

THE PRESIDENT OF ROMANIA: DESIGNATION, ROLE, MANDATE

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ABSTRACT: *The President of Romania is elected through universal, equal, direct, secret, and freely expressed vote. In order to run for this office, the individual must be a Romanian citizen and at least 35 years of age. The election of the President is validated by the Constitutional Court of Romania, and the mandate commences upon the taking of the Oath of Office. The current duration of the presidential mandate is five years, with the same individual being entitled to a maximum of two consecutive terms. The President of Romania's duties are generally consistent with those of a semi-presidential republic. During their mandate, the President is not allowed to belong to any political party. Among other responsibilities, the President of Romania also serves as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.*

KEY WORDS: *President, mandate, promulgation, decree, candidate, elections, vote, republic, referendum.*

JEL CLASSIFICATIONS: *KI*

1. INTRODUCTION

The presidential office is unipersonal in nature. Commonly referred to as the Head of State, considering the form of government, specific duties, and the mechanisms at the President's disposal, the term "Head of State" seems increasingly outdated. The Romanian people have a long history, evolving within the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic space and its surroundings, succeeding their ancestors, primarily the Dacians and Romans, as well as other nations who, for various reasons, passed through these regions. The Romanian states began to take shape in the first centuries of the last millennium, with the official name of Romania being used since the mid-19th century. However, the role of the President of the state is discussed only after the change in the form of government at the beginning of the post-war period.

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After the establishment of the republic, the foundation was laid for the creation of the office of President of Romania, and the first Presidents exercised their duties during the communist regime. In the post-revolutionary period, 4 individuals have held the office of President of Romania for varying lengths of time. Regarding the form of government, an analysis is unnecessary within this document, as the focus is on a different theme. However, it is important to consider Aristotle's assertion, made in ancient times, that "no form of government, be it monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy, is good if personal interest prevails over the common good" (Dănișor, 2011, p.179). Therefore, the form of government itself is not necessarily the key to a state's success, but rather how it is understood and applied, with public interest placed at the forefront.

Before addressing some aspects concerning the election, role, mandate, and other issues related to the presidential office, I will clarify a few points regarding the context of holding the highest office in the state, both in the past and in the present. Thus, since the establishment of the modern Romanian state, the supreme office was first held by the ruler, then by the king, until 1947. Subsequently, Romania became a republic, and under the current supreme law, it operates as a semi-presidential republic. According to specialized literature, this form of government is characterized by a designation method specific to presidential republics, but the holder of the office possesses limited competences, more akin to a president in a parliamentary republic.

The legal basis for the designation, organization, and functioning of the presidential office is the constitution, which has been in force for approximately three and a half decades, with only one revision occurring twelve years after its enactment. Some of the constitutional provisions amended during the revision process specifically addressed the President of Romania.

2. THE DESIGNATION OF THE PRESIDENT OF ROMANIA

Unlike monarchies or parliamentary republics, the President of Romania is elected by popular vote from eligible citizens. In terms of legitimacy, the President of Romania holds the highest legitimacy among all Romanian dignitaries, being elected through a uninominal vote by the majority of eligible voters.

To be eligible to run for the office of President of Romania, the candidate must be **at least 35 years old** on the date of the presidential election. This age requirement is the highest age limit set for elective offices in our country. From an analytical perspective, this subject can be extensively discussed. Although the right to vote is granted at the age of 18, for the holder of this right to run for the highest office, they must have completed an additional 17 years. On the other hand, for other public offices designated by vote, the state-established age limit is lower, except for the members of the Senate of Romania, who may also be elected, by electoral means, after reaching the age of 33. Regarding the condition for presidential candidates, it is likely that the candidate is expected to have considerable experience, as the constituent legislator established such a limit. From a historical standpoint, however, in monarchies, there have been state leaders much younger, some even minors, as was the case in the Kingdom of Romania during the period 1927–1930, when the duties of the king were exercised by a Regency established for this purpose. Moreover, a higher age limit that

would condition access to the presidential office could have been justified by the intention to accumulate superior experience, especially given the notion that politics, as it is often said, begins at an older age than education or a profession.

On the other hand, no maximum age limit has been set for an individual to hold the office of President of Romania.

Additionally, the individual running for the presidential office is not required to have a specific profession. "**Profession** refers to the qualification obtained after completing studies" (Răvaș, 2016, p.31), with the candidate potentially having diverse educational backgrounds.

