentions, expectations); all these are related to the practical actions taken by the state through its institutions and national strategies and policies adopted in order to achieve and assert its fundamental national interests.

61. From a **domestic perspective, national security objectives aim at**:

■ strengthening the national defence capacity, aimed at ensuring Romania's territorial integrity, sovereignty, unity, indivisibility, independence, the national character of the state, as well as the security of the Romanian people ;

■ enhancing the efficiency of the national systems put in place for the crisis prevention and management, either domestic or foreign, military or civilian in nature; enhanced efficiency for inter-institutional cooperation mechanisms and capabilities to counter asymmetric and hybrid threats, able to provide state resilience in emergency or crisis situations and enabling the continued functioning of essential institutions and services;

■ ensuring the citizens' unhindered exercise of their fundamental rights and liberties;

■ ensuring the proper functioning of justice and the rule of law;

■ eliminating deficiencies that hinder good governance, strengthening the capacity, efficiency and objectivity of the administrative system;

■ preventing and countering activities with major negative impact on Romania's social and economic interests, conducted by groups of interest, cross-border organized crime groups or hostile foreign entities, aiming at altering the state's decision-making process or targeting areas that are relevant to national security;

■ preventing and countering all types of crimes;

■ ensuring a predictable, competitive, efficient and attractive economic environment in terms of investments and entrepreneurship, as well as preventing and countering (in)actions that are likely to affect the sustainable financing capacity of all socio-economic systems, the obtaining and judicious management of the related financial flows;

■ preventing and countering threats arising from hostile intelligence actions, as well as strengthening the system for the protection of national classified information;

■ developing and strengthening the security and protection of critical infrastructure;

■ ensuring the security and protection of IT and communication infrastructures that are critical to national security, as well as identifying, preventing and countering cyber threats posed by actors with strategic extremist-terrorist motivation or financially motivated; streamlining and rebuilding the national communications system in accordance with international quality requirements, so that areas poised to market failures (where operators are reluctant to invest) to be compensated by publicly funded communication infrastructures;

■ ensuring food security and environmental quality;

■ developing major public systems (health, education, social care) in a consolidated and sustainable manner, tailored to social change;

■ reducing domestic inter-regional and intra-regional gaps and eliminating the ones that still exist in relation to other EU countries from Western Europe;

■ ensuring the capacity, coherence and efficiency of the national systems in place for crisis prevention and management (domestic or foreign, military or civilian);

■ promoting national identity, including by preserving and capitalizing on our cultural and natural heritage, and by responsibly encouraging areas of excellence;

■ preventing radical or extremist reactions and tendencies, by strict and non-discriminatory law enforcement, while respecting pluralism and promoting tolerance at the level of the civil society;

■ increasing the resilience to asymmetric and hybrid risks and threats that may affect Romania's national security;

■ strengthening the security culture in public and private institutions that deal with strategic information whose disclosure would harm Romania's or its allies' interests;

■ staying up to date with the technological developments as a prerequisite for an enhanced development in areas of strategic importance;

■ identifying, preventing and countering activities that involve violations of international sanctions or embargoes, i.e. those associated with conventional arms trafficking and dual-use items, as well as actions related to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and delivery means;

■ continuous, consolidated and sustainable development of major public healthcare-related systems, adapted to social and global changes;

■ increasing the Romanian state's support for the diaspora and encouraging the Romanian diaspora to promote and support Romania's interests, including by increasing Romanian state support for these communities;

■ preventing and countering organized crime, including cross-border activities, which, by influencing the decision-making process, carrying out illegal economic activities, trafficking in high-risk drugs and illegal migration, can affect national security;

■ preventing and countering terrorist risks related to activities carried out by such organizations, to the presence in Romania of members or followers of such entities, to the increase of the extremist jihadist propaganda, especially online, and to the radicalization processes that may occur in Romania.

62. **From a foreign policy perspective**, Romania must aim to strengthen its position as a relevant international actor, connected to the Euro-Atlantic principles and values – in accordance to the goals set forth at the political level, as well as in line with its economic development capacity. Our country is not only a beneficiary, but also an important contributor **in providing regional, European and Euro-Atlantic security**.

63. Given these coordinates and in accordance with national security interests, the **national security objectives** aim at:

■ strengthening security in the Black Sea region and in the Balkans, as well as the security and stability of the other neighbouring regions;

■ strengthening our country's profile in NATO and in the EU and contributing, in line

with Romania's interests and through our active involvement, to the adaptation and transformation processes that are underway within these bodies, from a conceptual perspective, as well as in terms of fulfilling the objectives and missions these organizations have set;

■ strengthening the strategic partnership with the USA, as well as the US military presence in Romania;

■ enhancing cooperation with Romania's other strategic partners, as well as within regional cooperation initiatives, including with states from the Eastern flank of NATO and the EU;

■ increased training level of military personnel, as well as Romanian Armed Forces' enhanced interoperability within NATO;

■ supporting NATO's efforts/undertakings/approaches to strengthen a unitary and balanced Allied presence on the Eastern flank, as well as in other regions within NATO's area of responsibility;

■ strengthening NATO defence and deterrence posture in the Black Sea area, including by boosting partnerships with other interested states, as well as improved situation awareness and early warning capacity;

■ supporting NATO-EU cooperation, ensuring complementarity between the two organizations in terms of European defence and security; one particular aim will be to ensure the coherence of EU initiatives (such as the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence-CARD, Pooling and Sharing) with similar NATO instruments and processes; supporting the new European initiatives (the European Defence Fund-EDF, the Permanent Structured Cooperation-PESCO);

■ supporting the implementation of the new action framework on EU integrated defence and security approach throughout the entire conflict cycle;

■ supporting further development in the field of the Common Security and Defence Policy-CSDP, as a central component for an increased global role for the EU;

■ capitalizing on Romania's position as a pro-Atlantic state and strategic partner of the US in order to maintain balance in the US - EU relationship;

■ promoting and observance of the European Union fundamental principles and values;

■ supporting the Republic of Moldova's EU integration;

■ projecting Romania's role in ensuring stability and promoting the EU values in the region, by supporting the European integration of the aspiring Eastern Partnership and Western Balkans countries;

■ promoting political, economic and security-related interests in regions of strategic relevance to our country;

■ reducing the *brain drain* phenomenon, while implementing programs for attracting international talent (*brain-gain*);

■ capitalizing on Romania's opportunities in relatively recent collaborative formats, consistent with NATO and EU objectives and practices, but with high potential for development (such as the Three Seas Initiative, the Bucharest 9 format).

64. Boosting the chances to achieve the domestic and foreign objectives requires to maintain a **high level of ambition** in promoting such objectives – coherently, uninterruptedly and not redundantly in terms of inter-institutional relations – by all actors involved at the political, social, economic and cultural levels, using all political, diplomatic and security channels available.

Chapter 3

ASSESSMENT OF THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

3.1. Major trends that are likely to affect and influence the security environment by 2024

65. The strategic trends of recent years illustrates the build-up of **a substantial potential for reshaping relations among global actors**, with direct effects on stability and predictability of the international system. The revitalization of global strategic competition confirms the shift to new security paradigm; the enhanced trend of more sustained activity of states in terms of bilateral cooperation around one-time or circumstantial interests, with ad-hoc alliances will further impact the predictability of the international security environment.

66. The attitude and actions of the Russian Federation carried out in violation of international law lead to continued and extended divergences with a number of Western and NATO states and, represents a serious obstacle to identifying viable solutions for stability and predictability of the security environment.

67. The reassertion of certain **states with regional leadership ambitions** which challenge or even break the international law increases the risks and threats to global security in general, and to Romania in particular.

68. The revival of the strong and assertive policy of some non-Western powers challenges the current liberal international order and is the major variable that will influence the global distribution of power, regional equilibriums and future configuration of the international relations.

69. The economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic will severely affect relations among global actors and will force states to channel their resources in order to manage domestic problems. The current pandemic will have a long-lasting impact on the global security situation as well.

70. Migration flows from the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan will continue to target Romania as a secondary transit route to the West. This context could be used by people connected to extremist-terrorist organizations to enter the national territory. Although indirectly exposed, our country remains a target of opportunity by association with other European states involved in the fight against terrorism.

71. Indications of **security threats** will be increasingly felt throughout the entire society as **hostile actors** multiply their combat tactics and interferes in states' domestic affairs, including by means of **cyber and other hybrid tactics**.

72. Amid the rise of **populism tendencies** among an increasing number of European state actors, but also on other continents the **distancing of political systems and their leaders** from the immediate and vital concerns of citizens will increase. This will also result in international separation and increased states` vulnerabilities by retreat into national feeling; states` tactical and/or strategic interests will be approached predominantly individually or in isolation.

