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ROMANIA: The Political Economy of a Constitutional Crisis

What lies behind Romania's bitter power struggle of spring-summer 2012? The economic crisis is not particularly dramatic in Romania, a country sheltered by its high underground economy and intense labor migration from the crisis-related unemployment which hurts other European economies. This new policy brief of Romanian Academic Society, Romania's first think-tank, argues that political capture of the state, manifested in the intense politicization of administration, discretionary lawmaking and favoritism in public resources allocation is accountable for Romania's acute constitutional conflict. The European Commission contributed to the crisis by pressing for high level corruption cases to be prosecuted and sentenced in order for Romania to prove it has graduated from a captive state to the rule of law. This disrupted domestic long term power arrangements, reliant on chronic state capture, and set in motion a dramatic conflict for controlling the powerful anticorruption agency, DNA. Who loses the impeachment referendum on July 29 is therefore threatened not only with defeat, but also jail.

1. The Crisis

The Romanian President Traian Basescu was impeached on July 6th by a majority in the parliament, dominated by the Social Liberal Union, a coalition made of Socialists lead by Prime Minister Victor Ponta and Liberals lead by Crin Antonescu. A total of 258 lawmakers in the 432-member parliament voted in favor of the move to impeach Mr. Basescu. But the impeachment will only be enacted if it is

approved in a popular referendum within 30 days.

Mr. Basescu, who has been president for eight years, is accused of overstepping his constitutional powers, as he frequently intervened in policy areas where he has no attributions by right. For many years, he has shadowed ministries with presidency chaired policy formulation committees, which in fact had the upper hand on proposing new legislation, but this has become unacceptable only after the

government was no longer formed by his own party, and Mr. Ponta became the new PM. Mr. Basescu was already impeached by Parliament five years ago, but a national referendum reinstated him. His current approval ratings are much lower this time, however, as the president has been blamed by many for cuts of wages in the public sector, an unpopular health system reform and widespread cronyism, including promoting his daughter and female favorites in top political positions.

The impeachment decision, which must be approved by a popular referendum on July 29, was only the last act of a swing in government initiated in the spring. Following street protests in winter against a new health bill, the corruption and incompetence of the Boc government, Mr. Basescu replaced PM Emil Boc, from his own party, with another government of his allies, chaired by Mihai Razvan Ungureanu, a former director of the Romanian foreign intelligence. This government fell after two months, however, after a significant wave of defections from the political majority. For more than one year, the former main ruling party, the Liberal Democrats (PDL) had been governing with defectors from the Socialists, who had formed a new political party (UNPR). Once opinion polls showed, however, that the political defectors' party had no chance in elections on its own, and that PDL itself was in danger of falling under 20%, defectors defected again, this time back to their old party and thus triggered the fall of the Ungureanu government. In fact, they were followed by some significant

top members of PDL themselves who switched to the Liberals.

Since May, Mr. Ponta has governed the country on the basis of this newly formed majority, won local elections in June by an astounding score (50 % of total vote to 22 % for PDL) and tried to complete his political takeover by replacing the old majority top appointees (in tax office, public broadcasting) with his own people. The new majority also replaced the speakers of both houses of parliament, who had been part of Mr. Basescu's party and elected USL politicians. In accordance to the Constitution, the new head of the Senate, Mr. Crin Antonescu, replaced Mr. Basescu as interim President following his impeachment by the Parliament, his own place being immediately filled with a PDL defector. The Parliament also dismissed the Ombudsman for contesting two emergency ordinances of the new government in the Constitutional Court, and when the Court sided with Mr. Basescu they called it 'politically appointed' and initiated a legislative process to reduce its powers. Mr. Basescu was prompt in accusing the USL of trying to "control all levers of the state, especially the judiciary." The EU has also expressed concern that checks and balances are being eroded in Romania, whose accession treaty has still a safeguard clause attached to its performance on judiciary reform and anticorruption.

The court rejected a decree that would have allowed Basescu to be removed from office with the vote of a simple majority who cast ballots in a national referendum scheduled for July 29th. The decision

upheld the law that has a substantially higher standard, permitting removal of the president by a majority of registered voters. Romania has not managed in the last years to assemble such a majority in any referendum. In fact, the electoral administration is so poor that electoral lists are still not updated after the last census, which showed the population has shrunken to the 1966 level, Romanians being thus more than two million less than reflected in the voting lists.

