

# **Bulgaria-Romania: Military cooperation and security**<sup>1</sup>

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*Abstract: This paper examines Bulgarian - Romanian security and defence cooperation through the lens of the Lower Danube as an emerging strategic zone within the European security architecture. Since 2022, the Lower Danube has evolved into a critical area of logistical support and solidarity in the context of Russia's war against Ukraine, enabling flows of energy, grain, humanitarian aid, and defence-related mobility. This has underscored its strategic relevance while also exposing persistent governance and infrastructure vulnerabilities. Bilateral cooperation between Bulgaria and Romania is increasingly structured around this shared operational consideration, shaped by converging threat perceptions, mobility demands, and resilience priorities. While the Black Sea remains an important maritime extension, the analytical focus shifts decisively toward the growing importance of the Lower Danube as a central organising axis of regional security, positioning Bulgaria and Romania as core actors in sustaining Euro-Atlantic resilience.*

*Key words: Black Sea region, Bulgaria, cooperation, Lower Danube region, defence, European Union, NATO, Romania.*

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The evolution of Bulgarian - Romanian cooperation in the field of defence and security reflects the broader transformation of the European security environment following 2022. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has acted as a critical catalyst, accelerating the reorientation of both states towards strengthened deterrence, enhanced allied presence, and deeper integration within NATO and EU stability frameworks.

Bulgaria and Romania have long maintained stable bilateral relations based on geographic proximity, shared regional interests, membership in NATO and the European Union. In 2019, Bulgaria and Romania celebrated the 140th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. In 2022, they marked the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Good-Neighborliness.

The post-2022 security environment has significantly increased the strategic relevance of their cooperation. **Lower Danube – Black Sea** region has become a central area of geopolitical competition and military activity, while the wider southeastern flank of NATO has gained renewed importance as a space of forward defence and allied reinforcement.

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The way **Lower Danube–Black Sea system** is conceptualised in both Bulgarian and Romanian strategies points to a shared perception of the region as a long-term area of elevated risk, requiring sustained allied presence and coordination. However, a predominantly maritime focus remains insufficient, as key vulnerabilities extend beyond the sea domain to include inland connectivity and logistical sustainability. In this context, the Danube axis **constitutes a central organising axis of regional security** as complementary corridor for mobility, supply, and border protection, yet it remains partially integrated into defence planning. This suggests a need for closer Bulgarian–Romanian coordination not only in the Black Sea domain, but also along the north–south axis, where the interaction between river infrastructure, energy networks, and military mobility could become a critical factor for the resilience of the eastern and south-eastern flank.

The analysis is structured around three interrelated dimensions of Bulgarian - Romanian cooperation within the evolving security architecture of NATO's southeastern flank. First, the **strategic dimension** examines the synergy of national military strategies and their expression along the Lower Danube. Both Bulgaria and Romania increasingly situate their integrity within NATO's collective defence framework, while simultaneously adapting to the expanding role of EU instruments in capability development, resilience, and defence-industrial cooperation.

Second, the **operational dimension** focuses on the development of practical defence coordination. This includes enhanced military interoperability, forward presence structures, multinational battlegroups, special operations forces coordination, maritime security initiatives, and mechanisms for joint response to hybrid and information threats.

Third, the **infrastructural and connectivity dimension addresses** the growing importance of the logistical integration in shaping security outcomes. Military mobility corridors, dual-use infrastructure and regional transport and energy networks increasingly underpin NATO reinforcement capabilities and EU strategic resilience. In this regard, the Black Sea and Danube areas function not as separate spaces, but as complementary corridors within a broader southeastern European security continuum.

## **Strategic dimensions**

Useful starting point for assessing the current state of the Bulgarian- Romanian partnership is the comparative analysis of the strategic documents of the two countries, especially in the field of the defence and security. Despite differences in national strategic culture and planning traditions, both Bulgaria and Romania demonstrate a high degree of doctrinal similarities which is increasingly operationalised along the Lower Danube region. The National Defence Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria /2025/ and the National Defence Strategy of Romania for 2025–2030 place collective defence, alliance cohesion, and regional stability at the centre of national security policy.