73. Under the **impetuous of technological development** the contemporary world will become, at least in the medium term, **a space for manifestation of interconnected risks and threats** which will make the global security environment more complex, uncertain and volatile. These trends are coupled with increasing relevance of non-state actors – in the context of new technologies development – as well with proliferation and resizing of cross-border threats such as terrorism, hacktivism and organized crime. **The exponential trend towards development of emerging technologies** (5G, artificial intelligence, big data, the Internet of Things, cloud and smart computing) generates both the need to increase and improve communications that will support innovative digital services designed to assist citizens and business environment, and the need to collect and secure all data and information circulating in those systems.

74. Given that **5G networks will support multiple communication and information technology applications**, including critical infrastructure applications, confidentiality, integrity and availability of telecommunications will be important for the national security. Technological vulnerabilities of 5G networks might be exploited in order to compromise interdependent infrastructures at the risk of severe damage.

75. Cryptocurrency, *blockchain* technology, artificial intelligence, *machine learning*, *Internet of Things*, *big data* or quantum technology or Dark Web maliciously could be used by **organized crime, cyber crime, hacktivist, terrorists or in extremist activities**, or in offensive operations coordinated by entities promoting the interests of some state actors. **There is a risk of hybrid offensive actions taking advantage of technological developments** through continuous diversification of methods, tools and resources aiming at affecting national interests, security included.

76. The demographic factor and spatial distribution of the population generates high impact challenges on future security aspects. Disproportionate trends in demographic growth, perpetuation of economic gaps between developed and developing regions, the ageing population trend in Europe, vulnerability to epidemics and pandemics, labour migration and deteriorating social conditions in crisis and conflict areas will be defining elements of asymmetric nature of global development.

77. Pandemics, worsening quality of environmental factors, resource dwindling and fluctuations in global energy demand have the potential to generate or enhance crisis situations.

78. **The effects of climate change** will be increasingly present and widespread and they can turn into a critical issue with global, regional and national security implications.

79. Overall, the "***dilution***" of multilateralism can complicate the way in which the international community, primarily Romania's partners, will respond to this trend that can affect and influence the security environment.

80. On medium and long term, the **domestic security environment** will continue to be influenced by **challenges** associated with:

- **the efforts to strengthen Romanian state's administrative capacity** in terms of developing and implementing public policies, reducing development gaps and shortcomings in the major public systems;
- **the intentions to use the decision-making process** for the benefit of certain groups' interests, thus affecting communities' interests and the public or European budget;
- **the intentions to radicalize the public discourse** or incite to extremist actions;
- **the strategies adopted by some state and non-state actors** aimed at weakening our state's authority or its regional role, aiming at suppressing or hindering the sovereignty, unity and indivisibility of the Romanian state.

3.2. Key coordinates of global security developments

81. The current security environment is **highly dynamic and unpredictable**, characterized by enhanced globalization of threats and risks with various manifestations, and unlimited radius of geographic diffusion.

82. The perpetuation of traditional sources of risk (revitalization of geostrategic competition) and of **asymmetric threats** (terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction) along with increased **emerging risks** (cyber-attacks, hybrid actions, illegal migration, climate changes) enhance the perceived **uncertainty and unpredictability of developments in the global security.**

83. USA pre-eminence in the international system will remain indisputable for the foreseeable future which is tantamount for the **Romania's national interest-wise**. On the other hand, **China's multi-decade doctrine** and goals will increasingly influence the USA perceptions to the systemic role of China while shaping appropriate responses.

84. The international security architecture will be strongly determined and redefined by state actors having global interests. Given that there are no noticeable signs for a paradigm shift in the USA relations with its strategic competitors, **areas where regional hegemonic ambitions intersect (Europe and Asia-Pacific) will be the most exposed to significant changes** in terms of security developments.

85. The security situation in the **Middle East, North Africa and Asia (North Korea, Afghanistan)** will remain tense and fragile generating increasing challenges for the regional stability with negative consequences at the global level. The impact on Romania's interests of perpetuating instability in these areas is directly linked to major geostrategic reshaping processes unfolded under the intervention of some international actors, state or organizations.

86. The ongoing programs of states designed to develop offensive military capabilities challenges the international order, and the **decrease in transparency and predictability** of the mechanisms to maintain strategic balance of power erodes the international community's efforts in the area of **arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament**.

87. The nature and the rapid pace of technological **progress with destabilizing potential** amplifies the volatile nature of security developments as the main goal is to obtain national advantages in the economic and military fields.

88. The global paradigm shift generated by **increasing use of online activities** influences fundamentally the entire security spectrum (in relation to citizens, institutions and private entities) and generates new security approaches.

89. Disputes, including armed conflicts, over **access to natural resources** will become more acute, as an intrinsic reaction to the natural depletion process (accelerated by intensive and unsustainable exploitation) and slow recovery of certain renewable resources.

90. In parallel, the **arms race intensifies** with multiplication of conventional and unconventional hardware and upgraded military technologies at the level of the main powers and on multiple regions. The development of new and increasingly powerful military resources and their expansion into new regions such as **the Arctic and Antarctica, the cosmic space or cyberspace,** leads to increased insecurity and risks including those occurring accidentally.

91. **The risk of a major armed conflict among the main powers remains low**. Yet, there is a tendency of some state actors to use hybrid tactics, including the threat of use of force in regions where their national geopolitical interests intersects with global or regional competitors.

92. Technological progress increased diversification and complexity of security risks and threats, such as cyber-attacks, information operations (hostile/influence actions carried out in public space, disinformation, and spread of fake news) and the disruptive use of civilian technologies in asymmetric and hybrid actions.

93. Technological trends related to the new weapons design are influenced by the evolving nature of threats but also to evolutions of dual-use technologies within civilian sector which could be used in asymmetric and hybrid actions. The most relevant technologies with applications in security related domain will be: hypersonic vectors, 5G, quantum communication infrastructures, laser and electromagnetic applications, air and underwater monitoring equipment, artificial intelligence, autonomous platforms.

94. In the economic field, increased economic and financial interconnectivity at the global level have side effects by increasing financial systems' vulnerabilities to threats and imbalances.

95. A risk that must be constantly taken into account is the **possible overlapping of international economic crises**, regional or generalized, with unpredictable **catastrophic** events **like pandemics, climate changes, rekindling or outbreak of instability in Europe's immediate vicinity.**

96. **In the social field**, the security environment is influenced by the asymmetry of demographic evolution, rapid urbanization, societies' polarization, increasing ageing of the population, migration.

97. Additional prospects of further tensions in the international environment, such as erosion of cooperation and systemic competition in multiple domains at strategic level, **are detrimental to Romania**`s achievement of national security objectives, and will require decisive foreign policy and international engagement **to foster an international order based on rules, strengthen the unity of transatlantic partnership**, to preserve and enhance the efficiency of multilateral cooperation, both worldwide and regionally. **Romania will need to further develop its bilateral relations**, especially with its strategic partners and with those states sharing common security concerns.

98. The rapidly evolving **European project**, including on its security and defence dimension, which is currently the subject of an intense debate, is increasingly significant for the national strategic calculus with effect on national security in a broader sense.

3.3. Romania and Euro-Atlantic security

99. Defining the means to ensure national security is achieved through the **interaction among national potential and national posture, and the effort and the collective contribution to the security management** undertaken at multilateral level, primarily within NATO and EU. This paradigm involves continuous adaptation of the national management capacity addressing the risk and threats with focus on **interaction and synergy between relevant capacities and instruments that can be engaged at the national level**.

100. As a state located on the NATO Eastern flank and the European Union Eastern border, **the main vectors for promoting stability and security for Romania** are the national capacity and our membership to international organizations. Both NATO and EU have proven their capacity to effectively achieve the objective of ensuring security and economic prosperity of the Member States, while demonstrating strong strategic potential for continuous adaptation to developments in the security environment.

101. The Black Sea region is an area of paramount strategic interest for Romania. Ensuring the security of this region requires a comprehensive approach covering, in addition to the military dimension, relevant aspects related to economy, transportation, energy, environment, society resilience.

102. The main guarantor of Romania's security is represented by the national defence capacity, intrinsically doubled by the country's NATO membership. Article 3 of the Washington Treaty underlines the obligation of each state to develop and maintain sufficient capabilities to withstand an armed attack. **The transatlantic relationship** is the main element in supporting Allied solidarity and cohesion. In this respect, **the USA commitment provides consistency and credibility and complements the collective defence efforts of the Alliance's Member States**, with an impact on European security in general, which is currently facing major threats in Eastern Europe.

103. Significant developments at the EU level in the area of security and defence, both conceptually and through the launch of **practical cooperation initiatives** aimed at developing capabilities, including through the implementation of the new architecture and interoperability of EU border and security information systems contribute to the strengthening of the response mechanisms to the challenges of the international security environment. Their complementarity compounded with the approaches and initiatives developed within NATO will make the joint commitment of the two organizations more efficient. In this respect, the EU's contribution by means of tailored policies and strategies will be particularly important for the management of risks and threats coming from outside the European territory, such as **illegal migration, terrorism, trafficking of human beings, arms and drugs** and the massive influx of migrants.

