

CHRONIC DEMOGRAPHIC CRISIS IN ROMANIA AND IT'S NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON THE COUNTRY'S DEFENSE CAPACITY

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Abstract: *This issue has been debated in recent years. Numerous Romanian and foreign specialists have analyzed and published articles and studies in which they demonstrated that wars, unfortunately, are not fought only with sophisticated weapons systems and not only with artificial intelligence (AI), but also with numerous soldiers who operate on the battlefield and give their lives by the tens of thousands, as demonstrated by the war in Ukraine, launched in February 2022 by the "peace-loving" Russian Federation.*

*I decided to return to this topic after becoming aware of the article published by the former Chief of the General Staff (SMAp), General Ștefan Dănilă, on the **adevarul.ro** website on **august 21, 2026**¹.*

*After four and a half years of fierce war in Ukraine, launched on February 2, 2022, by President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, by this date (august 24, 2026) the warring parties have lost, according to Ukraine and independent sources, such as the **International Institute for Strategic Studies**²: Russia – approximately 1.5 million fighters, killed and wounded, and Ukraine 650,000-700,000 people, in the effort of this aggressed state to cope with the Russian war machine.*

This means for the potential conflicts that threaten the entire world and especially Europe, that the demomilitary factor is of vital importance in ensuring the defense and security of any state, including Romania.

Unfortunately, in the absence of any public policies in the field of controlling demographic decline, the Romanian state is doing nothing; on the contrary, the latest so-called austerity measures are hitting families with young children and families who want children hard.

Keywords: *demomilitary factor, country's defense, Russia, Ukraine, Romania.*

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¹ Dănilă Ștefan, „Străinii nu pot lupta în locul nostru. Cum afectează criza demografică apărarea României”, available at <https://adevarul.ro/securitate-si-aparare/strainii-pot-suplini-forta-de-munca-dar-nu-si-2551185.html>, accessed on august 31, 2026.

² Borcea Ștefan, „Rusia a pierdut aproximativ 1.475.270 de soldați în Ucraina de la începutul invaziei sale pe scară largă din 24 februarie 2022, a raportat Statul Major General al Forțelor Armate ale Ucrainei”, available at <https://adevarul.ro/stiri-externe/europa/cifre-oficiale-rusia-a-pierdut-aproape-15-2551484.html>, accessed on august 31, 2026.

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1. Introduction

In these complicated conditions marked by uncertainties and turbulences at a global level (the war in Ukraine, the major conflict between **Iran and the US-Israel**, the militaristic agitation of China and Russia in the Pacific and the threats of the communist regime in Beijing against Taiwan, to which are added the trade wars and other threats of the Trump Administration against sovereign states (Canada, Denmark, Venezuela, Panama, Mexico, the European Union, etc.), they put unprecedented pressure on the **World Order**, established after the Second World War.

The gravity of the situation is also demonstrated by the fact that the UN has turned into a "**TOWER OF BABEL**", as some analysts have pointed out, without any power in resolving complicated international files. In fact, three of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council do whatever they want on the world stage, without respecting the **UN Charter** and the international regulations assumed through multilateral treaties and agreements.

Only if we consider Russia's actions from 2008 to today (august 26, 2026), do we understand that the atavistic aggressiveness of the Russian Empire has no cure^{3,4}.

I must emphasize that hundreds of analyses, articles and books that analyze, with arguments, Russia's permanent aggression against everyone. I note, again, the book "Russia's War with the World and How It Affects Us"⁵.

2. Importance of the demomilitary factor in war

The materials available from various sources demonstrate the political-military thinking and actions of the aggressive team in Moscow, the serious miscalculations of the Kremlin leader, as well as the cynicism and cruelty of him and his troops. More recently, Western intelligence services have obtained information from various sources that Putin is planning an attack on some NATO countries and military provocations coming from Belarus and the Kaliningrad Enclave.

More recently, there is credible information about a new massive mobilization, with the aim of expanding and prolonging the war⁶.

³ Mincu Constantin, „Haos Geopolitic Global”, *Revista de Științe Militare*, no. 4/2019.