The political unrest was not without economic impact. The exchange rate, initially influenced by the Greek and euro crisis, was the most obvious victim. The local currency RON depreciated from 4.3219 RON against one euro at the beginning of the year to 4.3970 RON/euro at the end of April (a depreciation of 1.74%). After Mr. Ponta's designation as Prime Minister and the different political events taking place in Romania, the RON decreased even more comparatively with the currencies unaffected by national political distress, such as the Hungarian forint or the Polish zloty. Thus, the RON hit a bottom low of 4.5848 RON to one euro on the 20th of July, depreciating in less than three months with 4.27%. Also, the RON depreciated against the dollar by 12, 6% during PM Ponta's mandate.

While some Western economists might regard this as good news and would appreciate that Romania might fare better outside Euroland during the crisis, the Romanian economy is strongly dependent on the euro and the private, as well as public debt is mostly denominated in this currency.

Any depreciation of the currency thus means a higher debt for the Romanian government to finance, but also higher bills for households and businesses, as many utility and service providers issue invoices in euro converted to RON.

The investors seem to show increasingly less confidence in Romania, starting to withdraw their capital from Romanian banks –the available data shows an outflow of over 2 billion Euros for May alone this year.

Moreover, the Romanian government encounters problems in financing its short term external debt of 20.8 billion euro, as from mid-May to present the Ministry of Public Finance has had around 9 failed auctions of bonds or treasury bills, in which the auctioned bonds/bills have not been entirely or at all sold, because of the high returns demanded by credit institutions and rejected by the Ministry. The risk premium for Romania has severely increased over the past few months as a result of the political distress, peaking and then falling back a little, all in all making borrowing more expensive for the government.

2. The Constitutional Background

The Constitutional situation is not straightforward, as indeed the Romanian Constitutional Court has never managed to become autonomous from politics, and the politicians always tried to manipulate it according to their immediate needs. According to the Constitution, (art. 81),

the President is elected by an absolute majority in the first ballot (i.e., by an absolute majority of registered voters), whereas an eventual second ballot “shall be held between the first two candidates highest in the order of the number of votes cast for them in the first ballot. The candidate having the [sic!] greatest number of votes shall be declared elected.” The impeachment article (Art. 95) provides for a four-step procedure: 1. an impeachment proposal (the articles of impeachment have to be supported by a third of the MPs), 2. an advisory opinion of the Constitutional Court, and 3. a decision of the Parliamentary Plenum (joint houses) to suspend the President for “committing serious infringements of the constitutional provisions.” The suspended President is 4. removed by a referendum held within 30 days, subsequent to a decision of the Constitutional Court certifying the procedural validity of the impeachment process in Parliament. The President of the Senate (or the President of the Chamber of Deputies (the lower house) acts as Interim President pending the referendum. The Interim President can also be impeached, following the same procedure (Art. 99). There is no provision in the Constitution concerning the validity and the results of the removal referendum, in terms of quorum and requisite majority, respectively.

In 2007, in the course of a previous attempt to impeach Mr. Bănescu, the Parliament had sought to amend the Referendum Law 3/2000, so that the quorum and majority would differ in the case of a president elected in the first and the second ballot, respectively. The

legislative provision was targeted at Mr. Bănescu, elected in the second ballot in 2004. In 2007, the Court (Decision Nr. 147/21 February 2007; see also, Decision 420/3rd of May 2007), in ex-ante review (prior to promulgation) declared the bill unconstitutional, insofar as it had made a distinction in terms of the quorum and majority of the removal referendum in correlation with distinct presidential election hypotheses. The Court noted that the constitutional mandate of the President was the same irrespective of the type of ballot by which the President had been elected. It stressed, however, that the choice was left to the Parliament to decide on the requisite majority: „Whenever the Constituent Assembly wished to entrench a certain majority, it did so expressly...except for the cases where the option is left to the lawmaker. The Court does not exclude the prerogative of the Parliament to opt for a relative majority...” *emphasis supplied*