104. The potential for escalation of the existing tensions in the region, amid the **strengthening of the offensive position and aggressiveness/assertiveness of the Russian Federation in recent years**, and upgrading of the hybrid methods it uses is a **major security concern at national level**. From this perspective, strengthening the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture, especially on its **Eastern flank**, through a unitary North-South approach, increasing the EU's capacity to act together and the USA commitment to the **security of the Black Sea region** are key elements and sustainable solutions to ensure regional stability. One of Romania's priorities is to **reconfirm the relevance of the Black Sea** with its strategic importance in the regional security configuration. G**iven the dynamic of the security environment that features a high degree of unpredictability** adapting the narrative used to maintain and enhance the attention of the USA, NATO and the EU on the strategic importance of the Black Sea is a permanent and important process for our country.

105. The significant deterioration of the security situation in **NATO's Eastern vicinity**, as well as in **the Western Balkans**, amid destabilizing actions carried out by states promoting aggressive and revisionist policies in violations of international law **raises legitimate concerns for strengthening the national security posture.**

3.4. Romania's strategic posture at regional level

106. In recent years, Romania **has strengthened its role as an allied state and regional actor** that actively participates in ensuring Euro-Atlantic and international security. The developments in the Eastern vicinity and Romania`s location at the external eastern border of the EU and NATO require, however, that the Romanian state undertake a **more active profile, from the political, diplomatic and economic point of view in strengthening the regional security**. Romania's status as a stability vector and regional security provider can be put to advantage by the consistent enforcement of the foreign policy strategies adopted in recent years in line with the objective of **democratic stabilization and security of Romania's neighbouring region**.

107. The continued implementation of support policies in relation to the **Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership countries** – with the major objective of permanently and irreversibly anchoring them in the architecture of the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions – remains one of the priorities of Romania's strategic **foreign and security policy**.

108. Regional cooperation is one of the main instruments for promoting Romania's contribution to strengthening the security environment in its vicinity, along the lines of European and Euro-Atlantic integration. However, the regional cooperation paradigm is also affected by the significantly worsened security situation, especially in **Romania's Eastern neighbourhood**. In this context, the **actions of the Russian Federation** contributes to the deterioration of regional stability with a direct adverse impact on the resilience of the states in the region, primarily the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia, as well as on the achievement of the objectives these states have in relation to the European Union and/or NATO, as defined in their relevant national strategic documents.

109. The constant actions of the **Russian Federation** to strengthen its own offensive military capabilities in the Black Sea and to create an anti-access area denial environment that may ensure its control over the Black Sea Basin, and its active posture to unbalance Allied military capabilities on NATO Eastern flank calls for a **reinforced national defence posture and Romania's active role** in order to strengthen the Allied deterrence and defence posture in the region.

110. For Romania, cooperation in its vicinity comes along with significant opportunities to strengthen the regional security environment through the development of concrete projects. The actions initiated within the **Bucharest Format (B9)**, **the Three Seas Initiative** or at the level of the **Turkey-Romania-Poland Trilateral in the Field of Security and Defence** will continue to

support the development of cooperation among regional states while complementing and strengthening of common contributions to the fulfilment of the commitments made within NATO and the EU respectively.

3.5. Security aspects related to citizens, communities and nation

111. At European level, **education systems** are undergoing a profound change under the impact of demographic developments, as well as of new technologies, and development of skills of the young generation and adults participating in various re-training activities will be essential for the future. In the near term, higher education will focus on building university networks, transnational academic alliances that will become the universities of the future, promoting European values and identity.

112. Romania will participate in European and international initiatives in emerging areas such as quantum technologies, new materials and renewable energy. Access to funding for European research projects will remain competitive and will require an increase in the capacity of Romanian researchers to access grants and participate in international projects.

113. Strengthening the **cultural dimension of security** aims to facilitate citizens' access to culture and stimulate the diversity of cultural means of expression, which entails ensuring a favourable environment for freedom of expression. Culture is a pillar of sustainable development, requiring the development of public policies designed to protect cultural heritage and to ensure the security of the cultural-creative ecosystem. Romanian culture will be promoted more actively at international level, as a means of fostering tolerance, better mutual knowledge and diversity.

114. At the same time, the "Educated Romania" project will become operational, having as central objectives the increase in the quality of education, downsizing inequities and loss of human capital, as well as the education/training of citizens for civic life in an age of intense information flow. Among other things, this strategy will lead to:

- an improvement in the initial and continuous training of teachers and education managers;
- better correlation among the education system, research and the labour market;
- reducing the quality gaps between urban and rural areas and the school dropout rate;
- ensuring the safety of children in the educational institutions;
- the development of a qualitative early education system, which contributes to achieving compatibility between family life and work;
- internationalization and Europeanization of university education, with the aim of strengthening cooperation with other EU countries, attracting international talent and facilitating Romania's access to international research and technological development projects;
- speeding up the process of ensuring access to health education for students, including in terms of aspects related to pandemic behaviour.

115. This strategy will be complemented by the **development of effective tools to strengthen societal resilience, including**:

- enhancing awareness of hostile/influence actions carried out in the public space through traditional or online media (difficult to manage when new factors with security impact emerged, such as misinformation or the spread/fabrication of fake news);
- the inclusion in the educational curricula of the critical thinking development on risks related to information aggression.
- the widespread introduction of digital literacy and online security education programs.

Chapter 4

THREATS, RISKS AND VULNERABILITIES

116. According to the Strategy, the concepts of threat, risk and vulnerability have the same meaning as the one promoted by the National Defence Strategy 2015-2019 and in the Strategy Guide 2015-2019, as follows:

Threats: Actions, facts or states of affairs, capabilities, strategies, intentions or plans that may affect national security values, interests and objectives and/or are likely to directly or indirectly jeopardise national security, by affecting national character, sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity, the normal functioning of state institutions, the life and physical integrity of citizens and the organisation of human communities;

Risks: Probabilities of the production or manifestation of any event, situation, condition with potential uncertain manifestation, whose materialization would lead to any effect on the normal functioning of state institutions, the organisation and functioning of human communities, as well as of the life, physical integrity of citizens, in a given or specific context.

Vulnerabilities: Functional-systemic/structural deficiencies that can be exploited or contribute to the materialisation of threats or risks, weakening the state's capacity to mitigate the impact of events with potential to seriously affect the normal functioning of its institutions, the life and physical integrity of citizens and the organisation of human communities, as well as the capacity to protect, defend and promote national security values, interests and objectives.

4.1. Threats

117. New challenges with an impact on the security environment **foreshadow an increasing tendency of states` adversaries and non-state entities** (information entities, interest groups or pressure groups etc.) to exploit limited capacity of communities, and society in general, to protect themselves from hostile interference.

118. The economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic will severely affect the world economy and test transatlantic and EU cohesion.

119. Strengthening the military potential in the vicinity of Romania, including on the Eastern NATO flank (militarisation of Crimea and in general of the Black Sea basin by the **Russian Federation**, conducting military exercises and strengthening its military capabilities through which offensive and defensive operations can be carried out), generates major challenges to the national strategic interests aimed at securing EU and NATO borders, ensuring energy security and stability in the Black Sea Region.

120. The offensive/aggressive behaviour, including in economic domain of some state`s entities whose interests are adversary to those of our country, the bottlenecks in the European/Transatlantic partnership, and/or perpetuation of economic instability may result in negative developments with security impact in the vicinity of Romania and in the Black Sea Region.

121. The delays in the Alliance's adaptation processes to the threats in its Eastern and Southern neighbourhood, the perpetuation of imbalances along the Eastern flank and changes in the positions of some allies regarding the Russian Federation have the potential to negatively influence the Romania's security situation.

122. The volatile security situation in the Western Balkans is correlated with the limited prospects for solving the frozen conflicts in the region, the South Caucasus included, altogether representing factors of regional instability.

123. Instability in the Middle East and North Africa will continue to project major security threats in the European and particularly Western areas, mainly associated with Islamic radicalisation.

124. The terrorist threat continuously features a menacing and diversifying dynamic that generates persistent risks to civilian and military personnel deployed in theatres of operations, in accordance with Romania's Euro-Atlantic commitments. Despite the downward trend of such attacks, terrorism, particularly jihadist terrorism, will continue to be one of the major threats to global and communities security. In Romania, **the terrorist phenomenon maintains its circumstantial character** influenced by the evolutions abroad. Indirectly exposed, **our country remains a target of opportunity by its relation to NATO, EU, the USA and the European states** involved in combating the scourge. **Radical Islamist hostile information actions** remains the main factor for (self) radicalisation processes, which has become a significant security risks in Romania, however without reaching the size of a phenomenon.

