



## ROMANIA: STEPS TOWARDS SMART POWER

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*A defence strategy for a European state that is both EU and NATO member should be in accordance with the security requirements of those organisations, while also in harmony with the domestic characteristics that define our country’s role within those organisations.*

*Europe 2020 strategy, adopted by the European Commission in 2010, is aimed at smart and sustainable growth, with an obvious focus on economic development, the concept being also applicable to security and defence.*

*NATO’s smart defence concept is rather limited to sharing capabilities, coordinating priorities and efforts in the military sphere, as it is the nature of the Alliance itself. But domestically, in implementing an ambitious National Defence Strategy, it should be considered the extended applicability of the concept of smart power, developed by Joseph Nye, which includes all areas of a country’s social, economic and military existence, in order to promote its security and interests.*

*Keywords: power; strategy; objectives; resources; globalisation;*



## INTRODUCTION

A new National Defence Strategy, as a programmatic document focused on national security, is, in its manner of approaching security, at least in the medium term, always a good occasion for society as a whole to revisit or revise some subjects that are often too far from the focus of attention and too seldom included in our daily news stream.

I think it is highly relevant that the civil society and the mass-media should be reminded, at least occasionally, of extremely relevant subjects for our daily existence such as those pertaining to national security. Personally, I am one of those who have always supported an increase in the efforts of professionals, practitioners and the academic community to build a solid security culture. As security is centred, essentially, on the individual and his welfare, the individual is also central for security, particularly in our current globalised and hyper-technologised world. My experience has often proven that, without a civil society prepared to understand and confront at least to some degree the security risks to which we are exposed, the efforts of the intelligence community and the agencies would have at least limited results, should they be left on their own.

The moment of conception and the manner of approval for this particular type of strategy, which involves a document initiated by the Presidential Administration and approved by Parliament, are also more arguments in favour of political decision-makers paying more attention to national security. This has several benefits, starting with a deeper understanding of the security phenomenon, to the more advanced ones, generated by the creation of an overall environment favourable to promoting and supporting new initiatives – among which the legislative ones stand out – in order to ensure useful instruments for this vital field in a nation's existence.

But besides awakening civil society, to which we shall return, because it is a valuable security resource, the National Defence

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Strategy is also a good opportunity for security institutions to review their own objectives, priorities, action strategies, in order to achieve those objectives and, why not, even reassess the required resources. This is also a good time to open new communication channels with the academic and R&D environment, in order for theorists and practitioners to productively “clash” ideas.

And although when the 2020-2024 National Defence Strategy was approved, a larger part of the Romanian civil society mainly noticed the bluntness of its references to the Russian Federation as an aggressive and disruptive neighbour, the document also refers to several other aspects that deserve at least similar, if not more attention, and we are required to raise awareness on those, too.

The 2020-2024 National Defence Strategy is a particularly ambitious programmatic document that manages to review a solid part of the issues facing the Romanian society, and not only our society, since some are transnational in nature. It even tries to anticipate some developments. It exposes the current security situation, the EU and NATO membership and the US Strategic Partnership as essential pillars in order to strengthen both our defence capabilities, as well as our domestic capacities. However, and this is the reason I insist on saying it is an actual security strategy, it does not overlook, but rather poignantly identifies the dangers lurking from a much wider array of risks than the military ones, from domestic ones such as those generated by faulty health or education systems, to cross-border threats, which mainly affect Western societies, such as rampant developments in information technology and communications, organised crime, drug and human trafficking, terrorism etc.

The accurate review of the risks and vulnerabilities we are confronted with, as well as the proper placing of Romania within its system of alliances actually consolidating our national power, are both correct and useful in order to increase awareness and to establish operational coherence. In fact, the concept of *security strategy* itself is not destined to expand on the included subjects, which are rather the object of various subsequent undertakings, including some for scientific systematisation. Security strategies represent rather a basis for an arborescent system, in which the strategy constitutes a starting

point for the development of similar, more detailed documents for various fields that present significant risks. The basic security strategy is, therefore, the cornerstone of security, giving coherence in the approach of actionable priorities.