In 2009, the Government in power (the President’s party, PDL, the Hungarian minority party, UDMR, and a splinter faction, UNPR) amended the Referendum Law again, by emergency ordinance, providing for a quorum of 50% plus 1 as a condition for the validity of all types of referenda. In 2012, Law 62/2012 approved the Emergency Ordinance again and provided that the President could only be removed if a majority of the registered voters should vote in favor of removal. This would have made removal close to impossible, especially in view of the fact that the electoral lists have not been updated (18.308.612 voters are recorded now and the results of the last (2011)

census have as of today not yet been processed). In 2011, the President had submitted to Parliament proposed amendments to the Constitution, which, if approved, would have also made the opinion of the Constitutional Court binding. The constitutional amendment proposals were made in the context of a change in the composition of the Court effected through the 2010 nomination of judges supported by the parties then in power (the composition of the court is renewed by a third every three years). Prior to this change in the composition of the Court, an earlier draft amendment proposal (drafted by a committee of national constitutional experts convened under the auspices of the Presidential Administration in 2008-9) had proposed a different type amendment to Art. 95, namely the automatic dissolution of the Parliament in the hypothesis that the impeached president should in fact be reinstated by the removal referendum results. The PDL-UDMR-UNPR Government had also adopted an amendment to the Constitutional Court Law, L. 47/1992, which gave the Court competence to review the constitutionality of Plenum decisions of the Parliament. This would have made the impeachment decision itself subject to binding constitutionality review and would have authorized the Court to intervene twice in the procedure (by way of the constitutionally-mandated advisory opinion and by way of the legislatively-mandated unconstitutionality review of the impeachment decision, respectively). Following their successful no-confidence vote in Spring 2012, the Ponta

government has again tried to modify the Referendum Law, so that removal could be effected by a relative majority of the voters taking part in the referendum (thus, without any quorum validity condition). Amendments were introduced both by means of a bill in Parliament, and by the expedited means of an emergency ordinance (both acts were drafted in identical form and the procedures were initiated in parallel). According to the Romanian Constitution, emergency ordinances can amend ordinary and organic legislation and enter into force immediately (in order to be enforceable, they only have to be laid before Parliament; if the Parliament takes no action within 30 days, the ordinance is automatically adopted). Unlike the case of parliamentary enactments, the constitutionality of emergency ordinances cannot be reviewed before they enter into force but only afterwards, by means of ex post review (either by way of an exception of unconstitutionality raised by the Ombudsman before the Constitutional Court or, if applicable, by means of an exception raised by one of the parties in the course of ordinary litigation and referred to the Constitutional Court). The Ombudsman, appointed during the prior, pro-presidential administration, was however dismissed from office by the Parliament. The Constitutional Court Law was also amended (by parliamentary bill and emergency ordinance, simultaneously adopted) to remove the Court's jurisdiction over Plenum decisions of the Houses and of the Parliament, respectively.

A recent decision of the Constitutional Court (Decision 731/10th of July 2012) has declared the referendum bill constitutional, “provided that the law [sic!] ensures the participation of an absolute majority of the registered voters to the poll” *emphasis added+. The Court did not elaborate on how the law should ensure participation. Also unexplained in the decision is the discrepancy between the motivation of the Constitutional Court in 2007 (when the decision regarding the quorum was left to the final determination of the Parliament) and the solution chosen by the Constitutional Court now, in 2012, to read a quorum validity condition into the bill. The motivation is supported primarily by reference to the Code of Good Practice on Referendums adopted by the Council for Democratic Elections (Venice, 16 December 2006) and the Venice Commission for Democracy Through Law (Venice, 16-17 March 2007), advocating the stability of procedural rules concerning referendum. The Court also mentions, in dicta, that referendums constitute “the authentic expression of popular sovereignty” and that “the participation to the referendum of an absolute majority of registered voters represents an act of civic responsibility.”

Technically, even though the bill as such was declared unconstitutional, the Emergency Ordinance remained in force and its constitutionality, in the absence of an exception raised by the Ombudsman, is formally unassailable. However, due to EU pressure to abide by the Constitutional Court Decision, the interim President asked the parliament to amend the

impugned provisions in accordance with the decision of the Court.

3. Political Migration as a Disequilibrium Trigger

Since spring 2010, Romania has been governed on the basis of a makeshift majority formed by political migrants, as President’s Basescu’s party has never had more than 31% of total seats, to which they could add only the Hungarians party’s 7%. During the past four years, about 20% of the members of the Romanian Parliament (MPs) have in fact changed their party affiliation¹. The phenomenon of political migration, has affected a total of 80 MPs (52 deputies and 28 senators). Throughout the latest term of the Parliament (2008-2012) there have been two intense waves of political migration. The first occurred in the spring of 2010. The second started in March 2012, as the support predicted by opinion polls of the party then holding the majority in the Parliament – the Democratic-Liberal Party (PDL) - dropped dramatically. While during the first wave, MPs migrated from the Social Democratic and National Liberal parties, towards the Democratic Liberal Party; in the second wave the trend was reversed.