These similarities have become particularly visible after 2022. For both states, the region is no longer seen primarily through the prism of neighbourhood policy or regional cooperation, but increasingly through the lens of the Lower Danube as a strategic corridor for deterrence,

mobility, and infrastructure security. At the EU level, initiatives in defence, connectivity, and resilience are gradually complementing NATO's role. Within this evolving tendencies, bilateral cooperation between Sofia and Bucharest can be understood as part of a broader adaptation to the changing security environment on NATO's eastern and southeastern flank and the emergence of the Lower Danube as a shared operational and infrastructural space where NATO and EU instruments intersect.

At the same time, the military strategies highlight the growing importance of resilience against hybrid threats, digital risks, and strategic influence operations, aimed at undermining social cohesion, democratic institution and strategic decision-making. This creates additional grounds for closer bilateral cooperation not only in the strictly military sphere, but also in the domains of intelligence sharing, communication and the protection of critical energy and transport infrastructure in the Lower Danube and the Black Sea area.

The strategic goal of Bulgaria is to safeguard the territorial integrity and defend the national interests through capabilities that are increasingly deployed and operationalised within the Lower Danube security space, by developing, maintaining, and employing adequate defence capabilities. It entails the development of modern, interoperable armed forces with a unified command and control system, both in peacetime and during times of crisis. Bulgaria shall prioritize also the integration and participation of the country as an ally and active member of NATO and the EU and guarantee of the national resilience (ensuring continuity of statehood and critical state services; sustainable energy supply; ability to effectively deal with uncontrolled movement of people and with situations of mass casualties and victims; sustainable communication and civil transport system).

National security objectives for Romania are structured across several domains. Priorities include strengthening deterrence and defence capabilities, modernizing the armed forces, stimulating the national industry, enhancing military mobility and dual-use infrastructure, improving crisis response and civil protection, advancing digital security, fostering research and innovation (notably in artificial intelligence), countering asymmetric threats, protecting classified information, and combating organized crime and hostile foreign interference, with increasing emphasis on their implementation along the Lower Danube.

Bulgarian strategy stress that the effective protection of national interests is possible only through country's active participation in and close cooperation with NATO and EU member states. Therefore, priority will continue to be given to develop capabilities within the framework of the NATO defence planning process, fulfilling commitments under the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy and providing Host Nation Support for the reception, staging, onward movement, and integration of NATO forces, which are key components in the realization of collective operations<sup>2</sup>. The main priority for the Republic of Bulgaria in this

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<sup>2</sup> National Defence Strategy of Republic of Bulgaria, 2025.

regard remains the achievement of the increased quantitative and qualitative parameters of the requirements regarding the NATO Capability goals.

Romania's NDS 2025–2030 frames national security around Euro-Atlantic integration too, democratic resilience and regional stability in the Black Sea region. While reaffirming membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union as the foundations of defence and foreign policy, the strategy introduces the notion of “solidary independence” as Romania's guiding principle. This concept combines the responsible pursuit of national interests with unwavering loyalty to allies and partners.

The Strategy argues that Romania's economic and societal development has often outpaced institutional adaptation, producing a gap that must be closed if the state is to meet citizens' rising expectations for performance, integrity, and resilience. The document insists that this new ambition is enabled, not contradicted, by Romania's deep integration into NATO and the EU.

Both countries stress that Russia's aggression against Ukraine violated the principles and norms of international law, seriously undermined the European security architecture and changed the factors that contributed to a stable and predictable tendencies. In this context, Bulgaria and Romania are among the countries - together with Germany, Poland, Norway, Denmark, the UK, the Netherlands, Croatia, Belgium and the Czech Republic - whose bilateral military cooperation agreements signed between 1992 and 2002 were terminated by Moscow in 2025.

The Black Sea is identified as a region of strategic importance for Romania, with goals including safeguarding freedom of navigation, strengthening Romania's role as a regional stability provider, enhancing NATO and EU engagement, protecting maritime zones and critical system, and deepening cooperation with allies – especially Turkey and Bulgaria.

For Romania the conflict potential of the Black Sea region will remain high in the long term. This leads to a strengthened focus of the Alliance on the region, the need to increase the allied presence and increase the partners' capability.

For Bulgaria the peace in the Black Sea region is only possible with the collective efforts of NATO and the EU, including in-place naval presence, strengthening the capabilities and interoperability of allies and partners in the region to address challenges, including enhancing capacities to protect against maritime threats and to support freedom of navigation and trade. Early warning capabilities and situational awareness maintenance across all domains will be intensively built.