There are those who do not support the need for a strategy, at least concerning national security, and partly with real and solid arguments: no strategy can foresee the unpredictable, and the unpredictable –*uncertainty* – is among the few constants of our current times. The foremost security shock of our century, the 9/11 terrorist attacks, was not anticipated, there were no predefined measures to prevent it or to alleviate its impact, and the results are known. And “*black swans*” will continue to exist from the security perspective, regardless if they are generated by the “*creativity*” of frustrated, malcontent categories, or by unpredictable results – the perverse effects – of IT&C, or of other unknown or too little-known factors.

But strategic documents, beyond their limitations in foreseeing the unforeseeable and their obligations to establish measures to alleviate the potential risks it involves and build resilience, do consider a myriad of other risks that can and should be anticipated. We also have a duty to act in a concerted fashion in order to lessen those risks and to integrate our efforts among institutions, at a national and even international level, in order to patiently build enhanced resilience. Strategic documents are particularly necessary in this regard, because they set common objectives and courses of action for all those who can and will contribute to national security, and, in some particular regards, also to regional and continental security.

And because I have mentioned that the strategy can also be a good opportunity for civil society to reflect on security, it is important to note that, in our current security environment, no such document can solely address state institutions. It is imperative that the strategy should be followed by the identification of the means to fully cooperate with civil society and private businesses.

However, we should be aware that no strategic document by itself is a panacea for all our problems. Without a proper conversion of strategic guidance into actual measures and, moreover, into coherent and concerted actions at all levels of society, as well as within all alliances



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and organisations in which we participate, I do not see foreseeable progress in achieving our main goals, of having “*a powerful, developed, capable and respected Romania*” (National Defence Strategy for the years 2020-2024).

## A POWERFUL ROMANIA

### *What is Power?*

After the end of the Cold War, there were constant reconfigurations of power in international relations: from a bipolar world, in which the Soviet bloc confronted the Western one on various battlefields, except the military one, to the unipolar world thereafter, in which a single superpower, the United States of America, would gain dominance over several aspiring ones, to a potential global society with multiple power poles, in which the USA seems to continue to keep the military dominance, but in turn lose from the economic pull and even legitimacy, influence and credibility in favour of more and more aspiring contenders to the global super-power status<sup>1</sup>.

So, what does Romania actually aspire to when it sets out to become a powerful state? To the super-power status? It seems highly unlikely, to be honest. To the regional economic power status? To military power? It all depends on what we understand by “*power*”.

In order to establish a common perspective on the term, a definition of the coveted status of power could be useful. The Romanian Explanatory Dictionary (2009) mentions the basic meaning of *power* as “*being able, having capacity, merit, physical, moral, intellectual possibility to act, to achieve something*”. Several other meanings are also mentioned, among which “*physical strength*”, as well as “*effectiveness*” and “*authority, domination, reign*” and even “*influence*”, “*capability, potential*”, therefore a sum of characteristics, some desirable for a constitutional, democratic state, a partner in international alliances and organisations, while others seem rather attractive to a different type of state. For example, influence can be desirable, regardless of the type of state, but it is not necessary power,

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<sup>1</sup> In his book, *The Post-American World*, renowned American publicist Fareed Zakaria spoke about the simple growth of some emerging super-powers, the most familiar examples being, of course, China, India, and Brazil, as undermining the USA super-power status.

same as strength, particularly military strength, does not necessarily bring power to its owner, at least not in this age in history. I also think the term “*potential*” cannot be excluded from analysis, although reality has proven on numerous occasions that having potential does not necessarily equal harnessing it.

And although there is no generally accepted definition of a state’s power in international relations, I think a good start for pinpointing the term is its first dictionary meaning, which directly relates owning power to being able to achieve the desired objectives. In other words, a powerful state is a state able to achieve its legitimate strategic objectives, ultimately materialised in the security, freedom, and welfare of its citizens.

However, as with the Strategy, which is only a theoretical document and needs to be enforceable and, moreover, enforced in order to prove its usefulness, from setting objectives to actually attaining them and to gaining the status of a powerful nation we need to take several successive, coherent steps, which are also conditioned by multiple factors, some of them subjective. This is wherein differences occur among various researchers interested in accurately defining power.