Overall, the statistics reveal that the parties which lost most MPs were the following: Social Democratic Party (PSD) –

¹ Traseism parlamentar: 20% din alesii poporului si- au tradat partidul in actuala legislatura
<http://www.romaniacurata.ro/ltfont-colorblackgttraseism-parlamentar-20-din-alesii-poporului-si-au--2730.htm>

32 MPs; Democratic Liberal Party (PDL) – 28MPs, the National Liberal Party (PNL) - 21MPs, The Union for the Progress of Romania (UNPR) -5 MPs²; and the Conservative Party (PC) – 2MPs. Conversely, the parties which have received most political migrants were UNPR (35), followed by PDL (18), PNL (11), PSD (8), and PC (5). The largest net-winner has been UNPR, which came to represent a force in parliament, despite not having existed before the elections and not having fielded candidates.

A possible cause for the widespread nature of political migration in Romania so late in the transition process is the electoral system reform enacted in 2008. Political migration among MPs has increased significantly since the 2008 electoral reform³, as “the introduction of single-seat constituency’s legitimated political migration”. Elected officials can argue that they do not owe their seat to the party, as the constituency voted specifically for him/her⁴ and may have presumably done so, regardless of the party supporting him/her. An attempt to regulate political migration has been undertaken in the past in regard to local officials, where the problem had been older and more serious. In 2006, the government adopted law 246 which prohibited mayors and representatives elected to local council to change their party affiliation. The previous two

² A party itself formed by a splinter group of the social democrats.

³ Economia politică a traseismului, <http://www.romanalibera.ro/opinii/comentarii/onomia-politica-a-traseismului-262613.html>

⁴ Economia politică a traseismului, <http://www.romanalibera.ro/opinii/comentarii/onomia-politica-a-traseismului-262613.html>

mandates had seen over 50% of the locally elected politicians change parties between terms to keep or gain funding from central government or other advantages. The new law regulated that once a mayor has been elected on a party platform and then resigned from that party, s/he would automatically lose his/her office. This legal provision compelled, for example, the mayor of Bucharest’s 4th district to maintain his original party affiliation even after having fallen out with his party’s leadership. Meanwhile, he was planning to run for reelection supported by an opposing party.⁵ Law 246/2006 has been challenged before the Constitutional Court, but only partial claims were raised, which did not target the central element of the law. The criticism referred to provisions penalizing the then current mayors for having switched parties before the law was enacted. Through decision 61 of 2007, the Court ruled that annulling the election of a mayor in office for their conduct prior to the law’s enactment constitutes a retroactive enforcement of the law and is unconstitutional. No attempts to regulate political migration for MPs have been made, but the issue has been discussed especially as the 2012 proposed electoral reform would encourage MPs’ “independence”.⁶

In its White Paper on Good Governance, a pledge signed during the January street protests by political parties, the good

⁵ Udrea si Piedone. Cuplul dinamita, <http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-opinii-10943880-udrea-piedone-cuplul-dinamita.htm>

⁶ Romanian Constitutional Court, Decision no 61/2007, http://www.ccr.ro/decisions/pdf/ro/2007/D061_07.pdf

governance advocacy group Alliance for a Clean Romania (ACR) suggested that a decision to eliminate political migration also at the MP level would be welcome. The Alliance recommended adopting "legislation to eliminate the phenomenon of political migration among MPs, following the precedent established in the case of mayors.⁷ ACR further concluded that regulation seemed the only option, given the perverse incentives for politicians and the nature of the current mixed electoral system. Meanwhile, the political migrants in the Parliament provoked the fall of a government in order to ensure their political survival. Negotiations are going on for still more migrations, in view of November elections, as MPs seek to secure seats for parties well credited in polls.

