

HUMAN SECURITY AND RESILIENCE, FROM A DEFENCE PERSPECTIVE

CONSTANTINESCU Maria, Associate Professor, PhD

DUMITRACHE Vlad, Associate Professor, PhD

POPA Brindusa Maria, Lecturer, PhD

DRESMARA/ National Defense University Carol I/ Brasov/ Romania

Abstract:

Human security has emerged as a pivotal concept in contemporary defense strategies, emphasizing the protection and empowerment of individuals and communities within the broader context of national and global security. This paper, entitled Human Security and Resilience: A Defense Perspective, explores the integration of human security principles into military operations and strategic planning. It argues that a comprehensive understanding of human security not only enhances the effectiveness of military missions but also addresses the root causes of conflict and instability. The paper outlines three strategic objectives for incorporating human security into defense frameworks: first, to embed human security considerations in military planning; second, to foster collaboration with governmental and non-governmental partners; and third, to analyze the underlying factors contributing to insecurity. By adopting a human-centric approach, defense organizations can better anticipate and respond to crises, thereby reinforcing their legitimacy and operational effectiveness. Furthermore, the discussion highlights the interconnectedness of resilience and human security, particularly in urban conflict scenarios where civilian safety is paramount. The integration of resilience strategies into military operations is presented as essential for mitigating civilian harm and enhancing operational outcomes. Ultimately, this paper advocates for a shift from traditional state-centric security paradigms towards a more inclusive framework that prioritizes the well-being of individuals as a cornerstone of national defense policy.

Key words: human security; challenges; defense; strategies; resilience

1. Introduction

The idea of human security has transformed the way we understand and approach security in the 21st century. Unlike conventional security models that focus on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations, human security prioritizes the protection and empowerment of individuals and communities. First introduced in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report in 1994, human security is defined as “freedom from fear and freedom from want.” This definition encompasses various aspects, including economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security. This broader perspective acknowledges that threats to security can stem from poverty, disease, and environmental degradation, just as much as from armed conflict or terrorism.

As defense organizations respond to increasingly complex global challenges, integrating human security principles has become essential. This paper argues that incorporating human security considerations into defense frameworks not only improves the effectiveness of military operations but also tackles the root causes of conflict and instability. A strong human security

approach enables the anticipation and mitigation of crises, enhances civil-military relations, and ensures that military missions align with wider global security and development objectives.

To delve into these dynamics, this paper outlines three key goals for integrating human security into defense strategies: incorporating human security into military planning, promoting collaboration across sectors, and addressing the fundamental factors that contribute to insecurity. Additionally, it emphasizes the vital role of resilience in urban conflict situations, where protecting civilians and critical infrastructure is crucial. By advocating for a shift towards inclusive security frameworks, this paper supports a comprehensive approach that places human well-being at the heart of national defense policy.

2. Embedding Human Security in Military Planning

Military planning has traditionally been driven by state-centric objectives, focused on the defense of territorial boundaries and national interests. The increasing complexity of contemporary conflicts generates the need for a broader, more comprehensive approach that incorporates human security considerations, in order to improve operational effectiveness, reduce civilian harm, and address the root causes of instability.

The integration of human security into military planning requires first of all redefining the operational priorities and military objectives. Traditional military campaigns often emphasize territorial control and the neutralization of enemy forces. Of course, these objectives remain central to warfare, but they should also be complemented by efforts to protect civilians, safeguard critical infrastructure, and promote long-term stability. An example of the challenges and opportunities of integrating human security into military planning is provided by the lessons identified during the NATO's engagement in Afghanistan, highlighting the difficulties of balancing kinetic operations with civilian protection, particularly in areas of active conflict (Fishstein & Wilder, 2012).

Operationalizing human security also requires military planners to consider the multidimensional nature of security threats, through identifying vulnerabilities, assessing civilian needs, and integrating these factors into mission objectives. The key elements of Human-Centric Planning are risk assessments focused on civilians (enabling forces to anticipate and mitigate harm) and prioritizing critical infrastructure (as in urban conflict scenarios, targeting power grids, water supplies, or hospitals can have devastating consequences for civilians).