Currently, the legislation also mandates the collection of a set number of supporting signatures, equivalent to two hundred thousand¹, for each candidate. This requirement can be seen as a formal procedure, especially for candidates from large political parties, whose membership numbers can ensure support; however, for independent candidates, and there have been such instances, gathering signatures may be a more challenging task.

There is no set limit to the number of candidates; in practice, any individual who meets all the conditions in full may run in the presidential elections.

The election of the President of the country is carried out through a uninominal vote, without candidate lists. A political party or, where applicable, an electoral alliance, may endorse a single candidate, with independent candidates also being eligible.

Although voter interest is not particularly high in Romanian elections, it is worth noting that, in the case of presidential elections, voter turnout has been higher than in parliamentary or European Parliament elections and, in some cases, even higher than in local elections.

Thus, in the presidential election of Romania held on May 20, 1990, a total of 12,232,498 valid votes were cast, with three candidates running. The election took place in a single round, and one of the candidates received 85.07% of the total valid votes cast (vve_competitori_circumscripții_presedinte.xlsx (live.com)).

Under the current Constitution, presidential elections have been organized in the years: 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2009, 2014, 2019, and 2024. Following the revision of the fundamental law, presidential elections have been organized at larger intervals, as can be seen from the years listed, a matter I will revisit in the section dedicated to the presidential mandate.

The election of the country's president may take place in a single round of voting or, as the case may be, in two rounds, in accordance with constitutional provisions. The President of the country can be designated in a single round only if one of the candidates obtains the majority of votes from the voters registered on the

¹ Law No. 370/2004 for the Election of the President of Romania, republished, with subsequent amendments and completions, Art. 27. Regarding the number of signatures, opinions differ, ranging from the elimination of this requirement to complicating it with a very large number of supporting signatures, so that the number of candidates for the presidential office would not be too large, in order to avoid trivializing the importance of the office. However, a very large number of supporting signatures could lead to a violation of Article 37 of the Constitution of Romania.

updated electoral rolls. This means, expressed in percentages, that one of the candidates must exceed 50% of the votes obtained from the total number of those registered on the lists.

For clarity, it should be specified that it is not sufficient for one of the candidates to obtain more than half of the votes of those who attend the vote. If turnout is low, the percentage indicated above will not be reached, as the calculation cannot be made based on the number of voters who actually cast their vote, but rather on the total number of the population registered on the permanent electoral rolls (the population with voting rights on the date of the presidential election). In practice, considering at least two aspects: voter participation, which is not very numerous, particularly in the first round of presidential elections, and the significant political division observed in domestic political life, it is unlikely that, in the near future, we will see a President designated through a single round of voting.

In such conditions, a second round of voting will be organized between the top two candidates from the first round. It does not matter in any way whether these candidates are supported by political parties or are independent candidates, and the number of votes obtained in each round does not carry over to the second round. The votes obtained in the first round of the presidential elections are taken into account to establish the ranking resulting from that round of elections. For the second round, both candidates start with 0 votes, and the candidate who receives the highest number of valid votes in the second round will be declared the President of Romania, effectively surpassing their opponent. In the purely theoretical situation where both candidates receive the same number of valid votes, logically, a new round of voting would be organized. However, this is a highly unlikely, theoretical situation.

The second round of the presidential election is organized two weeks after the first round, also on a Sunday.

The candidate for the presidential office must hold Romanian citizenship. A foreign citizen or a person without citizenship cannot acquire the office of President of Romania.

Additionally, the candidate must submit personal documents, as follows:

- declaration of acceptance of the candidacy for the office of President of Romania
- wealth declaration
- declaration of interests
- declaration regarding non-collaboration with the former Securitate (State Security).

The purpose of these documents is to highlight the following factual situations: no person may be compelled to run for office against their own will; the wealth owned by the President, together with their family (the spouse and minor children), is of public interest and must be disclosed (made public) from the moment of the candidacy. The wealth declaration is renewed annually, including at the end of the mandate, so that the assets and financial values can be correlated with the family's income; the private interests of the president, their family, and even their first-degree relatives, directly or through entities where the family holds shares or social parts, must be known and verifiable, so that these do not interfere with the presidential duties or conflict with the position held by the officeholder (the highest office in the state); given the activities of the former State Security prior to 1989, the candidate's affiliation,

regardless of their position (collaborator, employee), must be known. Furthermore, this set of documents is also required for occupying other elective offices, not just the presidential one.