The synergy identified in the national strategies of Bulgaria and Romania provides the necessary background for understanding the evolution of their bilateral agenda. Within this context, the **2023 Joint Political Declaration for a Strategic Partnership between the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania** represents a further step in formalising and structuring this alignment at the bilateral political level, providing a more coherent framework for cooperation. In the field of defence and security particularly important is Part IV of the document, which explicitly commits both countries to intensifying coordination within NATO

and the EU, strengthening deterrence and defence posture on the Eastern Flank, and deepening cooperation in the Lower Danube and the Black Sea region.

Both countries are committed to enhance the bilateral political-military dialogue at all levels and strengthen bilateral defence cooperation at practical level, with focus on domains such as military training and education, technical-military exchange, investment in cyber capabilities and protection of commemorative monuments.

The positions of Bulgaria and Romania on EU affairs point to shared understanding of the Union as a framework requiring both internal cohesion and adaptive capacity in response to overlapping economic, endurance and technological pressures.

Bulgaria and Romania continue to further contribute to the European security and defence at political-military and operational dimensions, including within EU frameworks, while ensuring coherence with NATO, avoiding unnecessary duplication. Efforts are also directed towards enhancing cybersecurity, including through more effective use of existing EU-level instruments and the capabilities of the EU Cybersecurity Centre based in Bucharest. Bulgaria and Romania also declare willingness to consolidate common positions in relation to institutional developments of the EU and Common Foreign and Defence Policy issues.

The emphasis on updating **existing regional formats** suggests recognition of their limited effectiveness, while initiatives such as the EU Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea (Bulgaria has assumed the role as the coordinator of the CMA for 2026) and the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda point to an increasing focus on the economic and technological valorisation of the Black Sea.

At the same time, initiatives such as the Three Seas Initiative and the EU Strategy for the Danube Region are primarily viewed through the lens of connectivity and the mitigation of infrastructure and energy vulnerabilities.

The two countries place emphasis on the operational readiness of Allied structures and initiatives deployed on their territories, in accordance with NATO decisions. They also identify cross-border air policing over the Black Sea as a practical area of coordination, alongside support for a more consistent NATO approach to regional stability. In addition, attention is given to the question of logistics, notably the development of a more sustainable and reliable fuel supply chain on the Eastern Flank, including its south-eastern segment.

Special emphasis is given to the role of Bulgaria and Romania to support vulnerable partners in Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans, to strengthen their endurance, including their capacity to tackle disinformation, foster democratic systems and develop their cooperation with NATO and the EU

With the Declaration Bulgaria and Romania reaffirm their full support **for Ukraine's independence**, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders (including territorial waters), as well as for its inherent right to self-defence against aggression. Bulgaria and Romania welcome the European perspective for Ukraine, the Republic of

Moldova and Georgia, as well as the status of candidate country granted to Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova.

The national strategies of Bulgaria and Romania establish a shared strategic orientation centred on collective defence, NATO deterrence, and closer integration within EU security frameworks. This alignment is further consolidated and operationalised through the 2023 Joint Political Declaration, which translates these strategic priorities into a structured framework for bilateral cooperation. However, the credibility of both strategic and political commitments ultimately depends on their translation into sustained capability development. In this respect, defence budgets and spending priorities serve as a key indicator of how these objectives are implemented at the national level.

The 2025 Defence budget of Romania is 8.55 billion EUR (approx. 2.24% of GDP). For 2026, it is projected at billion USD<sup>3</sup>. Romania has exceeded the 2% NATO threshold for eight consecutive years. Forecasts suggest a budget of roughly **\$11.2 billion to \$12.3 billion for 2026**, making it one of the fastest-growing defense budgets in Europe. The Romanian Supreme Council of National Defense aims to maintain the 2.5% rate, with some political discussions even suggesting a push toward **3% or higher** depending on the regional security climate.

The 2026 defense budget of Bulgaria is projected to reach **€2.708 billion**, which accounts for **2.25% of GDP**. For 2025 Spending surpassed **\$2.033 billion**, officially meeting and exceeding the NATO target of 2% of GDP. Over the past decade, Bulgaria has nearly doubled its defense spending, rising from \$910 million in 2014 to over \$2 billion today.