To ensure that human security principles are effectively embedded in military operations, defense organizations must invest in specialized training and capacity-building programs, which should equip personnel with the skills and knowledge needed to address the social, economic, and cultural dimensions of security.

The integration of human security into military planning offers several advantages:

1. **Enhanced Operational Effectiveness:** By addressing the root causes of instability, such as poverty and poor governance, military operations can achieve more sustainable outcomes.
2. **Strengthened Civil-Military Relations:** Focusing on civilian welfare builds trust between military forces and local populations, reducing hostility and enhancing cooperation.
3. **Alignment with Global Security Goals:** Human security principles align with international frameworks, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), positioning defense organizations as partners in global development.

The interconnected and multidimensional nature of contemporary security challenges necessitates collaboration between defense organizations and a wide array of stakeholders, including governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international

institutions, and local communities. The advantage of this multi-sector collaboration derive from the fact that military efforts to address human security are thus rendered comprehensive and sustainable, leveraging the expertise and resources of diverse partners, as military forces alone cannot address the complex root causes of insecurity, such as poverty, inequality, and weak governance. Collaboration fosters resource efficiency (by pooling resources from multiple sectors ensures that limited budgets are allocated effectively, avoiding duplication of efforts) and contextual understanding by using the expertise of the local NGOs and community organizations who often have deeper knowledge of the cultural and social dynamics within conflict zones, which can inform more nuanced military strategies. This collaboration also ensures an enhanced legitimacy, as partnerships with respected civilian organizations can enhance the perceived legitimacy of military operations, reducing opposition and fostering trust.

While collaboration offers significant benefits, it also presents challenges, deriving from the complexity of ensuring coordination of different organizational priorities and procedures, from power imbalances as military forces often dominate partnerships due to their resources and authority, which can marginalize civilian perspectives and from security risks, as NGOs and civilian partners may face increased risks when operating alongside military forces, being perceived as aligned with one side of a conflict. Addressing these challenges requires the establishment of clear communication protocols and shared objectives can reduce coordination difficulties, setting up training programs that emphasize equal partnerships and respect for civilian expertise can mitigate power imbalances and developing security frameworks that prioritize the safety of all partners and ensure that collaboration remains viable.

In order to enhance this cooperation, defense organizations should formalize partnerships through agreements that outline roles, responsibilities, and shared goals, through Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) doctrines that provide a structured approach to engaging civilian partners in conflict zones. Also, cross-sector training initiatives can build mutual understanding and foster trust among military and civilian personnel (for example, simulation exercises that involve military forces, NGOs, and local leaders can prepare participants for real-world challenges). Also, tools like geographic information systems (GIS) and digital communication platforms can facilitate information sharing and enhance coordination among stakeholders.

3. Resilience and Human Security in Urban Conflict Scenarios

Urban conflict has emerged as a defining feature of contemporary warfare, with devastating impacts on civilian populations and critical infrastructure. The interconnectedness of resilience and human security is particularly evident in urban settings, where the destruction of basic services such as water, electricity, and healthcare can exacerbate vulnerabilities and prolong recovery and integrating resilience strategies into military operations is essential for mitigating civilian harm, preserving infrastructure, and ensuring the long-term stability of affected communities.

In the context of urban conflict scenarios, resilience strategies should focus on preserving essential services, such as protecting critical infrastructure (hospitals, water supplies, and power grids), vital for civilian survival and post-conflict recovery, supporting civilian adaptation through community-led initiatives, such as neighborhood watch programs and local governance committees in order to empower civilians to take an active role in their security. Also, post-conflict recovery efforts should prioritize rebuilding infrastructure and restoring services to ensure long-term stability.

Defense organizations can play a pivotal role in enhancing urban resilience by aligning their operations with human security objectives. This can be achieved by the use of precision-guided munitions and adherence to international humanitarian law to reduce collateral damage and civilian casualties, supporting humanitarian efforts by securing supply routes and providing logistical assistance and incorporating reconstruction planning into military strategies to ensure that recovery begins as soon as hostilities cease.