4. State Capture as Root Cause of Conflict

The reason for this bitter fighting and the high political migration in Romania is one and the same: the high stakes of state capture in an environment with major corruption opportunities, but also more risks due to EU pressure. Romania is the most corrupt among EU member countries, and its main problem is grand corruption. The European Commission is aware, so considerable pressure has been put along the years together with support for the development of an autonomous

⁷ Traseism parlamentar: 20% din alesii poporului si- au tradat partidul in actuala legislatura
<http://www.romaniacurata.ro/ltfont-colorblackgttraseism-parlamentar-20-din-alesii-poporului-si-au--2730.htm>

prosecution agency (DNA). The agency finally managed to secure the sentencing for two years jail time of former Socialist PM Adrian Nastase for an electoral fraud scheme in June this year. Mr. Nastase tried to influence the result by asking a new appointee of Mr. Ponta, a Mr. Balaban Grajdan, to withdraw from his file a complaint from the government infrastructure agency. When the news came out, Mr. Ponta had to fire Mr. Grajdan and the agency renewed its role as a plaintiff against Mr. Nastase. His arrest after sentencing led to tremendous displays of solidarity from his own party and even an attempt of physicians to shelter him from prison after an alleged suicide attempt. The fact that all three top emergency hospital physicians were former Socialist dignitaries shows to what extent even the health system is politicized in Romania. DNA actually indicted one physician and a few policemen to push for Mr. Nastase's sentence to be executed after he failed to kill himself. The Minister of Internal Affairs himself, member of the same party as Mr. Nastase managed to send an ambulance in due time. These events triggered intense emotion on all sides, as some pitied Mr. Nastase and called him a victim of EU integration, while others were afraid that police would not dare to arrest him. Mr. Nastase has fought for eight years to defend himself, first using his immunity as a MP, then his lawyers to challenge the constitutionality of his case. He is standing trial in two other files.

In an equally significant development, DNA indicted in July the former president of the National Agency for Fiscal

Administration (ANAF) Sorin Blejnar, who had been dismissed by Mr. Ungureanu in his last days, after running the main tax authority under three PDL governments since January 2009. In 2011, the opposition demanded his resignation after hundreds of custom officers under his subordination were arrested by DNA, claiming that a commission from their illicit earnings went to Mr. Blejnar for PDL party finance. The current charge is of complicity at tax evasion related to mineral oil imports. Simply put, according to prosecutors, Mr. Blejnar enforced tax collection only discretionarily. He was the main person entrusted with fighting tax evasion under all governments patronized by Mr. Basescu and a crony of Mr. Basescu's close favorite and Regional Development Minister, Elena Urea. His arrest is the first hit to Urea's interest group. While Mr. Basescu has always accused the opposition of sheltering vested interests, and is running his campaign against impeachment with the main claim that his opponents are 'criminals' who try to evade justice, the opposition has always alleged that Mr. Basescu has always, in fact, protected a rival interest group, while using the judiciary only against his opponents. It is hard for Mr. Basescu to explain why Mr. Blejnar was spared until the very last days of the Ungureanu government, when both him and the PM, a former secret service head had certainly been informed of Mr. Lennar's doings, from the opposition's accusations if not from secret service reports.

Discretionary controls from state control agencies and preferential state funding

allocation for either businesses or local governments are the rule more than the exception in Romania, as shown in previous SAR reports.⁸ The pattern of discretionary allocation of public funds had not decreased in time, but rather increased, as shown in the table below with the illustration of Romania's natural emergency relief fund across three electoral cycles. All three main political parties distributed heavily to their own mayors, irrespective of where disasters occurred, and increased the volume of the fund without parliamentary approval, so that the ratio between percentage allocated from the fund to government party and its share of vote in local elections has become more and more misbalanced in time.

| | 2004 (SDP) | 2008 (Liberals) | 2010 (Democrat Liberals) |
|--|---------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Share of fund allocated for main govt party % | 49 | 45 | 62 |
| Share of vote in local elections of govt party % | 36 | 16 | 29 |

Legend: Romania's natural disaster relief fund distribution per govt party and share of vote

Source: SAR Annual Report 2011

⁸ See Freedom House Nations in Transit Romania reports authored by SAR and SAR's 2011 Annual Report at <http://www.sar.org.ro/dincolo-de-perceptii-a-devenit-guvernarea-romaniei-mai-integra-dupa-2004/?lang=en>.

Local politicians or businesspeople from certain economic sectors heavily dependent on state contracts (such as infrastructure) have no choice but to switch political allegiance when the power over the purse changes hands after elections. In certain sectors such as public roads building and maintenance it is impossible to find politically unaffiliated companies, and each party has its own.