Romanian prioritizes legislative and doctrinal modernization, force transformation, and the coordinated use of all instruments of state power. A central commitment is the **gradual increase of defence spending to 5% of GDP by 2035**, alongside modernization of the armed forces, personnel retention, voluntary military service, and reserve forces. Romania seeks to maintain and expand allied military presence, and integrate lessons learned from the war in Ukraine – particularly regarding drones, electronic warfare, and hybrid operations – into force development and defence-industrial adaptation. It places strong emphasis on **defence industrial capacity**, dual-use infrastructure, space capabilities, and enhanced interoperability with allies.

Bulgaria stress on the modernisation, rearmament, and technological adaptation to ensure interoperability with allied forces. The country will apply a balanced ratio approach between personnel, maintenance and capital expenditures within the overall expenditures of the Ministry of Defence, with at least 20% of the estimated defence expenditures being for the acquisition of new armament and equipment.

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<sup>3</sup> Secretary of State in the Ministry of National Defense: Defense budget 2025 – 8.7 billion euros for equipment and research, <https://informat.ro/en/current-affairs/defense-budget-for-2025-87-billion-euros-and-focus-on-equipment-93359>

This strategic orientation is also visible in expenditure trends, where both countries have gradually increased and restructured their budgets in response to the post-2022 dynamic. Romania maintains spending above the NATO 2% threshold, with a medium-term trajectory toward higher allocations and a strong emphasis on capital expenditure and large-scale procurement programmes, including air defence systems, combat aircraft, and long-range strike capabilities. Bulgaria, while operating at a lower absolute level, follows a similar pattern of prioritisation, allocating a growing share of its budget to modern equipment and aiming to sustain a minimum threshold for investment in new capabilities within a constrained fiscal framework.

### **Operational Dimensions of Bulgarian – Romanian Security Cooperation after 2022**

Beyond the normative and political framework established by the 2023 Strategic Partnership Declaration, the post-2022 period has been marked by a visible intensification of practical cooperation between Bulgaria and Romania. This cooperation has increasingly moved from declaratory political alignment towards operational coordination and concrete joint initiatives, particularly in response to the transformed security environment.

A central pillar of this operational architecture is the reinforcement of NATO forward presence in both Bulgaria and Romania through multinational battlegroups, rotational deployments, and integrated command arrangements. Established following the 2022 Madrid Summit, the NATO battlegroups in Bulgaria and Romania constitute a core element of the Alliance's deterrence posture in the Black Sea region. These formations, led respectively by Italy and France and supported by a broad coalition of Allied forces, operate on a permanent rotational basis and are fully integrated into NATO's command and control structure. Their activities are closely coordinated with Multinational Division Southeast in Bucharest, which provides operational-level command and ensures coherence between national forces and Allied formations across the region.

As of January 2025, Romania is expanding its troop and equipment presence in two NATO Battle Groups operating in allied countries on the eastern flank, namely Slovakia (with an anti-tank unit) and Bulgaria (with a reconnaissance unit), while continuing to participate in one of the Enhanced Forward Presence Battle Groups in Poland with an anti-aircraft unit.

The Republic of Bulgaria work for the development of existing and the formation of new multinational defense initiatives on its territory- expansion of the "Kabile" military area and the establishment of a multinational divisional headquarters, similar to the one in Romania, to command two Bulgarian brigades and the NATO battlegroup.

Currently, the battle group in Bulgaria numbers about 1,200–1,300 troops. NATO's plans call for increasing its strength to a brigade (about 5,000 soldiers) and, in the long term, deploying a multinational divisional headquarters similar to the one in Romania which commands the "Southeast" Division. It will command two Bulgarian brigades plus the multinational battlegroup, as well as additional forces and assets as needed.

The agreement between the governments of Bulgaria and Italy/ ratified by the Bulgarian National Assembly on January 2026/ for the joint construction and use of a military base in the Kabile military area<sup>4</sup> represents not merely a national infrastructure project, but part of a wider regional reinforcement architecture on NATO's southeastern flank. The new base will host the NATO multinational battlegroup deployed in Bulgaria, with the capacity to accommodate a brigade and potentially even a division. According to the Council of Ministers, the project represents a strategic step towards strengthening both Bulgaria's defence capabilities and NATO's presence in the region.