While the integration of resilience into urban conflict strategies offers significant benefits, it also presents significant challenges, such as balancing military and civilian objectives, as prioritizing resilience may conflict with traditional military goals, such as the rapid neutralization of enemy forces. Challenges also derive from limited funding and logistical challenges that can hinder the implementation of resilience initiatives. The close collaboration between military forces, local authorities, and humanitarian organizations required for effective resilience building can be difficult to achieve in reality, especially in high-intensity conflicts.

The traditional state-centric model of security, which prioritizes the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations, is increasingly insufficient in addressing the complexities of contemporary global challenges, considering that an inclusive security framework, which prioritizes the well-being and empowerment of individuals and communities, is essential for fostering sustainable peace and stability. State-centric security models often fail to address the root causes of insecurity, such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation and a narrow focus on military threats, these models risk perpetuating cycles of conflict and neglecting the needs of vulnerable populations.

An inclusive security framework should place the protection and empowerment of individuals as a cornerstone of national defense policy, based on a human-centric policy design, as defense strategies should be informed by a deep understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities of civilian populations. Marginalized and vulnerable groups, such as women, children, and ethnic minorities should be considered central to security planning and implementation, in conjunction with prioritizing strategies that address the structural causes of insecurity, such as weak governance and economic disparity. International norms and frameworks can provide critical guidance for advancing inclusive security approaches. The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine, adopted by the United Nations in 2005, underscores the international community's commitment to protecting populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.

In these contexts, defense organizations and policymakers should strive to integrate human security into national defense strategies and military doctrine, strengthen partnerships with multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations, and regional organizations to coordinate inclusive security efforts and engage local communities in security planning and implementation to ensure that strategies are contextually appropriate and sustainable. By prioritizing the well-being of individuals and addressing the underlying causes of insecurity, this framework not only enhances the legitimacy and effectiveness of military operations but also contributes to sustainable peace and global stability.

4. Conclusion

The integration of human security principles into defense strategies represents a fundamental shift in the way security is understood and pursued. By prioritizing the protection and empowerment of individuals, defense organizations can address the root causes of instability,

enhance operational effectiveness, and build trust with civilian populations. This paper has outlined three strategic objectives for incorporating human security into military frameworks: embedding human security in military planning, fostering multi-sector collaboration, and addressing the underlying factors contributing to insecurity. Additionally, the discussion emphasized the critical role of resilience, particularly in urban conflict scenarios where civilian safety and infrastructure preservation are paramount.

While significant progress has been made, challenges remain in operationalizing human security within traditional military structures. Overcoming these barriers requires a concerted effort to institutionalize human-centric principles, foster international collaboration, and develop innovative resilience strategies. Ultimately, the shift from state-centric to human-centric security paradigms is not merely a theoretical exercise but a practical necessity in an increasingly interconnected and complex world. By embedding human security into the core of defense policy and practice, nations can create a more just and stable global order, where the well-being of individuals serves as the foundation for national and international security.

References:

- [1] Fishstein, P., & Wilder, A. (2012). "Winning Hearts and Minds? Examining the Relationship between Aid and Security in Afghanistan.", <https://fic.tufts.edu/wp-content/uploads/WinningHearts-Final.pdf>, accessed 12.09.2024
- [2] Hughes, S. (2017). "Japan's Self-Defense Forces' Role in Disaster Relief.", <https://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/id/eprint/81694/3/WRAP-japans-strategic-trajectory-self-defense-Hughes-2017.pdf>, accessed 10.09.2024
- [3] ICRC Reports (2009). "Gaza Conflict Response.", <https://internationallawobserver.eu/who-is-a-civilian-in-gaza-the-dangers-of-adopting-a-membership-approach-to-direct-participation-in-hostilities>, accessed 10.10.2024
- [4] Smith, R. (2018). "The Battle for Mosul: Lessons Learned.", <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/Jan-Feb-2019/Arnold-Mosul/>, accessed 15.06.2024

EVOLUTION OF THE DEFENSE BUDGET ALLOCATIONS IN THE PAST 20 YEARS. A COMPARISON BETWEEN NATO COUNTRIES AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