5. Scenarios after July 29

This report argues that due to chronic manipulation of the Constitution and frequent resorting to unorthodox politics by both sides, a just constitutional solution does not exist. Every solution will be controversial, as voters are likely to impeach Mr. Basescu, but with a participation below threshold. If this turns out to be the case, this bitter conflict will continue to ravage Romania's politics and the rating agencies might degrade the country's debt. USL currently stands in polls at 50%, while PDL only has around 20%. The most controversial and costly statement of Mr. Basescu in 2011 was that regardless the result of elections he alone could decide who should form the government and he would not entrust the task to USL. This might account for the decision of USL leaders to impeach him at any cost. Basescu, however, argues that the real target of his opponents is control of the judiciary, as the last legally allowed terms for both General Prosecutor and Anticorruption Prosecutor end in August.

DNA already arrested a couple of top prosecutors accused of trafficking secret information to secure these two top jobs.

Undeniably, USL appointees made two clear attempts to deflect prosecution against their leaders: first through Mr. Grajdán, although later fired by Mr. Ponta, then through the agency of Minister of Agriculture Daniel Constantin, who pulled out an expertise filed by his ministry from a corruption file directed against his party boss, Mr. Voiculescu, claiming that the clerk who had filed it was a Basescu agent. Mr. Voiculescu's party, the Conservatives, is the third party of USL and it matters less in terms of voters (it has never passed the electoral threshold by itself) but its media power. Mr. Voiculescu is the owner of the most important current affairs media in Romania, and he is charged for buying an undervalued land from the Ministry of Agriculture in a residential area of Bucharest. Mr. Ponta also stands accused of having plagiarized an important part of his doctoral dissertation in 2003 (Mr. Nastase was his advisor). Mr. Antonescu is the only top politician not threatened by any investigation, as Mr. Basescu himself is accused of having used his position as mayor to buy a publicly owned apartment at a price below market level.

Mr. Basescu's claims that USL will infringe on the freedom of magistrates and points to the presence among those who voted for impeachment of Mr. Catalin Voicu, a USL MP already sentenced for being the ringleader of a gang fixing sentences of the criminal section of High Court of Justice, a case which also saw the resignation, retirement and sentencing of a few High Court Justices in 2011. But

Blejnar's case, as well as many others (PDL mayors from Cluj, Vilcea, Craiova; officials from nearly all state agencies, such as Property Restitution, Labor Inspection, and Drugs) shows that **Mr. Basescu's own regime was captured to a remarkable extent. In fact, it reminds one of the H.G. Well dystopia where the equilibrium is maintained in the transparent world of the Elois by some of them being eaten during night by the Morlocks. Mr. Basescu allowed the DNA to arrest some even from the own ranks of his party, this being the historical merit of his eight years-old presidency: but his party also developed into a general spoiling machine in its own right**, explaining its disastrous defeat in local elections and further indictments of nearly all its mayors.

Two years ago, during the austerity cuts, there were nearly no protests in Romania. A year ago, in partial elections in Neamt, PDL came first and Mr. Boc himself, the PM of austerity, was one of the few PDL leaders who managed to win the mayoral contest in Cluj. **Framing Mr. Basescu's unpopularity as punishment for austerity is therefore superficial; it was the**

countless disclosures of corruption and pork barrel spending of his party while demanding austerity from the poor which brought his fall from popular grace. In the end, the voters' mobilization alone will decide on Mr. Basescu's fate.

The European Union cannot but monitor both sides attentively and congratulate itself on the existence of a cooperation and verification mechanism. The mechanism should be clearly tied to Romania's Schengen accession, the last serious lever of EU conditionality and all developments from the fields of justice and anticorruption should be attentively monitored. EU should be mindful, however, that such interventions are not used in the electoral campaign which will dominate year 2012 in Romania and avoid tying its hopes to the success of one or another political side. **Whoever wins will need the same careful monitoring from the side of EU, but it is in everybody's best interest that a legitimate solution is given by the voters, not by a politically manipulated Constitution.**

More analysis on SAR's website <http://www.sar.org.ro/?lang=en> or (in Romanian) on the page of Alliance for a Clean Romania (www.romaniacurata.ro).

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A comprehensive network of experts on Romania can be found on the site of Romanian Academic Society, <http://www.sar.org.ro/baza-de-date-experti/?lang=en>

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