⁴ Mincu Constantin, „Agresivitatea politico-militară globală a Federației Ruse”, *Revista de Științe Militare*, no. 2/2019.

⁵ Keir Giles, *Războiul Rusiei cu lumea și cum ne afectează*, Niculescu Publishing House, 2023.

⁶ Ghiurca Narcis, „Fostul emisar special al SUA pentru Ucraina îl compară pe Putin cu Hitler: „Îngrijorarea mea: vom ajunge la un al Treilea Război Mondial”, available at <https://>

Although the Russians are facing heavy losses of life and equipment, they have not shown any sign so far (august 26, 2026) that they want peace, with recent statements by some Russian leaders confirming that they want all of Ukraine and more.⁷

Even worse is that in the recent analysis of BLOOMBERG it is estimated that "Russia is considering an escalation of the war in Ukraine. The possibility of resorting to tactical nuclear weapons is being discussed as an extreme solution"⁸.

From the data available so far (august 26, 2026), it clearly and with arguments results the importance of human resources for a long-term war, although some analysts, including Romanians, support the wrong theory of small armies, but equipped with modern combat means, some assisted by AI.

I tend to believe that there should be a carefully calculated balance taking into account the risks and threats in the European space and Romania's direct proximity to the war zone.

From the analysis, up to date, of the losses of Russia and Ukraine in four and a half years of war, it clearly results that Russia has lost 20 times more soldiers than the peacetime strength of the Romanian Army (75,000 soldiers), and Ukraine 10 times more.

Doesn't this reality give political and military decision-makers in Romania pause for thought?! Apparently NOT!

Analyzing the demomilitary factor in more depth in war (many sources of information are available regarding the direct link, difficult to dispute, between the size and structure of a country's population and the ability to size its armed forces in peace, in crisis situations and in war).

After the ending of the Cold War, With the collapse of the USSR (December 1991), many military specialists and political decision-makers from the relevant global powers argued for the need to de-massify their armies, mainly based on the development of modern technologies and weapons (including drones and AI applications), which can compensate for the sometimes dramatic decrease in peacetime forces (including in Romania, from 340,000 soldiers in 1989 to 75,000 soldiers in 2001), but also of those in the mobilization reserves (in Romania, the mobilization reserve almost melted away, being under 50,000 elderly and physically unfit reservists for a war effort).

[//adevarul.ro/stiri-externe/rusia/fostul-emisar-special-al-sua-pentru-ucraina-il-2552038.html](https://adevarul.ro/stiri-externe/rusia/fostul-emisar-special-al-sua-pentru-ucraina-il-2552038.html), accessed on august 31, 2026.

⁷ Idem.

⁸ Stancu Cristina, „Bloomberg: Rusia ia in calcul o escaladare a războiului din Ucraina. Se discută despre posibilitatea recurgerii la arme nucleare tactice, ca soluție extremă”, available at <https://adevarul.ro/stiri-externe/rusia/bloomberg-rusia-ia-in-calcul-o-escaladare-a-2552332.html>, accessed on september 1, .2026.

Several sources estimate that NATO countries now have between 0.3 and 0.8% of the population in their armies at peace. In the case of non-NATO states, the percentage at peace is higher, between 1.1 and 1.5%.

The war in Ukraine blatantly contradicts the estimates made until 2022, with Russia now having approximately 3 million soldiers, and Ukraine approximately 1.5 million.

In this context, let's return to the situation in Romania. Our state has a serious and persistent demographic crisis, ignored by the authorities.

The demographic decline in our country is -2% per year, so now, according to the 2022 census data⁹ a population of 19,053,815 inhabitants was recorded, serenely losing 1.1 million compared to the 2011 census. Specialists in the field state that in 2040 Romania will have, in the optimistic version, only 16 million inhabitants, and in the pessimistic version (much more possible) only 14 million, compared to 22.8 million in 1989. Of the mentioned figure of 19.05 million, more than 6 million have left abroad (as also estimated by General Ștefan Dănilă, in the material cited in the footnote at no. 1).

