

УДК 342.1

DOI <https://doi.org/10.24144/2307-3322.2023.78.2.61>

ANALYSIS OF KEY THREATS TO EUROPEAN SECURITY AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Ursu V.,

*PhD in law, associate professor
The Dean of the Faculty of Law, Administration,
Order and Public Security
at the Academy „Stefan Cel Mare” of the MAI,
Chisinau
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0696-4391>
e-mail: veaceslavursu1971@gmail.com*

Ursu V. Analysis of key threats to European security and the Republic of Moldova.

In humanitarian law, the terms public order or public security describe the general conditions that must exist for citizens to enjoy their rights and freedoms.

States thus become responsible for the defense of public safety. The Republic of Moldova, like other countries around the world, remains influenced by events outside its borders, especially those that can trigger conflicts. Directly or indirectly, due to a strategic geopolitical positioning, the Republic of Moldova is forced to create mechanisms that are functional and appropriate to the real contexts in order to be able to deal with possible difficulties, which, moreover, continue to leave their mark on the citizens.

In the present study we will refer to the threats, risks and vulnerabilities as they are understood in the controversy of researchers and specialists in security and public order, both on the internal and external (regional and international) dimensions.

Thus, the definitions of the stated concepts do not belong to us, but we completely rely on the definitions of the notions invoked in the previous studies, with strict references.

So, by Threat to security is an action or sequence of events that seriously threatens to degrade the quality of life of the citizens of a state, in a relatively short period of time, or constitutes a threat that cannot be ignored to the freedom of choice of the policy of a government or a private or non-governmental entity within a state [1, page 153].

Risks refer to possible but uncertain events that can cause harm. The impact of the risk depends on the evolving threats, plus the level of vulnerability to those threats, as well as the capacity available to deal with those threats. Plus, the risks affecting national security will be evaluated according to the fields of activity and their level of gravity and probability will be taken into account.

Vulnerabilities are analyzed from a classical point of view. Vulnerability depends on the nature of the state's situation: either the state of war/conflict, the «apparent» state of peace, or it depends on the objectives/interests pursued by an actor/disturber in the region. In general, vulnerabilities are processes or phenomena in the internal life of a state (weaknesses), which reduce the ability to react to existing or potential risks or which favor their emergence and development. Specific to the Republic of Moldova, vulnerabilities can be evaluated from an internal and external perspective (depending on where they are generated). For example, the unilateral dependence of the Republic of Moldova on foreign systems in the energy field is a major vulnerability that, in the current security environment, turns into a threat to national security. It can also be a question of vulnerabilities characteristic of weak countries, as well as the emigration of highly qualified specialists and the weakening of the country's development potential.

Also, the Republic of Moldova can be affected not only by classic threats, such as international terrorism or cross-border organized crime. In this sense, the situation in Transnistria and the involvement of the Russian Federation as a hegemonic force should also be outlined.

Key words: risks, threats, vulnerabilities, security and public order, European Union, regional instability, liquidation of statehood.

Урсу В. Аналіз ключових загроз європейській безпеці та Республіці Молдова.

У гуманітарному праві терміни громадський порядок або громадська безпека описують загальні умови, які повинні існувати для того, щоб громадяни могли користуватися своїми правами та свободами.

Таким чином, держави стають відповідальними за захист громадської безпеки. Республіка Молдова, як і інші країни світу, залишається під впливом подій за межами її кордонів, особливо тих, які можуть спровокувати конфлікти. Прямо чи опосередковано, через стратегічне геополітичне розташування, Республіка Молдова змушена створювати механізми, які є функціональними та відповідають реальним контекстам, щоб мати змогу справлятися з можливими труднощами, які, крім того, продовжують залишати свій відбиток на громадянах.

У цьому дослідженні ми будемо посилалися на загрози, ризики та вразливі місця, як вони розуміються в полеміці дослідників і спеціалістів у сфері безпеки та громадського порядку, як у внутрішньому, так і зовнішньому (регіональному та міжнародному) вимірах.

Таким чином, визначення викладених понять не належать нам, а ми повністю покладаємося на визначення понять, використані в попередніх дослідженнях, із суворими посиланнями.

Отже, під загрозою безпеці розуміється дія або послідовність подій, які серйозно загрожують погіршити якість життя громадян держави протягом відносно короткого періоду часу або становлять загрозу, яку не можна ігнорувати свободі вибору політики уряду або приватної чи неурядової організації в державі [1, с. 153].