DUMITRACHE Vlad, Associate Professor, PhD
CONSTANTINESCU Maria, Associate Professor, PhD
POPA Brindusa Maria, Lecturer, PhD

Abstract:

Ever since the NATO Summit in Wales in 2014, specialized literature has focused on the desire of several member states to increase their defense budget to 2% or more. This has been a debated topic and while several countries inside the European Continent like Germany, Belgium or the Netherlands have failed to increase their portion of the GDP allocated to defense, other countries in the Eastern flank have managed to reach the target, including Romania, Poland and the Baltic States. Future increase of the budget is nowadays into discussion in order to meet the ever-increasing risk and threats that have emerged on the European Continent ever since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. While experts debate whether this approach is a correct one, few have analyzed the increase in the defense budget of the Russian Federation over the years. While NATO countries find it difficult to reboot their defense industry, for the Russian Federation this is a much easier process. Put into the context of diminished defense budget, this could be an explanation of the current gap in this regard. Analyzing in comparison, therefore, the way in which the defense budget has evolved in number in NATO and in the Russian Federation could provide a better view on what strategy NATO countries should follow in regard to their defense spending in order to meet the current needs and goals both from a strategic point of view but also from a practical one, that best suits the redevelopment of essential defense assets including the European defense industry.

Key words: defense budget, GDP, defense allocation, defense expenditures, defense procurement, defense industry

Introduction

Over the past decade, ever since the Crimean invasion from the Russian Federation took place in 2014, there has been an increase in defense expenditures worldwide. For NATO Countries this has meant a commitment following the NATO Summit in Wales to increase the defense budget to at least 2% of National GDP. While that has meant an immediate response from some countries, especially those on the Eastern Flank, for other member states increasing the budget to such a degree just wasn't a priority.

The Russian Federation Invasion in Ukraine on the 24 of February, 2022 however, changed the paradigm and most NATO states jumped to an increased budget, most of them around the 2% margin. The increased allocation of the GSP has been a subject of controversy as some experts consider the budget increase insufficient and are pooling for a even higher ceiling. Recently elected president Trump has requested that all NATO members increase their defense expenditures to at least 4% of the budget. Others argue that the problem for a modern defense doesn't necessary sit in the budget but rather in the management of defense resources allocated to defense.

2. The NATO Defense Budget Challenge

In terms of NATO countries, the discussion has been orientated ever since the first Trump administration on whether the European member states are doing enough in increasing its defense expenditures compared to the United States.

In **Figure 1** we have a better view on how defense expenditures have evolved throughout NATO and some observations can be made.