In parallel, both countries are increasingly involved in the development of regional command and control capabilities, particularly in the domain of special operations(SOF). The establishment of the Regional Special Operations Component Command (HR-SOCC) represents a significant qualitative step in this direction. Designed as a deployable NATO-aligned headquarters operating on a rotational leadership basis between Bulgaria and Romania, HR-SOCC has the task to plan, command and support multinational special operations missions across the full spectrum of NATO crisis response scenarios. Beyond its formal mandate, this structure contributes to the gradual emergence of a regional special operations system within NATO's southeastern flank, linking land, maritime, air, cyber, and hybrid domains into a more coherent operational framework.

Maritime security constitutes another critical element of operational cooperation. The establishment of the Black Sea Mine Countermeasures Task Group in 2024 (together with Turkey), in conjunction with NATO Standing Naval Forces deployments, reflects an intensified focus on maritime situational awareness, sea lines of communication, and the protection of critical undersea and coastal infrastructure. While naval in nature, this framework directly interfaces with SOF capabilities, particularly in reconnaissance, sabotage prevention, protecting shipping routes, and safeguarding critical sea infrastructure in the western Black Sea basin.

Although multinational in composition, this framework has direct operational relevance for Bulgaria and Romania, particularly in the western Black Sea basin, where coordinated mine countermeasures, surveillance activities, and maritime domain awareness initiatives are increasingly central to regional security management.

These maritime efforts are further reinforced by broader NATO activities in adjacent theatres, including the Baltic Sentry operation in the Baltic Sea, which demonstrates the Alliance's growing emphasis on multi-domain maritime protection of critical undersea infrastructure across different regional contexts. In this sense, Bulgarian–Romanian cooperation in the Black Sea is embedded within a wider NATO maritime posture that links regional initiatives into a more comprehensive deterrence architecture.

A further important component of operational cooperation is military mobility and logistical interoperability. Both Bulgaria and Romania are actively engaged in improving cross-border infrastructure, transport corridors, and administrative procedures to ensure the rapid movement

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<sup>4</sup> The project follows the model of the existing Bulgarian-US facility at the Novo Selo training area.

of Allied forces, equipment, and supplies across the southeastern flank. The military mobility agenda also connects operational requirements with EU-supported infrastructure development, thereby reinforcing the dual-use character of key transport and logistics networks.

In addition, both states contribute to NATO air policing missions and integrated air and missile defence arrangements over the Black Sea region, as well as to cyber defence and hybrid threat response mechanisms. Particular attention is given to the protection of critical infrastructure, including energy facilities, transport networks, and communication systems, which are increasingly viewed as strategic assets within both national and Allied planning.

Taken together, these developments indicate not only an intensification but also a functional deepening of Bulgarian–Romanian operational cooperation. Within this framework, they function simultaneously as host nations, forward operating platforms, and active contributors to Allied deterrence and defence, linking maritime security in the Black Sea with inland operational depth along the Danube axis and broader regional networks.

## **Connectivity**

While NATO remains the primary framework for deterrence and collective defence, the **European Union** is increasingly consolidating its role as a complementary pillar of European security governance. This role is not expressed through hard command structures, but through instruments that shape capability development enhance resilient infrastructure connectivity.

Within this evolving institutional architecture, Bulgarian–Romanian cooperation is increasingly conditioned by the interaction between NATO’s operational requirements and the EU’s financial, regulatory, and infrastructural instruments. Rather than operating as parallel systems, the two frameworks are becoming progressively interdependent: NATO defines the requirements, while the EU increasingly provides the material and logistical conditions for their implementation.

A key component of this framework is the European Defence Fund (EDF), which seeks to enhance the competitiveness, innovation capacity and technological coherence of the European technological and industrial base. However, Bulgaria and Romania remain predominantly integrated into consortia led by more advanced defence industries, limiting their influence over research priorities and long-term capability development.

These structural limitations are addressed through the emergence of new EU-level financial mechanisms, most notably the Security Action for Europe (SAFE) instrument. In contrast to the EDF’s focus on research, innovation, and early-stage capability development, SAFE prioritises large-scale investment, procurement, and the strengthening of dual-use infrastructure. This shift marks an important evolution in the EU’s role, moving from long-term technological support towards more immediate capacity-building and operational readiness enhancement.