125. Hostile intelligence actions continues to aim at developing certain points of support used for influence, for obtaining information on domestic evolutions necessary to support decision-making processes in their countries of origin, but also for refining and developing support bases and propaganda channels with the potential to obstruct Romania's strategic projects and state decisions. Romania's strategic partnerships and policies promoted in accordance with its EU and NATO membership status keep our country in the attention of foreign espionage, the level of intrusion and offensiveness oscillating according to the interests of the aggressor states in relation to Bucharest`s partnerships or our alliances.

126. Hostile actions of influence carried out in the public space aimed at changing perceptions and influencing the civil society's behaviour are a constant threat to social security, and have potential to proliferate due to the increasingly diversified means of communication in the online environment.

127. Cyber-attacks launched by state and non-state entities (cybercrime groups, hacker groups with or without ideological, political or extremist-terrorist motivation) on critical information and communications infrastructures are a consistent threat to national security having their intensity, complexity and diversity on an increasing trend.

128. The integration of emerging and disruptive technologies among the cyber entities' offensive instruments multiplies exponentially the sources of threat and enhances solutions to conceal cyber operations in order to create the appearance of false membership.

129. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and delivery means, as well as the illegal transfers of military-use items and/or dual-use technologies may have unpredictable developments in the context of a new arms race with conventional or nuclear weapons. Our country is likely to have **Romanian entities being attracted** (indirectly, unintentionally) into trading connections/relations in fields of activities that are submitted/subject to international restrictions and/or with entities whose names are identifiable on international sanctions' lists.

130. Organised crime is still high, with interest groups continuing to engage in large-scale illegal economic activities (tax evasion, money laundering, smuggling of excise goods, counterfeiting). Romania is also predominantly a transit space **for illegal migration and international trafficking of high-risk drugs**, with local organised crime groups mainly involved in brokerage or support.

131. Cybercrime is on an upward trend, with more and more local groups specialising in illicit cyber activities (compromising ATMs and POSs, card cloning, unauthorised access to computer systems, illegal interception of computer data, posting of fictitious ads on intensively accessed trade sites, infecting information systems with *ransomware*, taking control over computer resources for virtual currency mining, as well as the use or exploitation of cryptocurrency for the conduct of illicit operations in the economic area).

132. Actions, facts, strategies, intentions or plans of states and non-state actors, aimed at

undermining Romanian state's authority and affecting its fundamental attributes (its national, sovereign, unitary, independent and indivisible character) or incitement to acts that could negatively affect the rule of law, are still a threat to national security.

133. Distortions in energy markets, as well as actions, or from case to case, lack of actions that damage **Romania's strategic economic interests** together with competing projects of some states or non-state actors hamper Romania's efforts to ensure a sufficient level of energy security.

134. Undesirable interference and hostile foreign takeovers of national interest economic operators and vital processes such as telecommunications, energy and ports can harm national security and public order. The infrastructures needed for the proper functioning of the social and economic life are exposed to domestic and foreign aggression and become liable of failure in the absence of joint and coherent efforts to modernise, digitise and obtain adequate financing.

4.2. Risks

135. The so-called illiberal temptation, reported in Eastern Europe in the recent years – whether combined with pragmatically formulated policy options, but certainly related to an approximate interpretation of democratic values – keeps its contamination risk at regional level with potential repercussions on Romania's economic development and resilience.

136. Republic of Moldova's development is at risk due to the prospect of counterbalancing the European orientation with an orientation towards the Eurasian direction. Reducing the chances of success for Republic of Moldova's European path entails some risks both for the neighbouring/near security environment and for national security, as well.

137. The indefinite stagnation of EU's enlargement to the Western Balkans, which would mean a perpetuated grey area in our geographical proximity, potential space for geopolitical, regional and global calculations, is itself a risk to Romania's interests.

138. Risks to EU and NATO countries from the south are indirect risks to Romania. Our country must be involved in addressing them not out of mere solidarity, but as a result of the awareness of its own interest in countering such risks.

139. Potential junctions in time of an enhanced drift in international order with the multilateralism dismantling tendency, coupled with punctual or generalised elements of crisis, heavily unpredictable in areas such as global climate, pandemics, catastrophic events, but also perpetuation, reigniting or outbreak, primarily in immediate European neighbourhoods of new regional outbreaks of instability.

140. The lack of real multi-annual budgetary planning leading to the ownership and compliance of strategic investment programmes negatively impacts infrastructure development and the economy in general, as well as the armed forces' capacity for modernisation and development and compliance with the military expenditure commitments.

141. Persistence of precarious infrastructure, shortage of specialised resources and underfunding in all social and economic areas, coupled with the low institutional capacity to access non-refundable sources of funding to link public policies with national interests and strategic missions in various areas, as well as to carry out control activities accordingly.

142. Illegitimate actions taken by interest groups are likely to seriously affect the way public policies are developed and implemented and the management of budgets allocated for the communities' interest. Poor performance in the provision of **essential public services** is maintained against the background of limited capacity to manage or operationalise related services or projects.

143. The perpetuation of tenuous dysfunctions in the organisation of **large public systems** hampers citizens' fundamental rights. The risks continue to arise from low functionality of **large public**

health, education and social care systems, amid generalised deficiencies related to resource allocation and management, as well as to their insufficiency.

144. The increased global Islamist-jihadist propaganda fuels the risks of radicalisation on national territory, including among Romanian citizens, entailing prospects which are difficult to anticipate and counteract.

145. Increasing demographic decline (infant mortality rate above the European average rate, negative natural growth, migration). The lack of a recovery prospect of the demographic balance increases the ageing trend in the population and disrupts the labour market. At the same time, the decrease in Romania's results in various comparative educational studies indicates the risk of **the lack of human capital** becoming chronic, which can slow down or even prevent Romania from meeting the common social and economic indicators set by the European Union standards.

146. The economic difficulties, the continuation of the shadow economy and corruption, the increased level of **tax evasion** in conjunction with the low level of tax collection, the **precarious infrastructure**, as well as the **tax system's low resilience** in relation to foreign developments limit **Romania's development prospects and the ability to promote** its political-military, diplomatic and image objectives abroad. In relation to all these, difficulties in ensuring fiscal sustainability affect economic growth, i.e. the size and efficient allocation of public expenditure.

147. Difficulties in managing European funds and project implementation continue to have a significant impact on the degree of access to and absorption of EU funding allocated to Romania.

148. The risk of cultural heritage disappearance is due to the poor conservation status of cultural real estate, movable properties and intangible assets, insufficient administrative capacity, contrary interests and lack of awareness, as well as natural factors with unforeseen behaviour in the context of climate change. The continuous and accelerated degradation of cultural heritage can lead to the loss of elements that define both the national identity and the multicultural nature of the Romanian heritage.

149. Domestic and regional developments may also generate other **risk factors that may lead to:**

- **inhibit or limit Romania's ability** to promote national interests abroad, especially in the Euro-Atlantic area and to capitalise on the opportunities arising from engaging in the Euro-Atlantic format, which could contribute to the national economy's functioning to its full potential;
- **alteration** - by foreign entities and/or interest groups and/or economic and financial crime groups - of the **strategic state decision-making process** or related to areas relevant to national security, thus affecting the balance on significant economic segments;
- **affect the** all socio-economic systems' **sustainable financing capacity** to attract and judiciously manage the related financial flows;
- **reflect negatively** on the economic stability needed for Romania's development, in vital areas, with related infrastructures (critical ones included) – energy, industry, transport, agriculture/food safety, environmental protection and forestry, information and communication technology, public and European funds, financial and banking markets;
- **distort the development of the security culture**, with possible irreparable consequences, in any of the sectors targeted by national interests, including the economic one.

150. Organised crime groups continue to act to attract public officials into the sphere of influence, in order to avoid or mitigate institutional response measures. The activities of cross-border crime networks specialised in the smuggling of high-excise or consumer products, illegal migration and drug trafficking, as well as cybercrime groups concerned with the expansion of their operational area, are a risk factor with increased impact on national security.

151. There is still a risk of a targeted and unpredictable growth of **extremist actions**, depending on certain developments in social life or according to the phenomenon's development in Europe.

152. The **new technologies' use** by organised crime and cybercrime entities, terrorist or extremist groups and organisations and actors interested in developing offensive actions **will be on an upward trend**.

153. The dependency of communications services on a **limited number of technology providers** or the existence of **unsecured flows of procurement of technologies** used in the provision of essential or critical services are a phenomenon with impact on the communications networks' availability and integrity.

154. The risk of an interstate armed conflict remains low, yet **there is an emerging risk of adapting hybrid offensive operations** to technological developments by continuously diversifying the modus operandi and coordinated resources in order to negatively impact the national interests, security included.