For example, Hannah Arendt, influential thinker of the previous century, assesses that “*power springs up among men when they act together*” (Arendt, 2018, p. 200), a notion which also applies to the *state power* concept, but insufficient to define it completely. First of all, we need to identify the manners in which people can be determined to act together, and, at state level, it seems pretty obvious that the highest potential to become real *influencers*, able to have an impact over all social areas and structures, belongs to those making the rules, namely state authorities. Able politicians, showing strategic thinking, vision, and potentially some charisma, are a must, but not sufficient to build and consolidate state power.

Does the fact that a state has a cohesive society, participative private businesses, and coherent state authorities that act in a concerted fashion guarantee its power? Is the cohesion of a military, political, economic or any other type of transnational alliance, even under directions from a strategic, visionary leadership, enough to ensure the achievement of its targeted objectives? It seems unlikely,



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if another *sine qua non* prerequisite is not met: having the necessary resources.

But what constitutes a power resource nowadays? The human resource, in order to genuinely add value, needs education. And even educated people who do not believe in the ideas of the state or in the legitimacy of its purposes cannot have the good morale to generate maximum results, therefore other factors can influence the human resource, too.

Military power involves the need for weapons. Weapons currently mean technology, with all due consequences, which are not completely advantageous to the owner. And technology is also based on the human resource's creativity and education.

From an economic perspective, the power resources also have other connotations: on the one hand, the human resource is essential in this regard, too, from obvious reasons. On the other hand, a while ago, during the modern age, natural and military resources, when ideally combined, meant power. Currently, however, the stress shifts towards informational resources, without neglecting natural resources, of course, while also involving knowledge and creativity, which are useful in order to replicate or substitute them. In other words, the need for human resources is still prominent.

In order to draw closer to the theory of neo-liberalism founder (or liberal realist, as he calls himself), Joseph Nye Jr., "*power is a state's ability to achieve its targeted objectives with the available resources, through strategic thinking and visionary leadership, as well as through capitalisation on all contextual developments in the local and global society*". (Nye, 2011, p. 24).

To sum up, a state that owns resources, both material, such as natural or technological ones, and immaterial, such as ideas or social values, also needs strategies – the theory – and statesmen, the actors able to act on pre-defined strategies, to correctly assess the domestic and international context and to support active measures in order to achieve state objectives, at all levels: from military defence, to constructing a healthy economy, to an educated and productive civil society, to a safe environment for human development etc.

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Trying to transpose Nye's ideas on power in a graphical manner could probably look like *figure no. 1 (Ibid.)*.

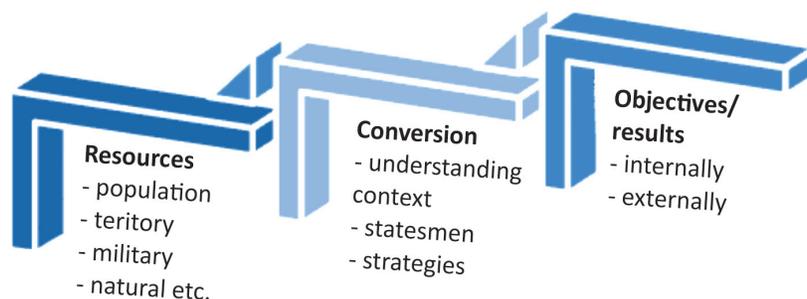


Figure no. 1: Elements of power

### What is a Powerful State?

I believe it would be utopian to imagine that one nation alone can have all the above-mentioned elements: all types of resources and the full capacity to convert them into strategic objectives, and that only such nation can become a truly powerful state.

Theoretically, the realist perspective assesses that a state's power comes almost exclusively from its military force, as states in the international system are actors trying to keep their independence and security through force and coercion, in other words, through *hard* power.

Nye reminds readers on various occasions of Napoleon Bonaparte's military and power strategy, since he was an advocate of the idea that "*God is on the side of the big battalions*" (Ibid., p. 25). However, (post-) modern wars are no longer fought with big battalions, at least not in the literal meaning, and modern states' power policies tend to be replaced, in the post-modern world<sup>2</sup>, by a policy of cooperation.