A person running for the office of President of Romania must not have been convicted of any criminal offenses resulting in a custodial sentence, for crimes with intent as the form of guilt. For individuals who have been convicted, the condition for potential candidacy will only be met after rehabilitation, amnesty granted after the conviction, or decriminalization of the respective offense.

Presidential elections are validated by the Romanian Constitutional Court, which is also the authority that could annul the presidential elections if fraud is found to have influenced the final result. Furthermore, the Constitutional Court is the institution that validates or invalidates the results of referendums held for the removal of the President, after their suspension by the Parliament.

Established as the political-judicial authority in constitutional litigation, the Constitutional Court has specific duties concerning the presidential institution, including but not limited to: candidacy submission, validation/invalidating of election results, suspension from office, interim office, and presidential vacancy. It may also be useful to note that three members of the Court are appointed by the President of the country, based on pre-established conditions.

3. ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT OF ROMANIA

Although Romania is a semi-presidential republic, both theoretically and practically, it has been shown under the current Constitution that the role of the President is significant, even though it does not overlap with the extensive powers found in a presidential republic, such as the United States or France.

According to the Constitution: “(1) The President of Romania represents the Romanian state and is the guarantor of national independence, unity, and territorial integrity of the country.

(2) The President of Romania watches over the observance of the Constitution and the proper functioning of public authorities. To this end, the President exercises the function of mediation between the state powers, as well as between the state and society.”² When analyzed exhaustively, this provision grants the President a series of concrete responsibilities, which are regulated by other normative acts. However, the President does not possess powers similar to their counterparts in presidential republics: they do not directly govern the Government, nor with the help of a prime minister whose powers would be limited by the President. The President does not have the right to vote or to sanction (approve) laws enacted by the legislative authority. Nonetheless, the President of Romania holds a number of specific competences, such as:

-legislative Initiative: The President **can propose constitutional laws** (to revise the Constitution), based on a proposal from the Government. Thus, the initiative is conditioned by the existence of such a proposal from the Government.

² The Constitution of Romania, art.80

- promulgation of Laws: Organic and ordinary laws, before being published in the Official Gazette, are subject to the promulgation procedure. The President has the **option to return a law** to Parliament for reconsideration only once. As noted, not all categories of laws are subject to promulgation; constitutional laws do not undergo this step. The rationale behind excluding these laws from promulgation seems to be the process they undergo, which is specific to them—approval by citizens with voting rights, in a constitutional referendum. Effectively, the population decides whether they agree with the revision of the supreme law, making the President's promulgation unnecessary in this context. Furthermore, promulgating a law is not equivalent to sanctioning or exercising a veto right. The President does not have such powers; they can only request a reconsideration of a law passed by Parliament. Alternatively, within the framework of pre-emptive constitutional control conducted by the Constitutional Court, the President, like other structures or groups, may request the initiation of constitutional control by the Constitutional Court.

- appointment of Three Judges to the Constitutional Court: The three judges appointed by the President represent **one-third of the total members** of the Court. The appointments are made regularly, every three years, with the President appointing one judge each time.

- representation of Romania in the European Council: Although the fundamental law does not contain specific provisions on this matter, and this would not have been possible given that the Constitution was adopted many years prior to Romania's integration into the European Union, the context at the time of the Constitution's adoption was different. Moreover, even after the revision, despite the creation of a normative framework for harmonizing domestic law with European law, certain aspects were not expressly or specifically regulated, which led to further debates and decisions to establish the representative of Romania in the European authority composed of heads of state or prime ministers of member states. Ultimately, **Romania is represented by the President**, not the Prime Minister. For other European countries, representation aligns with the form of government to some extent. Thus, from monarchies, representatives are prime ministers, while from republics, they are either presidents, as in Romania's case, or prime ministers. Among the heads of state participating in the European Council are those from Cyprus, France, and Lithuania.

The European Union has evolved significantly since the mid-20th century, when six states laid the foundations for the European Communities. "The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty abolished the organization of the union on the three pillars and confirmed the legal personality of this subject of international law" (Tofan & Bercu, 2013, p. 14).

- consultation with the Government and Participation in Government Meetings. The President is not a member of the Government and, as such, does not directly lead its activities. However, in accordance with the constitutional text, the President may consult the Government on major issues or urgent matters. Furthermore, when the President deems it necessary to be present to manage significant issues or matters related to foreign policy, the President **participates in Government meetings and may chair them**. However, they do not have decision-making authority, which rests with the Prime Minister and Government members. In practice, it is not very common

for the President to participate in Government meetings. Nonetheless, the institutional relationship between the President and the Prime Minister must be balanced and based on collaboration, with important decisions requiring the agreement of both parties.