	Million US dollars										
Current prices and exchange rates	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023e	2024e
Albania	178	132	131	145	176	197	197	224	231	397	516
Belgium	5,200	4,204	4,258	4,441	4,845	4,761	5,324	6,245	6,904	7,622	8,519
Bulgaria	747	633	671	724	962	2,159	1,121	1,276	1,440	1,992	2,325
Canada	18,172	18,689	17,708	23,700	22,399	22,572	23,330	25,502	25,898	27,991	30,495
Croatia	1,064	883	837	926	966	1,001	983	1,361	1,285	1,441	1,624
Czechia*	1,975	1,921	1,866	2,259	2,750	2,982	3,199	3,915	3,895	4,538	6,834
Denmark	4,057	3,364	3,593	3,780	4,559	4,487	4,886	5,274	5,473	8,140	9,940
Estonia*	514	463	497	541	615	637	719	749	820	1,238	1,437
Finland	3,991	3,401	3,418	3,336	3,825	3,900	4,156	4,145	4,726	6,266	7,308
France	52,022	43,496	44,209	46,133	50,507	49,493	52,519	56,457	52,238	59,379	64,271
Germany	46,176	39,833	41,606	45,470	49,772	52,549	58,652	62,054	61,405	73,138	97,686
Greece	5,234	4,520	4,637	4,752	5,388	5,019	5,492	8,006	8,488	6,731	7,684
Hungary	1,210	1,132	1,289	1,708	1,615	2,190	2,767	2,410	3,270	4,360	4,889
Italy	24,487	19,576	22,382	23,902	25,641	23,559	30,084	33,140	31,512	33,857	34,462
Latvia*	294	282	403	485	710	692	743	824	857	1,254	1,421
Lithuania*	428	471	636	817	1,057	1,094	1,176	1,308	1,738	2,165	2,300
Luxembourg	253	250	236	326	356	381	426	403	461	642	785
Montenegro	69	57	62	65	75	74	83	91	86	114	162
Netherlands	10,349	8,673	9,112	9,643	11,172	12,067	12,838	13,916	13,899	16,764	21,460
North Macedonia	124	105	104	101	120	146	154	204	221	267	353
Norway	7,722	6,142	6,431	6,850	7,544	7,228	8,438	8,694	8,694	8,799	10,606
Poland*	10,107	10,588	9,397	9,940	11,857	11,824	13,363	15,099	15,338	26,476	34,975
Portugal	3,007	2,645	2,616	2,738	3,249	3,299	3,273	3,899	3,578	4,241	4,627
Romania*	2,691	2,581	2,645	3,643	4,359	4,608	5,056	5,299	5,197	5,605	8,644
Slovak Republic	999	987	1,004	1,056	1,298	1,802	2,049	2,066	2,090	2,445	2,841
Slovenia	487	401	449	477	547	572	568	763	777	914	949
Spain	12,634	11,096	9,975	11,889	13,200	12,630	12,828	14,849	16,451	18,875	21,269
Sweden	6,205	5,103	5,017	5,229	5,396	5,560	5,984	9,071	8,562	9,848	13,428
Turkiye	13,577	11,953	12,644	12,971	14,168	14,089	13,396	13,137	12,292	16,614	22,776
United Kingdom	65,692	59,505	56,362	55,719	60,380	59,399	63,500	71,927	70,846	76,939	82,107
United States	653,942	641,253	656,059	642,933	672,255	750,886	770,650	824,094	834,977	875,603	967,707
NATO Europe and Canada	289,276	254,422	255,595	275,102	300,167	301,674	325,953	358,836	355,382	419,205	506,692
NATO Total	943,218	895,675	911,654	918,035	972,422	1,052,560	1,096,603	1,182,930	1,190,359	1,294,808	1,474,399

Fig 1 NATO countries defense allocation 2014-2024 [6]

The US remains the highest contributor to NATO with a medium budget of around 800 billion dollars allocated to defense in the past decade. On the other hand, we can highlight that the rest of the organization including NATO Europe and Canada have almost doubled their participation to the defense budget, from 290 billion dollars in 2014 to around 506 billion dollars in 2024. This is more than the overall increase of the overall NATO allocation to defense which is around 33% in the last decade.

There are two main areas of concern when it comes to the management and evolution of the Defense budget in NATO, both on the European and American continent.

First of all, most of the members lack basic ammunition and other defense assets as their defense expenditures have mostly been spent to major acquisition of high-tech equipment suitable for NATO's joint capabilities that were defined in previous NATO strategic concepts on dealing with emerging risks and threats more orientated towards cyber warfare and hybrid warfare but not the conventional warfare that the Russian Federation is executing in Ukraine.

The second challenge is driven by the concept of Guns and Butter effect. For most western countries investing in defense while neglecting other areas of public expenditures is not an option. Most of the European Union countries that are members of NATO have followed for the past 50 years a soft power model where economic growth has been the main pillar and priority in government policies rather than the hard power approach of developing a strong and modern military. For this reason, there is gap in report to both the US and Russia who have maintained their high developed military capabilities even following the end of the Cold War. Even with increased defense budgets, it will take a mid-term time frame for most of the NATO member states excluding the US, in catching up and developing defense assets that could answer to today's current risks and threats that might mean even a direct conflict with the Russian Federation.

1. Evolution of the Russian Defense Budget

When it comes to the Russian Federation the evolution of the Defense Budget has been realized in accordance to Russia's ambition following the ascension to power of president Vladimir Putin. The budget has been marginally increasing following Russia's ambitions in key three moments: the invasion of Georgia in 2008 and the annexation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the Crimean

Invasion and annexation in 2014 and the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2024. This evolution is visible in the Graph that we have presented in **Figure 2**.