Other theoreticians use a different terminology referring to states that base their power on military force and act on the international scene only considering "*raison d'Etat*". Robert Cooper, for example, considers this type of state organisation as specific to the modern age<sup>3</sup>, while post-modern states, exponents of a "*new world order*"<sup>4</sup>



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<sup>2</sup> The post-modern world is only a part of the world we live in, in which, according to Robert Cooper's theory, the post-modern states coexist with the modern and archaic ones.

<sup>3</sup> An age which is not over, but coexists with the post-modern one.

<sup>4</sup> Frequently mocked by contemporary thinkers as "*the new world dis-order*".



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and a notion particular to the European continent and project, are rather cooperative and partnership-based, showing “*an advanced system of mutual involvement in domestic policies*” (Cooper, 2007, p.53), a system of complex interdependencies wherein the distinctions between internal and external are blurred and military force is never the go to solution for resolving disputes<sup>5</sup>.

The neo-liberal notion, of which Joseph Nye is a prominent advocate, completes Cooper’s, assessing that, in international relations, a powerful state is a state with multiple interdependencies among multiple actors, some of which are even non-state actors, such as in the case of the alliances which define both our position on the international stage and our attitudes and measures in given situations.

In this complex context of network-type interdependencies, a powerful state is not necessarily the one holding the most and best weapons, but rather the one managing to promote its own agenda and to achieve the targeted strategic objectives without using force, through an attractive and persuasive *narrative* that does not coerce nor manipulate.

Nye does not deny the importance of military power for a state’s general capacity to achieve strategic objectives, but rather seems to not think of it as primordial, nor as a source of power, in itself, unless combined with other *soft* power variables.

For that reason, the use of *hard* power in the post-modern world is limited by other arguments, too: the human resource is limited, social ideologies no longer value military violence as a solution for conflict resolution, and the typology of conflicts also tends to make violence an aggravating factor, instead of an alleviating one. Even when referring to the military field, our *National Defence Strategy* itself also reminds – correctly and in complete accordance with Nye’s notions – that, beyond defensive military force, even this element of *hard* power involves several *soft* components, such as an emphasis on scientific research and development, training the human resource, involving troops in humanitarian and peace-keeping missions etc.

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<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, this last slightly idealistic vision tends to be more and more frequently contradicted by reality, as cohesion of the European project seems to weaken and it is undermined by discording interests – generally, economic ones, but also by emerging values such as the so-called illiberal ones, which are contrary to the democratic, founding ones.



The novelty Nye brings in the theory of power relations is a more adequate definition of post-modern power instruments, as defined by Cooper. Nye discusses power instruments as results of a mix of *hard* power, which is military power, and “*carrots and sticks*” policy, meaning coercion and financial stimulation, and achieving strategic objectives without force or coercion, through a certain power of attraction, of co-opting others in common projects and persuading them, without using manipulation or propaganda, to align their own agenda to one’s own through the force of the arguments, institutions, economy, civil society of the powerful state. All those latter concepts rally under the term of *soft power* (figure no. 2) (Ibid.).

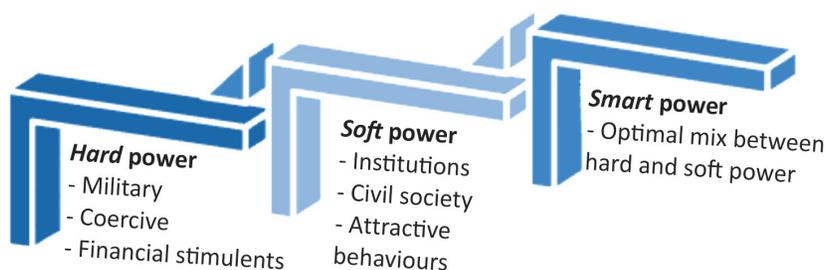


Figure no. 2: Instruments of power

*Developing military capabilities for a NATO member state as Romania is logical only when correlated with similar actions of the Alliance partners as well as with modern technology.*

Only an adequate mix of *soft* and *hard* power can make a truly powerful, *smart* state. The National Defence Strategy is a good starting point for Romania’s development towards the status of a powerful state. Some institutions thinking in cooperation have managed to achieve through this strategic document an almost photographic image of the domestic and external context. However, I appreciate that unless an appropriate manner to convert all types of resources Romania has – from the natural ones, to territorial, to population, technology, to NATO and EU membership itself –into strategic objectives, we will not be able to construct a *smart*, powerful state. For example, developing military capabilities for a NATO member state as Romania is logical only when correlated with similar actions of the Alliance partners as well as with modern technology. Acquiring frigates to ensure Black Sea security would be rather obsolete in our decade, given the defensive and surveillance possibilities ensured by state-of-the-art technologies.