- appointment of the Government. This power consists of two components: the first, a very important component, involves the nomination of a candidate for the position of Prime Minister, and the second involves the formal appointment of the Government. The first component refers to the identification of the candidate for the top position in the Government. In carrying out this competence, the President must consult with parliamentary political parties and, if they choose, other entities. After these consultations, the President will indicate a single person who will have a limited period to form their team of ministers and a government program, which must then be presented to Parliament for a **vote of confidence**. The President's role in this phase is thus limited to nominating the candidate, but without this nomination, no one can become Prime Minister. In the Romanian system, the President's role is active but limited. It is active because, in other systems, the Prime Minister is usually the leader of the political party that wins the elections, or the monarch, in a constitutional democracy, has a formal role in such nominations. However, the President of Romania cannot nominate the candidate without considering the parliamentary reality, meaning that the nominated candidate will rely on parliamentary support. The second component of this prerogative concerns the actual appointment of the Government, based on the vote of confidence already granted by Parliament. This appointment is essentially a formal act at the presidential level, as the President cannot refuse it after the parliamentary vote.

- dissolution of Parliament. The dissolution of Parliament is a prerogative specific to presidents, though its applicability varies from one form of government to another and even within the same form of government. In presidential republics, this can be done more easily than in other types of republics. However, in Romania, specialists in the field believe that this presidential prerogative is purely theoretical. In the over three decades since the adoption of our Constitution, this power has never been exercised. Politically, this could occur when the President and the parliamentary majority come from different political forces. This political context began to be a real, rather than merely apparent, possibility after the 2003 revision of the Constitution, as the presidential term was no longer the same as the parliamentary term, and on certain occasions, the President has found themselves in opposition to Parliament, even being suspended by the legislative authority. Returning to the possibility of the President dissolving Parliament, this can only happen under the fulfillment of two cumulative conditions: first, Parliament must refuse to grant the vote of confidence to a Prime Minister nominated by the President for at least 60 days, and second, at least two candidates for the position of Prime Minister, nominated by the President, must have been rejected. In practice, only Parliament can reject the candidates, and it is presumed that Parliament would hardly accept rejecting two candidates for the Prime Minister role, as fulfilling this second condition would lead to the early termination of the mandate of each member of Parliament due to the dissolution and the consequent organization of new elections. On the other hand, holding this possibility without any conditions would allow the President to control the legislative power, as Parliament,

under the permanent pressure of dissolution decided by the President, would no longer exercise its legislative function sovereignly. Nonetheless, reconsidering the conditions for dissolution could be analyzed during a revision of the fundamental law. To avoid subjectivism, perhaps the dissolution of Parliament could be made possible for well-founded reasons, through the decision of the President, preceded by a prior favorable opinion from both the Government and the Constitutional Court.

- addressing Messages to Parliament. This is part of the institutional relationship between the President and the legislative power. The President may **officially** and solemnly address Parliament in joint sessions with messages regarding issues of major national interest. Through these messages, the President effectively presents their own vision on existing political issues and may request directions to be followed by Parliament or other structures.

- consultation of the population through referendum – represents a constitutional possibility for the convocation of national referenda, through which the population expresses its position in support of or opposition to major issues, at least in the President's view. Procedurally, this requires consulting Parliament for the organization of the referendum. In practice, however, this consultation has at times transformed more into a mere form of information, in order to fulfill the requirement to trigger the organization of a referendum. The issues on which the President may seek the population's opinion can be of any nature, given that this type of referendum is not binding in terms of the result; more precisely, the outcome of a valid referendum initiated by the President does not oblige any authority to comply but may constitute, at most, a strongly legitimate recommendation. Domestic practice has also recorded situations where the sitting president organized the referendum in conjunction with various elections. Regardless of the arguments presented by the initiators or supporters, such a referendum will always carry some electoral connotation, whether more or less pronounced. An example of a politically tinged referendum could be the one organized by the President of Romania, also a candidate for re-election in 2009, concurrently with the presidential elections, on a populist theme concerning the reduction of the number of parliamentarians. Moreover, the President-candidate, as the initiator of the referendum, did not intensively support his own program but rather focused his electoral campaign on the subject of the referendum. Furthermore, after the result of the referendum was validated, the erroneous idea of a categorical refusal to apply the result was perpetuated, although, as mentioned, the role of the consultation organized by the President is **strictly advisory** and not mandatory! This attribute was designed by the constituent legislator to assist the President in decision-making, knowing exactly where public opinion stands on certain issues that need to be managed. Therefore, it represents a useful option available to the President in relation to the people, including in dealings with other public authorities or external structures.