In this context, Bulgaria and Romania have been included among the first group of beneficiary states, receiving substantial funding for the modernisation of armed forces, air and missile

defence systems, and military mobility infrastructure. Romania channels a significant share of resources into transport connectivity and logistics corridors, reinforcing its emerging role as a regional hub for military mobility and strategic transit on NATO's eastern flank. Bulgaria, in turn, focuses on capability modernisation, air defence enhancement, and incremental strengthening of its industrial base, within the constraints of a more limited industrial system.

At the same time, EU-funded connectivity initiatives are increasingly shaping the strategic geography of Southeast Europe. This logic has been further institutionalised through the Memorandum of Understanding between Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece establishing the Black Sea-Aegean Sea Corridor Platform. The agreement represents a step towards coordinating transport policy, infrastructure development, and cross-border interoperability across the three states. By accelerating the development of rail, road, port, and inland waterway links, the initiative strengthens the north-south strategic axis between the Aegean, the Black Sea, and the Danube, while also embedding dual-use considerations into regional infrastructure planning. In this sense, the corridor functions not only as an economic integration tool, but also as a critical enabler of NATO and EU operational mobility.

Within this framework, the emerging concept of a "military Schengen" acquires increasing relevance. It reflects ongoing efforts within the European Union to reduce administrative, legal, and infrastructural barriers to the rapid movement of military personnel, equipment, and assets across member states. Improved border procedures, harmonised transport regulations, and upgraded dual-use infrastructure are essential components of this approach. For Bulgaria and Romania, both situated at the intersection of NATO's eastern and southeastern flanks, the implementation of such mechanisms is particularly significant, as it directly affects reinforcement speed, crisis responsiveness and overall deterrence credibility.

In addition to physical and logistical connectivity, the resilience dimension of Bulgarian-Romanian cooperation is increasingly extended to cyber defence and hybrid threat mitigation. The Strategic Partnership Declaration explicitly identifies cybercrime, hybrid risks, illicit trafficking, and extremism as shared areas requiring coordinated action. In practical terms, this creates the basis for enhanced intelligence sharing, exchange of best practices, and joint cyber trainings, as well as closer institutional interaction between the relevant structures of both states.

Beyond physical infrastructure and cyber resilience, there is an increasing recognition that sustainability of the Black Sea – Danube region depends on a stronger societal dimension. Hybrid threats are not limited to military or cyber domains; they are increasingly directed at social cohesion, public trust, and the legitimacy of democratic institutions. Against this backdrop, Bulgarian - Romanian cooperation is gradually expanding towards a more comprehensive understanding of the processes that includes the societal level. This implies not only improved coordination between security institutions, but also the systematic engagement of non-state actors.

At the institutional level, this creates opportunities for deeper cooperation between universities, research centres, and analytical institutions in both countries. Such actors can contribute to the development of expertise on hybrid threats, strategic communication, and information integrity. At the same time, civil society organisations play an important role in strengthening trust in

institutions and enhancing societal preparedness in crisis situations, particularly in environments characterised by disinformation and external influence operations.

The evolution of Bulgarian - Romanian military cooperation since 2022 reflects a gradual deepening of functional interdependence across NATO and EU frameworks. This process integrates operational cooperation, infrastructural connectivity, and resilience-oriented policies, particularly in the Lower Danube and Black Sea regions. Bulgaria and Romania function as structurally important corridor states within the broader Euro-Atlantic security architecture **with the Lower Danube constituting their primary shared strategic environment.**

While NATO remains the primary framework for collective defence and deterrence on the eastern and southeastern flank, the European Union increasingly contributes through complementary instruments that enhance mobility, infrastructure development, capability financing, and resilience-building.

Within this dual institutional setting, the Black Sea and Danube regions are progressively being consolidated into a shared strategic space, where maritime security, inland logistics, and cross-border connectivity form interdependent dimensions of the same operational environment. Initiatives such as multinational battlegroups, special operations command structures, maritime mine countermeasure cooperation, and EU-supported connectivity corridors collectively reinforce the role of Bulgaria and Romania as key enablers of allied presence and force projection in the region.

At the same time, this cooperation increasingly extends beyond traditional military parameters. This reflects a broader transformation in the understanding of security, where deterrence is no longer solely defined by military capabilities, but also by the robustness of infrastructure networks, the integrity of information environments, and the cohesion of societies under pressure. Consequently, their cooperation contributes not only to bilateral stability, but also to the broader coherence, resilience, and functionality of the European security architecture as a whole.

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