Ризики стосуються можливих, але невизначених подій, які можуть завдати шкоди. Вплив ризику залежить від загроз, що розвиваються, а також від рівня вразливості до цих загроз, а також від можливостей, доступних для боротьби з цими загрозами. Крім того, ризики, що впливають на національну безпеку, будуть оцінюватися за сферами діяльності та враховуватимуться їх ступінь серйозності та ймовірності.

Уразливості аналізуються з класичної точки зору. Вразливість залежить від характеру ситуації в державі: або стан війни/конфлікту, «очевидний» стан миру, або це залежить від цілей/інтересів, які переслідує актор/порушник у регіоні. Загалом уразливі місця – це процеси чи явища у внутрішньому житті держави (слабкі сторони), які зменшують здатність реагувати на існуючі чи потенційні ризики або сприяють їх появі та розвитку. Що стосується Республіки Молдова, вразливі місця можна оцінити з внутрішньої та зовнішньої точки зору (залежно від того, де вони згенеровані). Наприклад, одностороння залежність Республіки Молдова від іноземних систем в енергетичній сфері є основною вразливістю, яка в поточному середовищі безпеки перетворюється на загрозу національній безпеці. Мова також може йти про вразливість, характерну для слабких країн, а також про еміграцію висококваліфікованих спеціалістів і послаблення потенціалу розвитку країни.

Крім того, Республіка Молдова може постраждати не лише від класичних загроз, таких як міжнародний тероризм чи транскордонна організована злочинність. У цьому сенсі слід також окреслити ситуацію в Придністров'ї та залучення Російської Федерації як гегемонної сили.

Ключові слова: ризики, загрози, уразливості, безпека та громадський порядок, Європейський Союз, регіональна нестабільність, ліквідація державності.

Introduction. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Republic of Moldova became an independent and sovereign state, and the citizens of the new state advocated for a democratic regime and rule of law. The government, during the years of independence, had to concern itself, including, with the creation of a safety and security environment for the country and its citizens. Of course, ensuring national stability and security should fall to the state bodies in the field of defense and security, central and local public administration, but to all entities that, directly or indirectly, contribute to ensuring and maintaining this climate of safety and security. It's just that today national security is interdependent and closely related to regional and global security. The Republic of Moldova, today, is the state of the periphery,

As a consequence of the eastward expansion of the European Union and NATO, the western border of the Republic of Moldova became the eastern border of the Euro-Atlantic community.

Taking into account these realities, we could state that not only the security of the member states is indivisible, but also that there is a close connection between the security of the states on the periphery of the EU and the security itself, that is, the security of these two entities cannot be separated in today's interdependent Europe.

The concept of interdependence, already mentioned, manifests itself in two directions: from the East to

the West and vice versa, according to the formula «either the West will stabilize the East or the East will destabilize the West»[2, p. 122].

Theoretical-methodological support. During the elaboration of the article, the theoretical-methodological support served the analysis of the conceptual and legal basis of national security in the Republic of Moldova. Also, a series of thematic publications on the security issues of the Republic of Moldova and the European Union were used.

Basic content. The European Community (EC), since its establishment, has set a priority goal, namely, not admitting the outbreak of conflagrations in post-war Europe. Since the creation of the Customs Union in 1957, through the Treaty of Rome, later, through the Maastricht Treaty (Treaty of the European Union, 01.11.1993), the community has been concerned with ensuring common security, the military component being part of the policy and integration process of European states.

Title V of the TEU provides that «the foreign and security policy (CFSP) will include all matters related to the security of the Union, including the development of a possible common defense policy, which, in time, could lead to a common defense»[3].

Here, we will make a necessary clarification: CFSP is the second pillar of the European Union. ESDP (European Security and Defense Policy) is a component part of the CFSP and is intended to contribute to strengthening and arguing for the credibility of the CFSP. The new element introduced by the ESDP in the CFSP is the development of an EU capacity to take decisions and act autonomously in the field of security and defense.

Subsequently, over the years, the history of the CFSP has progressed, with several meetings and reunions being organized, the establishment of units such as, for example, EUROFOR and EUROMAFOR (military units, designed for various crisis interventions, peacekeeping and peace enforcement missions, etc.).

Then comes the moment of adopting the decision to create a RAPID REACTION FORCE (FRR) towards the 2000s (the terrorist attacks of 09/11/2001, military operations in Afghanistan). Thus, the FRR becomes the main instrument of PESA.