155. Additional sources of risks are:

- **the prospect of rethinking** arms control regimes, increasing defence budgets and accelerating the pace of development for the military capabilities of some state actors;

- **the volatile security situation in the Western Balkans**, along with the preservation of outbreaks/hotspots of conflict in the wider Black Sea region and limited prospects for resolution of the frozen conflicts in the region, coupled with the lack of transparency regarding Russian Federation's weapon arsenal stationed in Trans-Dniester separatist region and with the tendency to extend the security crisis in eastern Ukraine, triggered in the context of the illegal annexation of Crimea;

- **low probability phenomena/phenomena less likely to occur**, yet with major impact: low-intensity military confrontations, but long lasting; massive influx of migrants; environmental disasters, natural catastrophes; aggressions to the quality of environmental factors or other calamities.

4.3. Vulnerabilities

156. The state institutions' ability to assess and mitigate the risks and threats' impact is limited by the **persistence of certain vulnerabilities** in terms of: public funds' allocation and management, more precisely in accessing European funds (including those subsequent to the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027); regulating and organising key areas such as health and education; public policies' development and implementation.

157. The actions meant to divert decision-making act cause damage to the public budget, affect the country's development potential, good governance, as well as decision-making for the benefit of citizens and communities, confidence in state institutions, along with the state's image and credibility abroad.

158. The persistence of legislative gaps in the field of national security or in **counteracting information aggression**, more precisely in terms of regulation of the instruments necessary to prevent and counteract destabilising propaganda, including in the event of hybrid campaigns.

159. Delaying the deployment of key endowment programmes for the modernisation of crisis and war surveillance and response capabilities.

160. The medical system's low resilience capacity, in case COVID-19 pandemic turns to be cyclic or should another pandemic occur. Globalisation and unlimited fast travel opportunities around the world are a challenge to people's health, including for the Romanian citizens. Drug-resistant viruses and bacteria have negative consequences for human health, the economy and the societal environment, just as it has happened in the case of COVID-19 pandemic. **The major challenge in this case is to provide an adequate and effective state response in fighting the epidemic risks** and their consequences, to have the adequate procedures set in place and to have

available the relevant number of medical personnel, as well as to enforce the necessary protective measures.

161. The institutions' capacity to implement state policies for the benefit of the citizen is limited by maintaining certain vulnerabilities from the perspective of the efficient use of public money, accessing and managing European funds and implementing viable development and upgrading projects for large public systems and local infrastructure.

162. Persistent deficiencies/mistakes/flaws in the management or in the public communication acts performed by national authorities at sensitive times, in cases of civilian emergencies or in crisis (including in the event of the decree of a state of emergency arising from pandemics) may impair the adequate functioning of internal mechanisms and systems designed for the management of such situations.

163. The low level of cybersecurity of communication and information technology infrastructures in strategic areas (including as a result of vulnerabilities in terms of technology and procedures of communication operators' infrastructures) makes way for the conduct of cyber-attacks by state or non-state actors.

164. Deepened technological gap and under-exploitation of the benefits provided by the use of new technologies in most of the fields of activity may have a negative impact in terms of economic development and competitiveness, from the perspective of the research-development-innovation, as well as on medium and long term in ensuring national security.

165. Economic development gaps – in general, but especially in view of the transition to a "green" and "circular" economy, capable to cope with climate change and sustainable development – in terms of infrastructure, connections, transport, within the European Union, which particularly affect Romania and its neighbours.

166. The poor quality of education, which puts Romania in the lowest ranks in the EU in terms of the educational results compared at the international level (the Programme for International Student Assessment - PISA), university studies' completion rate or access to lifelong training programmes.

167. Lack of professionals in public administration due to excessive politicisation and alteration of the selection, evaluation and promotion process, with negative impact on institutional performance.

168. The poor security culture at the level of civil society and decision-making apparatus may be exploited by hostile intelligence entities for the purpose of collecting information or carrying out influence actions.

169. Insufficient joint and coherent undertakings in the infrastructure projects' upgrading, digitalization and financing necessary for the proper functioning of social and economic life.

Chapter 5

LINES OF ACTION AND MAIN MODALITIES TO ENSURE THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF ROMANIA

170. Romania's national security is **the result of coherent and coordinated state action** in several strategic action plans, which, in line with the specialisation of responsible public institutions, define the **dimensions of achieving the state of security**, as well as the perception of the latter by the citizens, first of all, but also by public institutions, international public opinion and our country's allies and partners. The sum of all the activities carried out and the actions undertaken within these dimensions define the national security as general state of the Romanian society.

171. National security interests and objectives are the foundation for development of lines of action to ensure national security. **The lines of action** concerning national security are focused on strengthening all Romania's capacities in preventing, deterring and defending itself against any aggressive actions aimed at the state or its citizens.

172. The lines of action specific to the dimensions of materialisation in the social practice of our country's national security have as a fundamental objective **the implementation of Romania's national interests**, within the margin of strategic objectives arising from them and using in an aggregate manner all the state's power instruments, in proportions tailored to the security environment's dynamics, the dangers and the challenges arising from it. Circumscribed to the principles promoted by the Strategy, the lines of action are correlative to the domains where they manifest themselves and to which they adapt – domains identified as dimensions, according to the concept of extended national security, namely the dimensions of defence, diplomacy, intelligence, counterintelligence and security, public order, crisis management, economy and energy, society.

5.1. Dimensions of achieving the security of the citizens, communities and nation

173. The dimensions of achieving national security should be understood in their synergistic action, designed to give consistency to the public institutions' action as they are endowed with powers and responsibilities in the essential sector domains of national security. The sum of these dimensions ensures and generates the practical-applicative nature of national security, defining and describing how public institutions will size and calibrate their actions and activities, and how they will rank their priorities for the following five years.

5.1.1. Diplomacy

174. The diplomatic dimension of the action to ensure national security is based on pro-active diplomacy, able to promote national interests, identify developments in the international environment and their possible impact on Romania, generate solutions so that this impact is not negative and define concepts which are in line with national interests, as well as internationally accepted.

175. ***The lines of action aim to:***

- Strengthen cooperation and strategic dialogue within NATO and the EU, as multilateral partner bodies, and within the Strategic Partnership with the US, as the main bilateral partnership, based on shared values with the respective states and on common interests identified;
- The promotion of national interests in other multilateral formats, such as the UN, the OSCE, as part of a broader action to strengthen the international order based on rules;

- Strengthen cooperation with states from NATO Eastern flank and the EU, respectively, on pragmatic grounds, in variously shaped formats, depending on the actual envisaged topics; strengthening cooperation with other countries in the region interested in building stronger ties with the EU and/or NATO;

- The promotion of the strategic importance of the Black Sea, both from the perspective of the topics related to this region and in terms of connections with the Eastern Mediterranean;

- Strengthen cooperation with Western Balkan states, with involvement in the efforts made to ensure regional stability and security, such as those related to the reform of the states in the region, as well as to their steps in joining the EU;

- Strengthen cooperation with Middle East states and with states active in this region, in order to provide our contribution in addressing the multiple crises in the Middle East;

- The deepening of Romania's partnerships from the economic perspective and participation in strengthening international cooperation in the country's direct neighbourhood, on issues such as energy connectivity or security;

- Strengthen the public communication effort and public diplomacy in support of national security interests;

- Coordination of the diplomatic corps' efforts with representatives of higher education institutions, research institutes and think tanks with in order to strengthen cooperation with other countries, including through education and research collaborations and partnerships;

- Strengthening the resources assigned for Romanian diplomacy to be able to put into practice their objectives.

5.1.2. Defence

176. The national political agreement on increasing funding for defence to 2% of the Gross Domestic Product creates the prerequisites for Romanian Armed Forces' modernisation, as well as for strengthening its status as an increasingly respected international partner. This is achieved through several **lines of action**.