Romanian officials say, unbelievably, that there are only 4 million Romanians abroad.

This serious situation generates major problems for the defense forces and national security and affects the country's ability to mobilize the necessary forces for defense.

Studying the population structure by age, we find a sharp aging and a significant decrease in the number of young people between the ages of 18 and 35, a segment from which the military personnel needed by the Army and other structures in the National Defense System can be recruited, in peacetime, in crisis situations and in war.

Another serious problem is that of school and professional training, the cited census demonstrating an increase in the number of school dropouts and those with only secondary school education. Given the current and future complexity of weapons systems and the need for digital skills, it is difficult for them to be operated successfully in combat by the human resources available in the short and medium term.

I think we should reflect more on the population involution from 1989 to today:

- Romania's population:
 - 1989 = 22.800.000;
 - 2015 = 21.462.000;

⁹ Popa Dan, „Primele rezultate ale Recensământului 2022: Populația României a scăzut la 19.053.815 locuitori”, available at <https://hotnews.ro/primele-rezultate-ale-recensamntului-2022-populatia-romniei-a-scazut-la-19-053-815-locuitori-89103>, accessed on september 1, 2026.

- 2026 = 19.000.000.
- Fit for military service citizens:
 - 1989 = 6.840.000;
 - 2015 = 6.438.000;
 - 2026 = 5.000.000.
- Peace time active military personnel:
 - 1989 = 340.000;
 - 2015 = 73.000;
 - 2026 = 67.000 (on paper 75.000).
- Population percentage:
 - 1989 = 1,48%;
 - 2015 = 0,34%;
 - 2026 = 0,28%.

It should be noted that the Romanian State authorities do not communicate transparently the situation of human resources for defense. We note that there are notable differences compared to the data provided semi-annually by the Analysis Group "GLOBAL FIRE POWER - 2026"¹⁰.

Carefully analyzing the figures mentioned above, it results that compared to 1989 we have a drastic reduction, 4.6 times of the peacetime military and 10 times of the reservists mobilized in units that increase their numbers for war and in new ones that come into being, according to mobilization plans (if these still exist!?).

I appreciate that political and military decision-makers should, however, understand that we are a border state of NATO and the EU, located, due to historical misfortune, in an area with many risks and military and hybrid threats, and so far, NATO devices are moving "timidly" towards the East, especially in the South-Eastern Flank and in the Black Sea Basin.

We cannot neglect the war on the Romanian border triggered by Russia against Ukraine, a war that has already lasted for 4.5 years, with direct effects on the territory of our country through daily attacks with aerial and naval drones.

In this context, let us recall V.V. Putin's speech (over two hours long) on february 2, 2024, a speech in which he threatened the West and Humanity with extinction, through the use of the huge nuclear arsenal.¹¹.

¹⁰ „2026 Romania Military Strength”, available at https://www.globalfirepower.com/-country-military-strength-detail.php?country_id=romania, accessed on september 1, 2026.

¹¹ „Vladimir Putin, discurs în fața națiunii: De ce NATO nu înțelege că există pericolul unui conflict nuclear? / Armata noastră a câștigat o experiență de luptă colosală / Rușii trebuie să facă mai mult sport: Lăsați băutura, apucați-vă de ski!”, available at <https://hotnews.ro/video-vladimir-putin-discurs-n-fata-natiunii-de-ce-nato-nu-ntelege-ca-exista->

I believe that the text of this speech, of unprecedented aggression, from 1945 to 2024, should be studied and thoroughly analyzed by political decision-makers (completely disconnected from reality) and Romanian military leaders (excessively obedient to political bosses), those who have been keeping the laws regarding national defense and security in drawers for years and, instead of apologizing, keep attacking the military (!?). I believe that those interested in the Defense of the Country (fewer and fewer or more voiceless), from the political and military areas, know that in 1999-2000 it was estimated that the Romanian Army should have, in peace, 120,000 soldiers (fighters, not political clients planted in abundance in the central structures of the M.Ap.N, who, in case of war, mostly confuse or simply run away). It would have been an effort, but the defense and security of the Romanian State and its statehood costs (just like in other states).