Among the factors favorable to the formulation of PESA can be mentioned:

- The increased responsibility of the EU for South East Europe, against the background of the US military involvement in Central Asia and the Caucasus;
- NATO's inability to combat/prevent new security threats – terrorism, cross-border crime, arms trafficking, etc.
- The need to formulate new approaches in the external security policy (CFSP) of the EU vis-à-vis the «New Eastern Europe» (Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus), including, with the aim of strengthening control at the future eastern borders of the EU.

A no less important role in ensuring and managing the security sector in Europe belongs to NATO.

So, today the idea of security of NATO members is no longer strictly linked to the notions of territorial integrity and sovereignty of the member states, this extending beyond the borders of the member states, considering the emergence of non-traditional security risks, namely, the proliferation of weapons of destruction in mass (WMD), arms and drug trafficking, regional conflicts with ethnic, religious or social «background», refugee flows, human rights violations, ecological problems, etc.

In this way, NATO becomes interested not only in its own security but also in the security of non-member states, considering the aforementioned risks that can generate security problems, including, for member states.

Under the conditions of the realities in which we live, the security of these two entities (member states and non-member states) cannot be separated, both in Europe and throughout the world, considering the trends of globalization, etc.

If we talk about a ranking of European states from the perspective of NATO, then we have member states, EU member states but which are not members of the Alliance are followed by the states, identified as important countries for NATO and able in the future to fully integrate into the Alliance (today, two of them - Sweden and Finland, have already become member states).

The Republic of Moldova would be the country in the fourth group, in terms of importance for NATO, being next to Switzerland, Ukraine, and Croatia (Belarus and Russia were, previously, among these states).

Today, NATO is politically present in Moldova, dealing, in some cases, with some aspects of the country's security (consultancy, training, peacekeeping missions, joint military exercises, etc.).

This fact is due to the position that R has Moldova in the mentioned group of countries.

The Republic of Moldova is not important for European and NATO security, on the other hand, its geographical positioning, small size, the existence of the Transnistrian dispute, the instability of the political

vector, etc., generate the need for this presence of NATO and the attention given by the EU to the Republic of Moldova.

The probability that Moldova to remain a focus of regional instability is high. Even if we admit that the Transnistrian dispute will be resolved, military, political, economic and social integration will take time and could generate tensions with repercussions for our country, in particular, and the region, in general.

Obviously, ensuring national stability and security should fall, first of all, to internal factors; and the competition of external forces should be only an additional element.

However, Moldova's ability to successfully overcome the crises that affect the security of the status is quite questionable, which argues for the possibility of a direct involvement of external factors in solving Moldova's security problems, in order not to allow the proliferation of instability.

Returning to the analysis of the most current threats to European security and which target, including, the security of the Republic of Moldova, we will mention that, according to analyst Barry Buzan, «Human life varies depending on the framework in which it takes place and, for this reason, based on the same criterion, we can also talk about different fields in which the types of threats must be studied: political, economic, social, military, environmental, etc.[4, p. 147].

So, the Republic of Moldova was, and still is, the target of dangers and threats aimed at the liquidation of statehood. The state is dismembered, given the existence of the separatist regime from Tiraspol, but also in the Gagauz Autonomy, anti-state rhetoric is promoted, a fact that is due to a policy of double standards on the part of external and internal actors. The population is disoriented, the propaganda operated by some mass information sources (mainly foreign ones) is «doing its job».

On the other hand, a series of economic risks affect the security of society and the person in the field of energy, food, ecological, demographic, informational, etc.

Insecurity and instability remained among the most important obstacles to the stabilization of the Republic of Moldova's democracy, which led to the persistence of particularly harmful social effects for the population, the state and civil society as a whole. The geographical location is very important for the national security of the Republic of Moldova. The country is at the intersection of three geopolitical zones: Southeast European, Central European and Eurasian.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Republic of Moldova did not break relations with the former Soviet republics for economic reasons and to preserve external markets and the provision of energy resources and raw materials. The current situation shows us that, due to the lack of vision of the former governments, the reliance on friendly relations with the main suppliers of energy and raw materials, which is why alternative sources of supply with energy resources have not been diversified, the Republic of Moldova has serious problems in this regard. chapter, being totally dependent on external factors, a fact that endangers its energy security.

Even the membership of the CIS did not allow the Republic of Moldova to solve the urgent problems of national security.