177. ***The lines of action aim to:***

- Continue Romania's strategic efforts to guarantee national independence and sovereignty, territorial integrity, defence and security of citizens, support to allied, European and partner states in accordance with the commitments made through international treaties. To this end, there is a need to develop the capacity to respond to the new challenges in the security environment, but also to increase resilience, including through active measures to prepare the population and territory for defence;
- Ensure at least 20 % of the defence budget for the acquisition of military equipment, as well as ensure at least 2 % of the defence budget for R&D and innovation;
- Provide the human resources necessary to public institutions in the national security system as well as their adequate training;
- Encourage scientific research in the field of defence, dual technologies and promotion of their results, including through partnerships with universities, research institutes, representatives of the private sector or non-governmental organisations, promoting the already in place examples of good practice;
- Develop modern, high-efficiency capabilities, fully interoperable with allied and partner forces, to ensure the fulfilment of constitutional missions;
- Implement the force structure resulting from the "Strategic Defence Analysis 2020". This will allow the transition to a multi-annual planning, which will ensure the dynamics of

personnel and endowment according to the current and prospective needs of the Ministry of National Defence;

- Develop the inter-institutional framework necessary for the efficient organisation and functioning of the National Integrated Management System for Crisis Situations (SNMISC), connected to the existing crisis management systems within NATO and the EU;
- Fulfil the national obligations assumed both within the PESCO (permanent structured cooperation), as well as in the NATO defence planning process, participation in allied missions and operations, in its command structure and forces, in order to contribute to enhancement of the Alliance's role and capabilities, giving priority to strengthening the Eastern flank in a unitary, coherent and cohesive manner;
- Develop multinational capabilities on Romanian territory by continuous efforts to increase the allies' presence;
- Develop multinational capabilities within the framework provided by NATO and the EU, as well as under joint arrangements, involving allied and European states;
- Facilitate the implementation of the NATO-EU cooperation agenda, with particular focus on areas such as cyber defence, combating hybrid threats, countering terrorist threats, resilience, strategic communication and military mobility;
- Promoting/supporting, at the EU level, the initiatives specific to the Common Security and Defence Policy, relevant for ensuring European security, including in the Black Sea region;
- Harness the potential of emerging and disruptive technologies on the development and use of the armed forces;
- Support and coordinate with other institutions for the development of critical infrastructure that can also be used in the field of defence;
- Strengthen the role and national presence in the European Union's civilian missions and military operations by participating in crisis monitoring and management missions in areas of interest for Romania;
- Correlate the transport infrastructure investment programme with military mobility needs, both on the west-east and on the north-south axis;
- Deepen the security dimension of the Strategic Partnership with the USA, strengthening military cooperation, including on national territory and in the Black Sea region;
- Facilitate the increase of US military presence in Romania, develop the facilities meant for access, standing, training, protection and forces action coordination;
- Ensure security in the Black Sea region by deepening partnerships with allied states on the Eastern flank and south-eastern area of NATO, as well as through cooperation with NATO partners in the region;
- Adapt the security industry to the armed forces' procurement requirements, as well as to the competitive environment, including by accessing European funding opportunities for R&D;
- Develop and maintain combat readiness capabilities meant to ensure permanent surveillance, early warning and a resolute response to crisis situations, independently or in the allied framework;
- State investments in military or dual-use production facilities, in order to strengthen Romania's resilience in crisis situations and diminish dependence on non-EU and non-NATO suppliers;
- Support research development and strengthen progress made at European level in industrial cooperation in defence and defence-related areas which can make a significant contribution to it.

5.1.3. Public order

178. ***The lines of action are aimed at:***

- Increasing the safety of citizens by protecting their life, body integrity and right to ownership;
- The adjustment of the legal framework applicable in the field of public order and security to the social developments, identified risks and concrete regulatory requirements, in order to maximise efforts to prevent and combat risk situations, with an impact on the public order and safety of the citizen;
- Identifying and counteracting the activities of organised crime networks, including cross-border networks, and the dismantling of criminal groups;
- The prevention and combating of large-scale illegal economic activities (tax evasion, money laundering, smuggling of excise goods, counterfeiting), carried out by cross-border criminal groups;
- The development of international cooperation both in regional cooperation formats (Police Cooperation Convention for South-East Europe, Southeast Europe Police Chiefs Association) and the European Union (European Police Office – EUROPOL, European Border and Coast Guard Agency – FRONTEX) in order to combat transnational organised crime;
- Securing the border, in particular the European Union's external border, in order to combat illegal migration, trafficking in human beings, smuggling of excise or counterfeit goods and other risks having an impact on national security;
- The provision of human resources, material, financial and intelligence means, in particular with regard to situational awareness, as well as in respect to an increased level of inter-institutional cooperation needed to maintain and develop the operational capacity of the competent institutions, based on a rigorous planning process;
- Reshaping the public order and security system by making efficient use of the already existing capabilities and increasing the number of operative personnel, leading to an increased capacity for prevention and immediate response, as well as to an enhanced resilience/institutional adaptation capacity for risk situations;
- Improving decision-making processes - developing the capacity for prevention and anticipation through integrated risk analysis and assessment and ensuring integrated operational management for handling public events with impact on public order and safety;
- Strengthening the administrative and operational capacity of the structures designated to maintain, ensure and restore public order through dynamic and flexible allocation of institutional resources, according to the development of the criminal phenomenon;
- The use at national level of modern concepts on management of public order institutions, based on their equal performance according to standard operational procedures (*police equal performance*) and leadership based on intelligence (*intelligence led policing*), which contribute to the efficient use of resources while increasing the level of institutional performance;
- The coordination of the efforts of all public institutions in order to address physical security problems in educational establishments, while taking the necessary measures to ensure the physical security of students on their way to and from school, in cooperation with local public administrations;
- The development of partnerships with local communities to identify the problems they face in the public safety area and how to jointly act in order to address them;
- Rethinking and modernising both academic and initial and ongoing professional training institutions for students to acquire the practical skills needed to effectively prevent and combat risks to public order and safety.

5.1.4. Intelligence, counterintelligence and security

179. ***The lines of action are aimed at*:**

- The defence of constitutional order and values, including the citizens' fundamental rights and liberties;
- The identification and reporting of dysfunctions liable to affect the insurance/preservation of identity-national values;
- Protecting and promoting Romania's interests at EU, NATO, UN and OSCE levels and strengthen our country's profile of regional security guarantor/provider;
- Preventing and countering the risks and threats arising from the activity of hostile intelligence entities oriented against Romania's security interests;
- Ensuring the counterintelligence protection of classified information;
- Preventing and countering risks and promoting opportunities in terms of ensuring economic and financial stability, energy security, Romania's economic interests in the wider Black Sea region and in the Balkans, the operation of critical infrastructures, the development of transport infrastructure, the implementation of the information society and the digital economy, as well as the reporting of vulnerabilities, respectively of opportunities in the industry field, as well as in financial-banking, agriculture and forestry sectors;
- The identification and reporting of interference that would damage/hamper strategic economic and financial decision, as well as the prevention and countering of large-scale illegal economic activities;
- Preventing and countering risks, reducing vulnerabilities and promoting opportunities for accessing and using European funds;
- The identification and reporting of actions carried out by illegitimate interest groups to divert the decision-making act;
- Preventing and countering cyber threats – carried out by hostile, state and non-state entities – against communication and information technology infrastructures with critical relevance for the national security;
- Strengthening the legal, procedural and operational framework specific for critical infrastructures' protection;
- Increasing the capacity of public institutions, private companies and non-governmental organisations to implement cybersecurity norms and train their staff to protect personal data, as well as data on the activity and results of scientific research and other data which are not of public interest;
- Preventing and countering the risks related to terrorist entities' activities, to the presence on national territory of members or sympathisers of such entities, to increased extremist-terrorist propaganda, especially regarding the emerging jihadist propaganda in the online environment and the radicalisation processes in Romania;
- Reporting and preventing dysfunctions registered in the large public systems' operation;
- Identifying and reporting vulnerabilities and risk factors in securing the state border, in particular the European Union external border, in order to prevent and combat illegal migration, human being and goods trafficking and other risks with impact on national security;
- The prevention and countering of organised crime, including cross-border activities, which, by influencing decision-making, illegal economic activities, trafficking of high-risk drugs and illegal migration, can affect national security;
- Preventing and countering hybrid threats, materialised in hostile conjugate actions, implemented by state or non-state actors, at a political-administrative, economic, military, social, informational, cyber or organised crime level;

- The prevention and countering of illegal transfers of weapons, dual-use products and technologies intended for state or non-state actors that are subject to international sanctions or involved in proliferation;
- Strengthening the security culture among the decision-making apparatus, considering their status as managers of classified information, by raising awareness of the main counterintelligence risks and vulnerabilities that can facilitate the manifestation of threats to national security with a major impact in terms of national interests, as well as from the perspective of the interests entailed by partnerships;
- Ensuring interoperability and compatibility of information systems with those of the EU and NATO, in order to optimise cross-border cooperation between law enforcement authorities in order to provide access for information needed in investigating organised crime and terrorism.

5.1.5. Economy and Energy

180. ***The lines of action are aimed at:***

- Comprehensive development and promotion of policies to ensure that the development gaps between the regions of the country are reduced;
- The promotion of free initiative and the consolidation of domestic capital;
- The protection of public and private property;
- Ensuring the competitive framework and competitiveness by reducing the factors that affect the proper functioning of the business environment;
- Ensuring transparency of domestic markets and interconnected functioning capacity with external ones, including by extending strategic partnerships and cooperation in the economic field;
- Ensuring energy security through operational adaptation and optimisation of primary energy resources consumption structure, development of energy production capacities, increased energy efficiency, development of projects aimed at ensuring diversification of access to resources and transforming Romania into an important energy market player, by capitalising on its resources in the Black Sea, increasing interconnection capacity and competitiveness, including through the implementation of the Energy Union objectives;
- Reducing dependency on fossil fuels through the use of future innovations in energy generation, including clean green energy, which will help solve climate change problems, with energy being vital to social continuity;
- The development and modernisation of national infrastructure networks;
- The provision of communications services throughout the entire national territory and their continuity, at a defined quality and at affordable prices for all users, as a consequence of guaranteeing the right of access to communications services;
- Developing a strategy to retain and attract talent (*brain-gain*) and experts in various areas of national interest, to prevent economic stagnation, in the context of an increasingly high-tech oriented economy. In this respect, a first step could be to simplify the procedures for accepting the files/the applications of foreign researchers wishing to work in Romania.

