
BOOK REVIEW

Catrinel Popescu (2020).

THE DEMOGRAPHIC

OUTLOOK OF ROMANIA AT

REGIONAL LEVEL IN 2019.

THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON

NATIONAL SECURITY.

Alba Iulia “Carol I”

National Defense University Press.

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The volume approaches the nexus between the demographic trends in Romania in the past 5 years and the security risks, looking at the population dynamics from the perspective of challenges faced by Romania from political, social, economic, and national security perspective. Population and its demographic characteristics are at the core of national security, being one of the main elements defining a state, its social, political, and territorial boundaries. According to the author, the population connects all other layers of the state power, being essential for the national security policy, as it is located at the crossroad between hard and soft power.

In approaching this topic, the study looks at the regional differences existing at the macro-regional level with respect to the main demographic indicators, such as age and gender structure, territorial density, natality, nuptiality, mortality, and migration. The work, organized into two volumes, provides an encompassing overview on the demographic statistics, the first volume presenting the current features of population living within the Romanian borders, while the second focuses on the dynamic aspect, by analyzing the trends of the main demographic indicators. The second volume looks at the nexus between the demographic trends and statistics and the risks of security, analyzing how the current demographic outlook impacts on the national security and how the demographic risks can be mitigated.

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The regional analyses carried out on data retrieved from the National Institute of Statistics, covering the time span 2014 to 2019, points out to several distinctive statistics and trends, all of them being highly relevant for national security. Based on the official statistics, the author points out that the Romanian population faces the challenges occurring at the intersection of population ageing, decreasing fertility, and significant external migration mainly among the active age groups. As outcome, Romanian population shrinks and will continue to do so, the pessimist scenario leading to less than 14 million inhabitants in 2100. Moreover, as population aging evolves at high speed, the dependance ratio grows high, rising sever risks from economic, political, and national defense perspective. The in-depth analysis conducted at regional level points out to the high territorial heterogeneity, some regions being more affected by the drop-in fertility rate and by the external migration, such as North-East, while other are still attractive for young adults and work force, like Bucharest-Ilfov.

By overlapping the map of demographic trends with the one of national security risks, the volume indicates the main vulnerabilities confronted by Romania from the perspective of security threats and propose several public policies direction meant to overcomes the vulnerabilities and to address the issues raised by population ageing and by the other demographic trends. The book is well documented, introduces the main concepts and theories, presents the data analysis in a comprehensible way, and draws several original and highly relevant conclusions for this research topic. It is a good read for specialized audience, as well as for the general public.