- changing the rank of diplomatic missions – being highly active in foreign policy, the President has competence in appointing or recalling Romania's representatives abroad, including regarding the rank of diplomatic missions, such as **embassies, consulates**, or other aspects related to their organization.

- exercising the function of Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces – represents one of the President's major competences. One of the arguments for the creation of

such a fundamental norm was to ensure, at the highest level, a unique military decision, to avoid discrepancies in urgent measures in case of military conflict. The military has its own organization, structured in accordance with legislation issued by Parliament, and at the government level, one of the ministries is the Ministry of Defence. However, major decisions belong to the President, in the aforementioned capacity as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. Additionally, in this capacity, the President **directly leads the Supreme Council of National Defence**, a key structure with military and associated roles. Based on these competences, the President can mobilize the army, either partially or fully. It is true that decrees issued by the President, even if they enter into force and produce legal effects immediately upon publication in the Official Gazette, will be confirmed by Parliament in exceptional cases, with Parliament convening if not in session and remaining active, as specified by the Constitution, throughout the duration of the conflict. The authority to mobilize the military is not linked to the President's military training. The assumption of the highest office in the state is not conditioned by military service or holding certain military ranks but concerns the competence of the leader to make decisions in the military field from the office with the widest legitimacy at the national level, namely the office of the President of Romania.

- concluding international treaties – this is also a competence in the field of foreign policy, where, as previously stated, the President holds multiple levers of power. Regarding international treaties in which Romania becomes an active subject, they are negotiated by the Government, concluded by the President, and must be ratified by Parliament in order to produce legal effects in relation to Romanian citizens. Although negotiations are conducted by the Government, international treaties are concluded by the President as **the country's chief representative**. Of course, the President cannot be compelled to conclude an international treaty against his will, even if governmental negotiations with other parties have been finalized. The President concludes such treaties if he agrees with their provisions in light of the set objectives. Ratification is a subsequent operation after the conclusion of an international treaty. To be enforceable in domestic law, the text of the treaty must also be approved by the legislative authority. Parliament cannot alter the treaty's text and has two options: either to ratify it or to refuse its ratification. As for international treaties that contradict the Constitution, they can only be ratified after their revision or after the revision of the national Constitution.

- declaring a state of siege or emergency – these are courses of action available to the President in exceptional situations. In cases of siege or emergency (regardless of its nature), the President can **decide and decree the corresponding state**. During such states, certain rights and freedoms may be temporarily restricted (for the duration of the state), and the administrative or public order authorities will receive new competences for managing the factual situations in which the country's territory finds itself, either partially or entirely. The COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, represented an opportunity to confront some of these states, and thus constitutional norms found their applicability. A crucial role in decreeing these states also lies with the legislative authority, with Parliament later pronouncing on the maintenance of these states and,

implicitly, the restrictions stemming from the exceptional situations that triggered their declaration.

- granting pardons – represents an act of clemency within the President's power. Among his numerous competences, not all of which are enumerated in this work, is the forgiveness of the execution of custodial sentences as determined by the courts. The pardon granted by the President of Romania is a personal act and is not limited to specific offenses or individuals. Thus, the President may decree a pardon for **any convicted person**, subject to procedural conditions. The decision to grant a pardon rests entirely with the President. However, it is observed that this presidential attribute is not exercised intensively, and some of the reasons for granting a pardon include humanitarian or social reasons (such as individuals convicted not for very serious offenses with pronounced negative consequences, but who support other people in precarious situations). This power has been criticized, citing various arguments. However, its retention within the President's competencies remains a natural option. I argue that if this prerogative were to be removed through a constitutional amendment, it should be granted to another authority, as contemporary life and societal realities sometimes necessitate the use of such mechanisms. The President's right to grant individual pardons must not be confused with any interference in the independence of the judiciary. A pardon can only be granted after a final custodial sentence has been pronounced, and the effect of the pardon pertains solely to the execution of the sentence, with other measures imposed by the judicial ruling remaining opposable to the concerned parties.

For the pronouncement of an individual pardon, it is not necessary to initiate a new trial.