The author Yuri Josanu mentions in his article entitled «Risks and threats to the national security of the Republic of Moldova» that «the vulnerability of the Republic of Moldova as a state in transition, on the one hand, and the post-imperial syndrome of the policy of the Russian Federation in the so-called «close neighborhood», on the other hand, creates an environment that generates a situation of permanent growth of instability and risk. During the last years, the situation in the Transnistrian region, controlled by pro-Russian separatist forces, has become a challenge to the security interests and democratic values of the enlarged Euro-Atlantic community». [5]

Conventionally, threats to national and European security can be classified into:

1. Military risks and threats;
2. Economic;
3. Social;
4. Politics.

At the regional level, they can be related to transnational organized crime, international terrorism, illicit trafficking in drugs, weapons and human beings, etc.

On 11.07.2022, the Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Moldova participated in Prague at the meeting of the Ministers of Justice and Internal Affairs from all EU member states, at the meeting of the Council of Justice and Internal Affairs of the EU (JAI).

The Council develops cooperation and common policies on cross-border issues in order to build an area of freedom, security and justice at the level of the European Union. In May 2022, the Republic of Moldova proposed to the European Commissioner for Internal Affairs the establishment of an EU security HAB in Chisinau, for

better protection and resilience of the risks and threats caused by the war in Ukraine, a proposal accepted by the EU states. Within this structure, representatives of the EU states, together with the employees of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Moldova, will develop strategies to counter the trafficking of drugs, weapons and persons, terrorism and organized crime activities, which threaten the borders of the states bordering on the war.

Following the dialogue and exchange of opinions within the Council, it was found that Moldova has the capabilities to defend Europe together with the EU states and that its geographical position and the capabilities of our country are important in the stability and peace of the entire European continent. In this way, the Republic of Moldova is recognized for its role as a security producer for the European space, forming together with the EU member countries a fortified security belt at the border with the war.

Conclusions.

4.1. The Republic of Moldova, like any other contemporary state, depends a lot on the processes that take place outside its borders, processes that influence the internal situation in the country, the state of the legal order and, in general, the level of its security.

4.2. As new risks and threats generated by changes in the international security environment, they are: international terrorism; proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; cross-border organized crime; illegal trafficking of people, weapons and narcotic substances; illegal migration.

4.3. The threat of external coercion (pressure) is not as explicit as in the case of Transnistria, where the Russian Federation is directly indicated as the hegemonic force. At the same time, emphasis is placed on integration into the European Union as a potential shield against external pressures.

4.4. Transnational organized crime and international terrorism are reviewed more as regional risks than direct threats to national security. Threats deriving from human activity, man-made factors and natural calamities, information technologies, etc. can also be attributed to this chapter.

4.5. As a factor generating risks and threats, the imperfection of the normative framework, in general, as well as that inherent in the field of defense and national security, can be invoked. Therefore, it must be realized that the Republic of Moldova needs a national security system based on an institutional framework clearly defined by relevant normative acts and on highly qualified personnel, which will function in accordance with the legislation in force. This institutional framework is the national security sector of the Republic of Moldova. The national security sector of the Republic of Moldova includes the coercive state institutions intended to implement the tasks of protecting citizens and the state (operational level) and the civil state institutions that exercise the functions of governance, planning, control and supervision in the national security system (administrative level). The national security sector is responsible for achieving the national security objective.

4.6. The Republic of Moldova constitutes, on the one hand, a source of insecurity for the region, considering Transnistria, on the other hand, it has an increasingly active role in ensuring international security, considering the above.

Bibliography:

1. Ullman R. Redefining Security. În: International Security, vol. 8, nr. 1, 1983, p. 153.
2. A Romanian concept regarding the future of the European Union, selection of studies, Iasi, Polirom, 2001, page 122.
3. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0001.02/DOC_1&format=PDF(visited on 10.10.22).
4. BUZAN, Barry, Peoples, states and fear. An agenda for international security studies in the era after the Cold War, Ed. Cartier, Chisinau, 2000, p. 147.
5. https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag_file/43-48_Riscuri%20si%20amenintari.pdf(visited 10.10.2022).
6. Nicolae Dolghin, Alexandra Sarcinschi, Mihai-Ştefan Dinu, Risks and threats to Romania's security. Actuality and perspective, Publishing House of the National Defense University, Bucharest, 2004, ISBN 973-663-143-5.
7. Treaty on European Union, consolidated version, in the Official Journal of the EU, C 326/15.
8. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0001.02/DOC_1&format=PDF (visited 10.10.22)
9. https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag_file/43-48_Riscuri%20si%20amenintari.pdf (visited 10.10.2022).