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The context in which states evolve is not always easy to read properly, in order to make anticipative decisions and to use only the minimum necessary resources. From a security perspective, the context is an extremely complex environment that incorporates many variables, from international relations, in which different entities relate based on different principles and not everyone follows the same rules, to domestic policy, which has determined more internal, violent conflicts in the last decade than traditional wars, and to state-of-the-art technology risks and benefits.

I consider that the endeavour to build a *smart* Romanian state is not utopian. To prove it, I believe Romania post 9/11 has proved to be a *smart* state, consistently following its strategic objectives, NATO and EU accession. Under those circumstances, Romania managed to considerably strengthen its defence capacity against one of the most serious threats of the decade, the terrorist threat. Through concerted actions by political decision-makers, the legislative, developing institutions, Romania defined a solid legal framework to prevent and counter terrorism. A cascade of laws and Supreme Council for National Defence decisions were enacted in a concerted fashion: from the national strategy to prevent and counter terrorism (2002), to the law regarding foreigners in Romania (2001), a law regarding the prevention and countering the financial and banking system's use to finance terrorism (2002), the law on preventing and countering terrorism (2004), to the development of the national system for preventing and countering terrorism (2002) and of the national system for terrorist alert (2004). Some of those may only seem simple regulations and bureaucratic institutions or structures to some, but the result of their establishment and development and of their proper functioning was that the Romanian state achieved a much-coveted objective of securing its homeland and citizens from the terrorist threat, while also projecting regional security and helping secure other states, by sharing intelligence and capabilities.

The current National Defence Strategy may also prove a winning bet to strengthen our state power as well as regional security and balance, but only with actual measures of converting resources into power, at least similar to those made after 9/11: from updating legislation

to coordination and cooperation among state institutions, with civil society and private businesses, to well-funded and timely procurement programmes that conclude before the necessary technologies become obsolete, and so on.

## TWO POWER RESOURCES

An overview of all power resources, in all their complexity and with all their variables, would be a difficult enterprise. However, I would like to briefly dwell on two of those resources, which I consider to be of a significant influence over the world we live in, concerning both international relations and internal affairs.

### *Globalisation*

Globalisation is the topic of many studies, discussions and research activities, far too numerous and with far too dissenting conclusions to overview at this point. But from a power and power relations perspective, globalisation is both a resource, and a *game changer*, an element which constantly alters order in international relations and not only. And I use the term “alter” purposefully, because the changes globalisation brings about are not always positive ones.

From an international power perspective, globalisation offers unprecedented possibilities to use *soft* power instruments. Products such as blue-jeans and Coca-Cola have done more, in some analysts’ opinion, for the end of the Cold War than decades of diplomacy and mutual military threats from the belligerents, even though, at that time, globalisation was only at the beginning.

Globalisation “*inevitably leads to the transfer of power towards many different actors moving very dynamically in the international system, albeit state or non-state actors, meaning non-governmental organisations, private actors that are already particularly powerful*” (Maior, 2014, p. 79). This continuous shift of power involves interdependencies at all levels, from the military to the security one, to diplomacy, society, and even religion.

The “*global village*” relational system is, as reminded, a network in which power constantly shifts between actors. The network nodes are significant variables in this system, because they tend to have



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the most potential to accumulate power. “*The interconnected world of the XXI<sup>st</sup> Century*”, Anne-Marie Slaughter said (apud Maior, 2014, p. 80), “*exists above the state, under the state, and through the state*”, which makes it practically impossible to still have the unipolar state of international affairs that was specific to the previous age. This situation also creates numerous opportunities for those able to become nodes in this network.