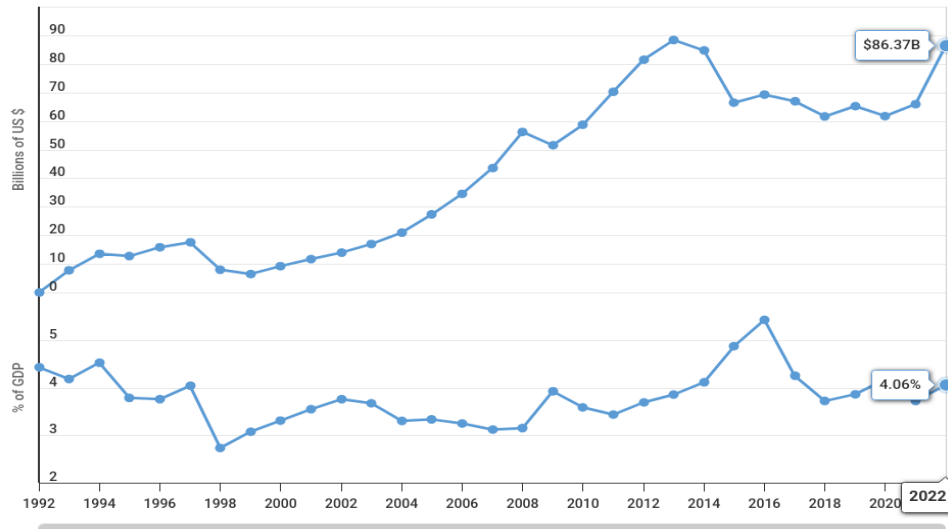


Fig 2. Evolution of the Russian Defense Budget [4]

While the NATO member states operate their defense policies and expenditures based on an economy of piece, since 2022 Russia’s economy has shifted to a war driven economy. Because of this the defense budget has become the main priority for defense allocations. In such, in 2024, a third of the entire budget of roughly 86 billion dollars has been allocated to defense related activities. While Russia has never declared a full war on Ukraine and the official terms used are still those of “special military operation” or “hybrid war” it is ultimately clear that the entire economy is driven by defense strategic objectives. Western countries have tried to limit the potential for Russian allocations to war by trying to impact the biggest sources of funding to Russia’s national GDP, respectively the incomes from the energy field, Russia being a major producer in oil and gas, and therefore a big exporter of these resources. The effort from the West in terms of economic sanctions has decreased the incomes from oil and gas exports from 1.2 billion dollars to just around 600 million dollars in 2024. [1] Other savings from the Russian GDP that have went to defense in 2024 and will continue to do so in 2025 mean a reshape of the social welfare state in Russia. Social policies will be affected in this new budget design, while inflation continues to also go up and the Russian currency, ruble continues the devaluate at record numbers. Private companies are also going to be submitted to a higher taxation system that will be applied starting with 2025. The Central Bank of Russia with the aim of stopping an inflation that has toppled 9% in 2024, is trying to increase the income tax that is currently 21%. This has scared company owners, regardless of their sympathies to the Putin regime [3]. Specialists have warned the government that the Central Bank intervention might even affect the defense industrial complex which will also be affected by the increased taxes. [5]

With the budget designed for such a war-time economic approach, specialists [2] consider that the Russian economy will collapse in a similar fashion to the way it collapsed at the end of the 80’s bringing an end to the Cold War. A reason is that commitment to major allocations for

investments in defense. In 2024, around 30% of the budget, approximately 100 billion dollars were in the form of apportionments for major acquisitions in defense. Separately another 10% of the budget was spent for actions correlated with the activity of the Ministry of Interior Affairs. While a total of 40% of the budget is already a big element of pressure on any national budget, if it is allocated to defense, the Russian Federation wishes to increase that percentage in 2025 with the hope that this will bring decisive military victories on the Ukrainian front. Besides the direct costs of investing in the war with visible effects in the defense industry which has increased production by a rate of 30% there are other indirect costs in Russia's defense budget. [7]

The ministry of labor is spending a large part of its budget with veterans and families and those who have passed fighting in the war. Other expenditures are going to subsidized funds that are being used to rebuild the so-called provinces that Russia has illegally occupied from Ukraine. A budget of around 500 trillion rubles was allocated to this category of funds in 2024.