5.1.6. Crisis management and civilian protection

181. In order to act effectively across the entire spectrum of crises, from crisis prevention measures to collective defence, Romania is considering the full implementation of the National Integrated Management System of Crisis Situations (SNMISC). This system should ensure an adequate level of readiness and operational planning and functionality of all decision-making and enforcement structures with responsibilities in this field, for the management of the entire spectrum of domestic or foreign crises, being at the same time able to properly respond to different crisis situations, ensuring the autonomy of the component subsystems so that they can become operational and respond to the nature and extent of the crisis.

182. ***The lines of action are aimed at:***

- Upgrading the National Integrated Management System for Crisis Situations (SNMISC) by improving the legislative framework for inter-institutional cooperation and by attracting resources necessary for the institutions in charge with crisis situations management, based on a rigorous and efficient planning process;
- the development of the integrated process of special and crisis situations management in the field of public order and security and their consequences – integrated management of complex actions, special and crisis situations;
- increasing the capacity for intervention and the mobility of public order and security structures, in order to provide rapid and effective response in the event of special and crisis situations;
- ensuring the material and human resources necessary for the institutions designated for crisis management, based on a planning process;
- strengthening the National Management System for Emergency Situations as part of SNMISC, by improving the legislative framework on emergency situations, in line with European requirements and the society's growing needs;
- increasing the capacity to respond and manage emergencies, including by increasing the confidence of the population in the relevant institutions;
- preparing the institutions and the population for crisis and civil emergencies, including through deployment and training exercises, but also through international cooperation;
- training the intervention structures' decision-makers and staff for crisis action and decision-making;
- development of a rapid emergency response system by ensuring the sustainability of the military emergency medicine and operational medicine system and adapting medical services and training of medical personnel to the demographic and epidemiological trends;
- participation in international mechanisms for mutual support in the event of natural and anthropogenic disasters, as well as Romania's international affirmation as a contributor in the development of other states' emergency systems and providing civil protection support;
- improvement and modernisation of alternative alert, notification and warning systems, while developing the communication system in case of major emergency crises;
- establishment of a prevention culture among the population by actively and continuously preparing them to react in a major emergency situation.

5.1.7. Environmental security, with direct effects in providing life quality

183. ***The lines of action are aimed at:***

- preventing and countering the significant degradation of climate conditions in our country, amid the increased frequency of floods and prolonged droughts;
- implementing EU environmental policies, both at central and local level, promoting the concept of a circular economy and supporting sustainable development;
- the correct and responsible exploitation of natural resources;
- increasing the surfaces of protected areas and their more effective safeguard.

5.1.8. Education, Health, Society and Demographics (Societal Dimension)

184. ***The lines of action are aimed at:***

- the promotion of Romanian cultural values and the establishment of conditions for affirmation and development in the European and international context; unaltered preservation of ethnic values, folklore, customs and traditions of the Romanian people and national minorities;
- conjugated promotion of democratic values, such as pluralism, civic participation, tolerance and non-discrimination and cooperation in a multicultural context;
- ensuring cultural freedom through public access to archives, libraries, museums, cultural heritage and creative freedom;
- encouraging, promoting and supporting scientific research, experimental development and innovation;
- Strengthening the security culture among the decision-making apparatus, considering their status as managers of classified information, by raising awareness of the main counterintelligence risks and vulnerabilities that can facilitate the manifestation of threats to national security with a major impact in terms of national interests;
- Establishment of the legislative, procedure and technical framework for the implementation of a modern voting system, in line with the evolution of current technology;
- development and modernisation of communication and information technology support for registering and solving citizens' emergencies;
- developing the necessary infrastructure for the implementation of the process meant to digitalise Romania, in order to streamline the activity of the administrative apparatus and to increase the quality of public services;
- developing the prevention and response capacity of the public health system and public administration structures in the event of pandemics, epizootics, etc., especially those with a high degree of infectiousness and danger, which result in emergencies; developing diagnostic capacity, including rapid detection of epidemics, analysis and prognosis of their development; the necessary medical equipment will be included in the programme of strategic reserves; the state will support the development of the medical industry in Romania;
- creating and shaping a health system that sees the patient/citizen's as being at the heart of this system;
- correlation of public health policies in order to generate the society's sustainable development;
- implementation of projects to reform the education and professional training systems;
- improvement of education system's financing and more efficient investments in the human capital, by making better use of the synergies among different sources of funding: National budget, European grants or external (non-) reimbursable funds as well as Erasmus funding;
- reducing inequity in access to education and health, aiming at seizing the development potential of rural or poor economic regions;
- a better correlation between labour market policies and education and health policies, in order to support Romania's sustainable development;
- diminishing the worsening rate of the demographic situation;
- diminishing the gaps in terms of development in various regions from Romania.

5.2. Functionality of the national security system: Integrated networking and collaboration

185. The permanent transformation of the international security environment and the growing dynamics of risks and threats **bring about a number of challenges in terms of institutional capacity** to formulate the appropriate responses and to enable effective measures.

186. The transformation processes within NATO and EU and **the increased multidisciplinary nature of risks and threats** entail the necessity to constantly review the management of the issues currently on these organisations' agenda, in order to adequately promote national security interests and objectives and to capitalise on national contribution. At the same time, adequate crisis management in both national and international contexts requires a **relationship system structured** on the principles of expertise, coherence and efficiency in terms of communication when managing these issues.

187. The functionality of the national security system can only be achieved through an integrated approach in successive stages of **institutional consultation**, decision-making, implementation and regular evaluation.

188. The transformations that have marked the international security environment in recent years, in conjunction with NATO and EU membership, have imposed a dynamic and intensive approach to **inter-institutional cooperation at the national level**, allowing for **flexibility and expediency** in addressing the issue of national security, in an allied context.

a). Coordination and organisation

189. According to the Romanian Constitution, the unitary organisation and coordination of activities related to the defence of the country and national security are carried out by the Supreme Council of National Defence.

190. Existing inter-institutional collaborative mechanisms and instruments work to ensure Romania's security, defence and promotion of national interests and those of the Romanian citizens, while **national public institutions** act in synergy and according to the legal competences governing their organisation and functioning.

191. In order to analyse, evaluate and interpret the dynamics and changes in the international environment and to provide integrated expertise to the President of Romania, a Group **of Strategic Reflection (GRS)** is established, coordinated by the head of the Department of National Security within the Presidential Administration.

192. The achievement of the national objectives promoted by this Strategy involves a joint and synergistic effort of all Romanian institutions, and the cooperation among them must be based on **the principles of continuity and predictability by**:

- the coherent and consistent implementation of existing national strategies and plans, and their updating, in line with the new strategic guidelines for the period 2020-2024;
- complying with the commitments made as NATO and EU member country and monitoring how allies and foreign partners deliver on their own commitments;
- the consultation of foreign partners in order to correlate procedures and adjust strategies with a view to permanently linking existing developments at European level and appropriating Western principles;
- generating cooperation formats with foreign partners and making better use of the existing ones in order to identify and counter threats, risks and vulnerabilities affecting common security interests at regional and Euro-Atlantic level.

b). Inter-institutional cooperation and implementation

193. The continuous strengthening of a flexible institutional architecture of inter-institutional cooperation, centred on consultation mechanisms at all levels, which must be targeted accurately and continuously tailored **to national security objectives**. The implementation of this approach is a mandatory approach for strengthening the capacity of the Romanian state to react timely and with the involvement of adequate resources.

194. In the 21st century, whose security developments are becoming increasingly effervescent and unpredictable (at least in certain segments), a *sine qua non* condition for the national security system to be operational and to achieve its intrinsic goals is **cooperation both internally, as well as at the inter-institutional level, with allies and other** foreign **partners, too.**

195. Cooperation, with its follow-up mechanisms, becomes an extremely necessary tool to complement the knowledge of those aspects with national security impact and, implicitly, in generating responses and decisions at the strategic level, aimed at ensuring the country's defence.

196. Finalising the inter-institutional functional framework and the necessary crisis response capabilities is crucial, and it should also include operating procedures, as well as pre-authorised measures and responses. Development of communication systems is also imperative and they should be compatible with modern communication and information technology capabilities, which bring about digital transformation.