Globalisation provided Romania with a new set of resources it did not have before: economic resources, cooperation, technology, military resources, environment preservation ones, education and so on. A good example of a resource stemmed from globalisation and from the new network organisation of international relations, based on joint objectives and interests, is the very opportunity we, as a state, had, to become members in select partnerships, which can support us in becoming power-nodes in international relations, for example as a NATO member state, in the particular instance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In the theory of network power-relations, any state able to mediate a conflict or that has open communication channels to the belligerent parties – as Romania is, through its historical tradition – has significant negotiation leverage, as well as influence and power. And membership in more such partnership networks, either military, economic, global or local ones, is a good manner of accumulating a form of power specific to the globalised world, because it gives states the possibility to promote their agendas in more various environments. Romania’s NATO and EU accession is, in this regard, both a good premise and an excellent resource for our country to acquire the status of a powerful state.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

A field as dynamic as globalisation and one directly related to globalisation is that of technology, which currently undergoes rapid and radical development. It is so obvious that it becomes difficult to argue why IT&C is an invaluable resource for a state’s power. Emerging technologies such as 5G or 6G, artificial intelligence, the internet of things or big data analysis are essential both domestically, at society level, and from a security and military defence perspective. States,

societies, individuals, national and trans-national organisations of all types, they all depend on IT&C for a wide array of activities, from those securing the most basic needs, to the most sophisticated ones. We all depend on IT&C resources for our financial or banking needs, for transportation, including for the transportation of energy and other resources.

Technology brings about unprecedented vulnerabilities that were unknown in other historical contexts. It exposes us to cyber-attacks, cyber spying, denial-of-service (DoS)<sup>6</sup> attacks and so on. An expert report on the future NATO 2020 Strategic Concept places cyber-attacks as the third most significant risk to allied states, after ballistic and terrorist attacks.

IT&C technologies also support critical infrastructures, and they are increasingly vulnerable as the field develops, because they are more interdependent and cover wider areas. A legend circulating in the national intelligence community says a famous intelligence agency from a neighbouring state continues to produce all documents concerning its operations exclusively on paper, in order to protect them from technological vulnerabilities.

But the solution to alleviate those vulnerabilities does not seem to be in avoiding technology as, without it, opponents will always have the competitive advantage. This resource provides significant, unmissable opportunities, and the state-of-the-art technology's competitive advantage, even if temporary – for an undeniable characteristic of the field is the rate of replacement and update – is unquestionable, particularly in the military sphere, for which it provides both defensive (critical infrastructures protection) and offensive (physical destruction or cyber warfare) capabilities.

Technology is an essential resource for a country's *soft* power and a fundamental component of its *hard* power, because obviously there cannot be any performing armed forces unless they have sophisticated weaponry. Therefore, technology becomes an essential premise for a *smart* power and needs to be constantly allotted resources



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<sup>6</sup> A cyber-attack in which the perpetrators seek to make a network resource or an online service unavailable to its intended users, thus temporarily disrupting services of a host connected to the Internet.



*The National Defence Strategy mentions risks and opportunities, which need to be considered from this point of view, as it should be, and in accordance to similar programmatic documents from other countries. Protecting critical IT&C infrastructures, building their resilience, the perspectives occurring from the use of new technologies such as cryptocurrency, blockchain, AI for objectives undermining security, such as those pertaining to organised crime, cyber-attacks from enemy state or non-state entities, are concerns included in the current strategy.*

for protection and further development. From a *hard* power perspective, state-of-the-art technology involves an optimal mix between IT&C specialists, who often come from the private business areas, hence the debate about the “*privatisation of war*”, and security specialists, generally coming from state coercing institutions. This resource also involves convergence between military and civilian technologies, while developing in a less than ideal space, with very few rules and systematisation, which is often a major hindrance for those working with technology.

In several contexts, the *National Defence Strategy* mentions risks and opportunities, which need to be considered from this point of view, as it should be, and in accordance to similar programmatic documents from other countries. Protecting critical IT&C infrastructures, building their resilience, the perspectives occurring from the use of new technologies such as cryptocurrency, blockchain, AI for objectives undermining security, such as those pertaining to organised crime, cyber-attacks from enemy state or non-state entities, are concerns included in the current strategy. A particular point from the IT&C development perspective and of interest for the military component of power Romania aims at is that concerning 5G technology. The fifth generation of wireless networks allows for data transfer at speeds three times higher than those of the previous generation.