The historical aggressiveness of some of Romania's neighbors (which will never disappear) requires a responsible analysis of the country's ability to defend itself. But who should do it!?

As if by magic, without any public debate and without any analysis of the risks and threats in our area, the decision-makers (!?) assessed that 75,000 military personnel and 15,000 civilian employees (a bit too many) were sufficient, resulting in a total of 90,000 people. Instead of these figures on paper, we now have only 67,000 military personnel, of which only about 30% are capable of combat actions specific to modern warfare. This Army today cannot resist an atavistic aggressor, such as Russia.

As I presented above, to these systemic shortcomings, we add the fact that approximately six million Romanians (out of the 19,053,800) are abroad, either long-term or permanently. At least 30% of them are fit for military service in peace, crisis and war. But there is nowhere to get them and as some publicly declare, they do not want to die to defend the fortunes of the numerous corrupt people in Romania (!??).

3. I believe that in the current context in Romania, it would be necessary to present, from my point of view, some conclusions on the current political-military crisis in the region, which imply concrete and urgent actions on the part of politicians and military personnel now in regulatory and leadership positions:

Current Romanian society, as a whole, is shaken and disoriented by chaotic policies without any vision (taken without expertise, on the knee) in all areas of political, economic and social life;

- **Honest citizens** (the majority in the country) do not understand why the political-economic mafia continues to

steal unhindered, with new cases appearing in the media every day;

- **Romania, unfortunately**, due to harmful public policies and widespread robbery, lives on debt, at the expense of future generations, who will no longer want to stay in the country. The latest figures indicate a public debt of over 60% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)¹², without seeing anything significant in public investments and in the well-being of Romanians, who work honestly;
- **Deindustrialization**, carried out according to evil plans, including in terms of defense production units (weapons and ammunition, various equipment), such as those in the field of military communications and logistics, continued at an alarming pace. Now we buy ammunition from Brazil, Serbia and other countries. It is, in my opinion, a great mockery and an act of betrayal of Romania's national interests;
- **Citizen security** is increasingly threatened by all kinds of clans of criminals, in cahoots with those who should, by law and by their powers, eradicate them. These clans are involved in drug trafficking and in the destruction of the health and lives of young people (the phenomenon is completely out of control, according to the plan of the "authorities");
- **Education** continues to be the scene of unfortunate experiments, with a pronounced anti-national character (also according to evil plans). The poor and inadequate training to the realities of today's world also seriously affects the military component, lacking qualified human resources, able to face security challenges;
- **The health system** it is only in focus on paper, in "plans" and strategies, never implemented, although significant financial resources have been allocated in recent years.
- **The defence system**, as demonstrated, with solid arguments, by numerous experienced military analysts, in numerous studies, books and published articles, it is a "flower" that is worn only on December 1. Otherwise, everyone with their own business and interests, especially those at the top of "politics" and "government", as long as it lasts;

¹² „Datoria publică a depășit 60% din PIB”, available at <https://www.digi24.ro/stiri/-economie/finante-economie/datoria-publica-a-depasit-60-din-pib-guvernul-nu-mai-poate-majora-cheltuielile-totale-cu-salariile-si-asistenta-sociala-3912885>, accessed on september 2, 2026.

- **And because the chronic demographic crisis** from Romania is the subject of this article, I must note that the current Government is cutting the small allowances for pregnant women, babies and children from poor areas, without the possibility of having a normal life and without minimal access to education;
- **Total lack** of policies in the field of stopping the demographic decline, the most pronounced in Europe, is a deliberate act of villainy and national treason. Who will pay for this and when!?

There is much more to say, but I will stop here.

In conclusion of this short article, I would like the country's situation to change for the better, but, as the current "political class" shows, the chances are extremely small.

I am convinced that my text will annoy many, but this is the truth, to which hundreds of other activities and actions against Romania and its ability to defend itself can be inventoried (in the unlikely event that those currently "on the buttons" will read it).



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