The Russian Federation is optimistic that the overall budget will increase because of regulatory price increases in oil and gas at international level. However, expert opinions differ on this topic. Several factors might impact the price at which oil is transitioned on the international market. The end of Assad regime in Syria might enable the development of a new gas pipeline from the Middle East through Turkey and eventually to Europe that could further decrease European dependency on Russian oil and gas. Another event worth mentioning is the fact that on December the 12th of 2024, OMV has abruptly ended its contract of oil distribution with Gazprom. The impact of this decision will also trigger long term effects of the fluctuation of energy prices.

2. Conclusions

While the current total defense budget of the EU is more than 4 times the defense budget of the Russian Federation, the evolution of this budget for the past 10 years has been a closer one that it has looked on paper. The Russian Federation had an advantage and it increased its defense expenditures starting earlier, from the beginning of the Putin administration in the early 2000's. This has allowed the Russian Federation to take an advantage in developing more capabilities and shifting its industry complex to a much more efficient one (Russian Federation defense industry running on *war speed*, not *peace speed*).

As we know from the reality of scarce resources and defense management rarely do cost and benefits happen together. For this reason, the increased Russian defense budget, has given the Russian Federation an edge over NATO in terms of military outputs, one that will take some time to reduce.

Furthermore, there is a visible difference in how different NATO countries have approached the consensus to increase defense expenditures. While for countries like Poland, Romania, the Baltic States there has been a general desire to go beyond the 2% all the way up to 4% and more because of the proximity of the war in Ukraine to their own borders, other countries have delayed any investments in defense up until 2022. The pressure from the USA that all member states contribute more to NATO is a correct one from a conceptual point of view, but in technical terms, due to increase in defense allocation being realized just marginally as national budgets can only work in that way, the American presence in Europe remains crucial in front of an expanding Russian army, whose ambitions in positioning itself as a regional power from a military standpoint remains as a priority regardless of any economic fluctuations that might affect its overall capacity to finance the conventional wars it has set up to develop.

References

- [1] Cochino, A., *Rusia alocă pentru 2024 cel mai mare buget militar din istoria sa modernă, semn al pregătirii pentru un război prelungit*, Libertatea, 2023 <https://www.libertatea.ro/stiri/buget-militar-razboi-rusia-2024-4681407>
- [2] Econmedia.ro, *Why Putin's regime might be closer to a soviet collapse than we think*, 2024 <https://economedia.ro/regimul-lui-putin-ar-putea-fi-mai-aproape-de-un-colaps-sovietic-decat-credem-de-ce-razboiul-din-ucraina-s-ar-putea-incheia-la-riad-the-telegraph.html>
- [3] Ene, C., *Elita Rusiei trage un semnal de alarmă în privința economiei. Industria de apărare, amenințată*, adevarul.ro, 2024 <https://adevarul.ro/stiri-externe/rusia/elita-rusiei-trage-un-semnal-de-alarma-asupra-2408102.html>
- [4] Macrotrends, *Russia Military Spending/Defense Budget 1992-2024*, Macrotrends website, 2024 <https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/countries/rus/russia/military-spending-defense-budget>
- [5] Meunier, M., P., *Russia Is on a Slow Path to Bankruptcy, But How Slow?*, War on the Rocks, 2024 <https://warontherocks.com/2024/09/russia-is-on-a-slow-path-to-bankruptcy-but-how-slow/>
- [6] NATO Public Diplomacy Division, *Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2014-2024)*, Press Release, 2024 https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2024/6/pdf/240617-def-exp-2024-en.pdf
- [7] Yefimenko., Y., Lastovyria, M., Tanska-Vykulova, M., *The collapse of the Russian economy, The Counteroffensive with Tim Mak*, 2024, <https://www.counteroffensive.news/p/the-collapse-of-the-russian-economy>