197. In order to achieve the objectives of the National Defence Strategy of the Country, at the level of institutions, formats and inter-institutional cooperation mechanisms, also by amendment, where necessary, of the related legislation, the following **should be considered**:

- the undertaking by central public administration institutions of the development and implementation of **relevant strategies**, in accordance with the objectives of the Strategy, in order to achieve national security objectives through specific action directions or, on a case-by-case basis, harmonised within working formats/partnerships;
- updating the specific legislation in areas where it is necessary;
- development of sector and area-based strategies and action plans, in full accordance with the lines of action set out in the Strategy;
- elaboration at inter-institutional level of action plans for foreign **strategic communication**, with the aim of promoting Romania's security interests and achieving the national security objectives arising from them;
- development of compatible communication systems with modern communication capabilities and information technology, adapted to new technological developments and digitisation processes.

198. Regarding **the role of the international cooperation formats** in achieving the objectives set out in the National Defence Strategy of the Country, by extending and strengthening strategic partnerships, as well as cooperation relationships with other international actors, the following **shall be considered:**

- the deepening of cooperation in the already initiated fields, according to the algorithm: exchange of information, expert meetings, joint operations;
- identifying new forms of multilateral cooperation and making better use of existing ones; institutions' increased contribution in multilateral formats both conceptually and operationally;
- boosting confidence in Romanian structures through increased capacity to respond to partners' demands and strengthening the status of security provider at regional and international level;

- enhancing predictability and interoperability through the development of joint action plans on specific topics, on short and medium term.

5.3. Correlating the lines of action with national security objectives in terms of threats, risks and vulnerabilities

199. Correlating the lines of action with the national security objectives is **the essence of the National Defence Strategy of the Country**. This requires a continuous effort for upgrading, given that the objectives, which remain fixed, must be achieved through actions directed towards maintaining a certain degree of flexibility, which would allow for the adaptation of concrete activities to developments in threats, risks and vulnerabilities.

200. The setting of national security objectives implicitly determines the concrete lines of action needed in order to achieve them. Thus, the relevant public institutions will continuously act to identify, anticipate, prevent, mitigate, and counter the threats, risks and vulnerabilities that could hinder the achievement of security objectives.

201. Correlating the lines of action with the national security objectives will remain a permanent, **inter-institutional** effort, supported by a deeper dialogue between the institutions and the citizens, with the aim of strengthening security culture and resilience. It will be **an integrated, strategically coordinated effort based on a single implementation plan**, which will involve horizontal cooperation with ongoing monitoring within inter-institutional working groups in formats appropriate to the concrete themes it addresses. The success of this effort depends on the proper functioning of the national security system, which means that between the correlation of objectives and the lines of action, on the one hand, and the functionality of the national security system, on the other, there is a mutual dependence relationship.

202. Achieving national security objectives requires concerted action by public institutions and society as a whole. Sector strategies and policies, which will derive from the National Defence Strategy of the Country, will have to be adapted to the developments of the security environment, which are fluid and unpredictable.

203. The lines of action associated with each dimension of achieving national security will be implemented taking into account the importance and prevalence of objectives, especially those with specific forms of manifestation, with direct impact in critical areas of state and citizen security, such as:

- strengthening the national defence capacity, aimed at ensuring the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Romania, as well as the Romanian people's security;
- enhancing the efficiency of the national systems put in place for the crisis prevention and management, either domestic or foreign, military or civilian in nature; enhanced efficiency for inter-institutional cooperation mechanisms and capabilities to counter asymmetric and hybrid threats, able to provide state resilience in emergency or crisis situations and enabling the continued functioning of essential institutions and services;
- enhancing the security of critical and communication infrastructures and information technology, with critical implications for national security;
- ensuring energy, food and environmental security;
- development of strategically important areas through the connection to technological developments;
- the removal of deficiencies affecting the strengthening of administrative capacity and the sustainable development of large public systems (health, education, social protection);
- the prevention of radical or extremist reactions and trends in society;

- the promotion of national identity, including the preservation/capitalization of national cultural and natural heritage, and gaining international recognition for the Romanian.

204. The synergistic functionality of the national security system is a prerequisite for the coordinated and integrated action of institutions called upon to meet national security objectives. Each direction of action will **bear the mark of the institution responsible for its implementation**, but at the same time will have **the added value of integrated action**, which is absolutely necessary in order to achieve the security objectives, which, by definition, require a multi-vector approach and a joint institutional effort.

205. Addressing security threats, risks and vulnerabilities by state institutions must follow the logic of national security projects in which resources, plans and capabilities are meant to facilitate knowledge, prevention and countering, as well as reducing their potential to affect the achievement of national security objectives.

206. The lines of action should be adapted according to the impact that threats, risks and vulnerabilities have on them and calibrated at the level of institutional and inter-institutional action so as to achieve their common goal, namely the putting into practice of national security objectives.

207. The systemic vision of **correlating national security objectives to the lines of action** in terms of threats, risks and vulnerabilities must be the common element of the entire national security system. Strategic decision-making mechanisms and such coordination formats play an important role. The role of the Supreme Council of National Defence is of paramount relevance, as this level brings together the national strategic planning capabilities and functionalities/structures.

208. In **the new global context**, Romania's approaches must aim at prioritising security threats, as well as achieving an in-depth strategic analysis of national security, which will take into account the most serious problems Romania is facing.

209. The correlation of the lines of action with the national security objectives stated in the National Defence Strategy of the country is made by:

- providing a tailored legal framework, both for the unitary coordination of country defence and national security activities at the level of the Supreme Council of National Defence, and for the organisation and functioning of institutions with responsibilities in the field, for full adaptation to the NATO and EU membership;

- continuing the Romanian Armed Forces' process of transformation, modernisation and endowment/procurement, by allocating at least 2% of the GDP to the defence budget annually, for at least 10 years, a process started in 2017;

- meeting specific performance standards in order to achieve interoperability with Armed Forces of other NATO and EU member states and harmonising the legal framework governing Armed Forces readiness and training;

- increasing the role and national presence in civilian missions and military operations by taking part in crisis monitoring and management missions in areas of priority interest for Romania;

- the provision of human resources, material, financial and informational means necessary to maintain and develop the operational capacity of the competent institutions, based on a rigorous process of planning and evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of their use;

- preparing public institutions and the population for crises and civilian emergencies, including by means of mobilisation and training exercises, as well as by use of international cooperation, at the same time with preparation of decision makers for action and decision-making in such situations.

210. Without effective institutions, **a state has no international and strategic credibility**. Romania will apply the commitments made on the allocation of sufficient funds for national defence and security so that its citizens will be better protected against security risks and threats.

The steps to ensure national security will take into account:

- the allocation of resources through an integrated, planned, multi-annual process capable of meeting inter-institutional requirements at national, NATO and EU levels;
- ensuring the digitisation of institutions in the field of national defence and security, public services, as well as of the inter-institutional mechanisms through employment of recent technological developments;
- protection and efficient use of national material resources; encouraging domestic and foreign investors to develop the various objectives of national or regional interest;
- European funds absorption, or of other funds in order to finance important projects and in particular critical/vital infrastructure projects, including those related to military mobility.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

211. Consistent implementation, with the expected results and achievement of the objectives of the **Strategy**, involves **a joint effort from the politicians, designated national authorities with responsibilities in the field and civil society,** as well as the efficient use of human, material and financial resources available to our country.

212. The aim of the Strategy is, on the one hand, to provide guidance for further implementation of the strategic guidelines adopted in 2015 and, on the other hand, to support the efforts of national institutions to adapt to domestic and international developments in order to address the citizens' concerns and to safeguard the security climate in the Euro-Atlantic area.

213. From the perspective of the implementation of this National Defence Strategy of the Country, a complementary condition to all other values and principles underlying the elaboration of this programmatic document is **to provide a coherent and applied legislative framework**, aimed at strengthening the security culture and modernising the institutions with responsibilities in the field of national security. The legislative framework in Romania, and the juridical institutions are functional, the regulations in the field of national security have been the subject of several proposals for amendment and completion, yet without concrete materialisation.

214. For the timeframe 2020-2024 **the legislative framework in the field of security must be adjusted** in order to provide the designated national institutions with the necessary tools to establish a proper connectivity and have the flexibility to manage national security challenges.

215. Any robust security architecture also requires **the provision of prepared and equipped human resources**, as an essential part of interoperable capabilities, able to operate coherently together. Anticipating trends in the security environment and embracing progress in the technological field will instead increase our capacity to effectively counter national security risks and threats, irrespective of their nature.

216. The assessment on the Strategy's **implementation degree** is carried out **annually** or whenever the situation requires it, and is **based on the information collected during a monitoring process**. A comprehensive analysis – Evaluation Report on the implementation of the National Defence Strategy of the Country is to be written and submitted, as well as issuing recommendations on the implementation of further actions.

217. After the **adoption** of the National Defence Strategy for the period 2020-2024, the executive and public institutions with national security responsibilities are called upon **to develop sectorial strategies** and measures in their field of responsibility, aimed at counteracting and combating risks, threats and vulnerabilities and achieving the objectives of the Strategy.