- granting Titles and Decorations – This type of attribute is specific to presidents, regardless of the type of republic they lead, whether presidential or parliamentary, or even monarchs. We refer here to a widely encountered constitutional right, regardless of the form of government, where the holder of the highest representative office in the state has the competence to bestow titles and decorations for distinguished merits to **various persons**, both from among its citizens and beyond. Beyond the possibility of conferring these distinctions, the possibility of their withdrawal may remain open. Although the constitutional norm does not contain any regulations in this regard, practice, based on legally inferior norms or even as part of customs, has led to decisions regarding the withdrawal of such distinctions. In the future, such aspects should be strictly regulated through normative acts with legal force equal to that which created the possibility of conferring them, and the possibility of withdrawing a distinction awarded by the President of Romania should only be made by the person who granted the distinction. This would avoid any arbitrary situations and those generating subjectivism, even when based on inferior norms, whereby subsequent holders of the office could withdraw titles or decorations granted by their predecessors. Also, through the fundamental norm, it would not be without interest to set certain limits on the granting of these distinctions, in order to maintain their degree of appreciation and to avoid their excessive granting during the term of a particular President.

- granting of the Ranks of Marshal or Admiral – This can be correlated with the President's position as the Supreme Military Commander, and these ranks can be granted **under strict conditions**, relating to specific military operations or related circumstances, for soldiers or sailors, as the case may be.

The President of Romania also exercises other powers granted by domestic law. Although we are talking about a republican form of government with a President elected by universal suffrage, his specific competences place him in a middle ground, between the Presidents of republics across the world. The President has competences in relation to all three branches of government, represents the country abroad, and can make decisions or influence decision-making in many areas of activity.

4. THE PRESIDENTIAL MANDATE OF ROMANIA

This section will focus more on the duration of the mandate and their number, rather than the actual election, as the aspects concerning the designation are enumerated in the first part of the paper.

In the initial form of the current Constitution, the President was elected for a term of four years, but following the revision of the Constitution in 2003, the presidential term was extended by one year, reaching five years. The new provision created a different reality in the relationships between the state authorities. Given that the duration of a legislature is four years, it led to a situation where the presidential and parliamentary elections overlap (in the same year), once every 20 years. Until the amendment of the Constitution, practically, the elected president also benefited from a parliamentary majority, as the electoral effect made the elected president bring votes to the political formation(s) supporting him. In the new context, with parliamentary elections being organized at different intervals from the presidential elections, situations of opposition between the President and the parliamentary majority arose. With both appreciation and criticism, 2024 represents the year of the first overlap of elections, after decades. The existence of a presidential mandate equal in duration to that of Parliament presents several advantages:

- reducing the number of elections (scrutinies) held in the same period;
- the President collaborates, in principle, more easily with the other powers, as they are appointed in the same period and for the same duration;
- the governance program can also be assumed by the President, who appoints a Government based on a vote of confidence from a Parliament, with which, most of the time, he will have a smooth collaboration due to the political support offered prior to the election.

A presidential term longer than that of a parliamentary legislature also presents some advantages:

- the perspective of external representation for a longer period, generally corresponding to the same period during which the European Parliament and the European Commission exercise their mandates;
- the eventuality of diametrically opposed positions between the President on one hand, and Parliament and the Government on the other, following the constitution of the new Parliament, which could have positive outcomes.

In the event of a constitutional revision, it would be preferable, in my opinion, to return to the duration of the presidential term of four years, in order to ensure a "junction" at the central power level, to ensure the leadership of the state.

The same person can hold a maximum of **two presidential terms**, and to avoid any room for interpretation, the fundamental law clearly states that these can also be consecutive. Regarding the rationale behind limiting the number of terms for the presidential office, I will not dwell on it at this moment, but, as in other instances, I will rhetorically ask: why can the same person hold other public offices for a longer duration than that of the President?

According to the older Romanian Constitutions, especially those of the monarchical type, the holder of the supreme office in the state maintained the office for life, and parliamentary elections were also held periodically at that time. Therefore, in such cases, the issue of political or ideological compatibility between the holder of the supreme office and the representatives of the legislative and executive powers did not arise over a lifetime, as monarchs cooperated politically or at least institutionally with many political forces, both similar and different in ideology. Regarding political affiliation and more, during the term of office, the "presidential mandate is incompatible with being a member of a political party, as well as with any other public or private office" (Muraru & Tănăsescu, 2016, p. 266).

The President of Romania, summarizing in accordance with the Constitution, is elected by universal suffrage, holds competences specific to a President of a semi-presidential republic, and has a five-year mandate.

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