Implementing 5G involves, in Romania as elsewhere, debates on espionage suspicions towards one of the largest suppliers of 5G equipment, a renowned Chinese company, but not enough is said and analysed about how it could greatly benefit military defence. The sheer speed of the technology allows for real-time data processing and transfer, which have undeniable advantages for the military and could result in a series of significant military applications. Among them, sensor border surveillance, artificial intelligence for data analysis, unmanned military vehicles storing data in cloud, automatization of logistical processes such as loading and unloading trucks, trains and/or military planes etc.

*Figure no. 3* (Nye, *Ibid.*) suggests a summary of 5G advantages from a military perspective, emphasising its use for command and control, personnel training and protection of critical IT&C infrastructures.

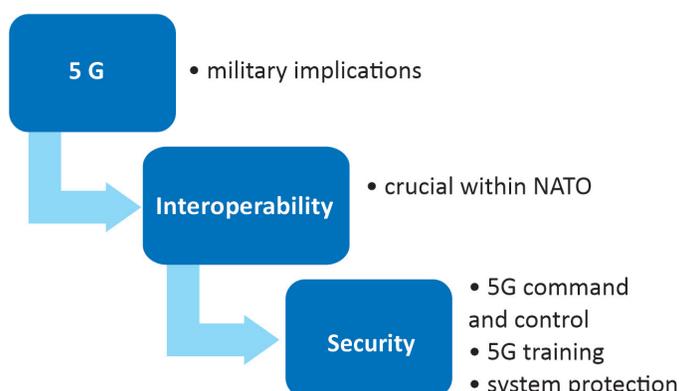


Figure no. 3: 5G technology advantages from the military perspective (Ibid.)



*Returning to Joseph Nye's conclusions, power is not an absolute term, but one depending on context, "and in the context of transnational relations (such as climate change, illegal drugs, pandemics, and terrorism) power is diffuse and chaotically distributed". The type of problems which are specific to the current age need cooperative solutions and Romania already has a number of instruments through which it is placed directly within the systems responsible to solve those problems, by its NATO and EU membership.*

Making use of IT&C capabilities and developing them have the potential of building our status as a powerful state and of creating new *cyber capabilities*. But this can only be feasible on certain conditions, of concerted and coherent action, with the consistent *input* of the private business area, which tends to absorb more responsibilities and has more resources to develop technology. And a first step in this direction, for Romania, would also involve better coordination between the National Defence Strategy and the National Cyber Security Strategy, which was approved in 2013.

Developments regarding the Integrated Information System, the National CYBERINT Centre's capabilities, internet speed and its wide coverage, software development are just a few more arguments that Romania has the premises and resources to aspire to the status of powerful state.

### INSTEAD OF CONCLUSIONS

Returning to Joseph Nye's conclusions, *power* is not an absolute term, but one depending on context, "and in the context of transnational relations (such as climate change, illegal drugs, pandemics, and terrorism) power is diffuse and chaotically distributed" (Nye, Ibid., p. 231). The type of problems which are specific to the current age need cooperative solutions and Romania already has a number of instruments through which it is placed directly within the systems responsible to solve those problems, by its NATO and EU membership.



In this new *National Defence Strategy*, we have an anticipatory and complete image of the Romanian state's security responsibilities, but we still need to make coherent and determined efforts at all institutional levels (in defence, public order and national security), as well as social and political ones. We need to give effect to a set of complex practical measures to respond to those security concerns, in order to consolidate our status as a *smart* power, but we are all aware this is not a simple endeavour, nor a walked road.

The fact that Romania has not had any strategic surprise until now and our country's capacity to act pre-emptively in front of disruptive events entitle us to hope we are on the right path towards achieving this status. Should we, on the contrary, not be willing to go the extra mile in implementing actual practical measures, warning must be issued that, in this particular context, in which threats and risks are highly dynamic and closely interconnected, increasing uncertainty and implicitly decreasing prognosis capabilities, we risk generating new social vulnerabilities, particularly by affecting fundamental infrastructures and institutions, with effects that are difficult to assess and quantify.

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