



2016

PARLIAMENTARY election

PARTY PLATFORMS

2016 has been a year of complex referendums, of many national elections and of severe changes in the international and national political arenas. In a few days, Romanians will go out to vote their next Parliament in an environment of popular distrust, corruption scandals, and gridlock of processes and institutions.

This Strategikon project looks at the political platforms of the four main parties, PSD (Social Democrats), PNL (National Liberals), USR (Save Romania Union), ALDE (Liberal Democrats). We discovered a lack of cohesiveness on the main issues affecting or poised to affect Romania for the next four years. These four main political parties understand that the economy needs to grow, the administration needs to be streamlined, more money is needed for education, health, and social benefits. And the consensus generally ends here, as each party identifies its own set of causes and frames its own solutions.

The intricacies of the budget, central and local administration, corruption, bureaucracy, investments, policies, all make leading a country a tricky business. Nonetheless, parties and politicians need to set aside ideologies and engage in a coherent dialogue to decide what are Romania's main problems. In a democracy, each party will envision the country, the role of the state and the path forward based on its own perception of the world but ideology is the coloring in a drawing book, it gives expression and feeling to a framework already decided upon. This analysis shows that Romania needs a two-tier dialogue: between grassroots and the establishment, and between those in the establishment.

Editorial note: data was compiled from the parties' documents, leader's press statements, but no governing program. We tried to be as thorough as possible while also streamlining the information into easy-to-read documents. We invited the parties to add any information they feel we have missed. To this date, no answer was received.



ON INVESTMENTS

PSD advocates for a general VAT level of 18% and tax cuts for a wide segment of the population (agricultural income, property transfer, those earning less than €5300/year, small businesses, R&D).

PNL advocates for a general VAT level of 16% and a general quota for social contributions for both the employee and the employer.

PNL pledges €11 billion over the next four years for an Urban-Rural Development Fund for strategic investments and another €200 million for the establishment of the Romanian Development and Investment Bank.

ALDE looks at macroeconomic indicators, it advocates reaching nominal convergence with the Euro, capping public debt at 40% of the GDP, running a budget deficit of maximum 3%, reducing inflation, and stabilizing the National Bank's reference rate. ALDE advocates for tax cuts without mentioning figures or beneficiaries and plans on financially supporting Romanians returning from working abroad and both IT&C and R&D specialists.

ALDE pledges €100 billion in state and private assets to finance large national projects, small and medium companies.

ON the ECONOMY

PSD aims at a 5.5% per year economic growth. By 2020 PSD

PNL is all about institutions, as it seeks to establish a Romanian

USR sees Romania as an industrial hub, linking Europe and Asia. They

ALDE would like to renegotiate the fiscal deficit ceiling, to allow for a



projects a minimum wage of €900/month, 0.9 million jobs created, and an unemployment rate of below 3.5%. PSD advocates for a Small Businesses and Entrepreneurship Ministry, for an incubator in each county, 10.000 start-ups financed every year, and state guaranteed loans. PSD promises jobs in the counties with a high unemployment rate and aims at enhancing the role of financial consultancies and thus avoid costly and very frequent state controls.

PSD would like to support Romanian exporters entering foreign markets, to decrease agricultural exports and respectively increase consumption of local production.

Agency for Investments and Exports Promotion, to redesign the role of the Export Council when it comes to representing the public-private partnership, and to decentralize the Agency for Exports Promotion so that each county can better promote itself.

envision an active role for the government which is supposed to invest, attract foreign investments, support industrial clusters, and inform possible investors on profitable sectors. USR bets on high tech R&D and start-ups owned by students. USR envisions an entrepreneurs' community well enmeshed in both the government and civil society.

2.5-3% deficit, to support innovation and high tech segments, and to re-industrialize the economy. ALDE pledges a public investment rate of over 6% of GDP and €5 billion a year in foreign investments. ALDE plans on turning consumption based economic growth into investment growth and to use all state assets, coupled with EU funds for industrial parks. ALDE plans on setting-up the Romanian Reconstruction and Development Bank, on reducing development discrepancies differences between villages and cities and between regions. ALDE plans on investing €50.000 in 8000 small businesses and €44.000 in 2.500 first businesses over the next four years, and some money for small towns to help reindustrialization. Public investments will be presented in a separate section of the state budget for adequate control.

ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

PSD pledges 2% GDP for defense, renewing the strategic partnership

PNL advocates joining Schengen and strengthening the strategic

USR vows to consolidate Romania's defense capabilities, to retain the

with NATO, the US, and the EU, supporting the defense industry and modernizing the equipment of the Romanian Armed Forces.

partnership with both the US and the European Union. PNL pledges renewed efforts to lobby Romanian interests abroad and to improve the country's image.

European Commission Mechanism for Cooperation and Verification, and to prepare for the Romanian presidency of the Council, based on the vision of a united Europe, a reformed Ukraine and a reformed Moldova, a strong EU agricultural policy and increased funding for the Danube. USR believes in the European integration of Moldova and in developing the Ukrainian economy, instituting political reforms, maintaining territorial integrity, and supporting Romanian communities living in Ukraine.

ON EU FUNDS

PSD plans on increasing the absorption rate to €20 billion by 2020 through ensuring co-financing and streamlined procedures.

PNL plans to decentralize EU funds management and to improve the absorption and implementation processes through the development of administrative capacity, systematization of selection criteria, co-financing for private entities running transnational projects, bringing all management authorities (except rural development) under the EU Funds Ministry, improvement of control mechanisms, and the establishment of pilot projects that can be easily replicated.

ALDE plans on increasing the absorption rate by establishing a catalogue of available financing methods (national funds, structural EU funds, hedge funds).



ON the HEALTH SYSTEM

PSD wants to increase the wages of medical personnel to at least €1.200. PSD plans on building the Carol Davila teaching hospital with a capacity of 2500 beds, plus eight other regional hospitals, all by 2020. PSD wants to renew the ambulances park and to place an ambulance in each village.

PNL wants to double doctors' wages starting July 2017 and nurses' wages in five years' time. They plan on building eight emergency regional hospitals and 900 village clinics, plus dental and general medicine clinics in schools and universities. PNL's pledges universal, free, prevention, family planning, and vaccination programs. They want to involve academia and NGOs in policy making, roll screening programs and support the practice of dental tourism.

USR pledges 6% of GDP to the health sector, over the next 2-4 years. USR advocates changing the paying method of doctors, from monthly fix wages to performance based salaries. USR is very keen on prevention, it advocates for universal, free access to basic services, more budget allocations to primary medicine and equipment, more money for village clinics, more data on health. It also looks at the management of the system, as it plans on decentralizing services, instituting professional management, informing patients through apps, investing in HR policies, and deciding on investment and acquisition based on big data.

ALDE stresses the need to have good doctors working in villages.

ON AGRICULTURE

PSD pledges €100 million in investments, another €240 million to support locally grown products, and a series of mutual funds to protect farmers against price volatility. PSD advocates for lower or zero taxes on land and equipment and on the creation of monitoring system for

PNL advocates for the creation of an Agricultural Investments Fund, for the establishment of large common public-private enterprises, for financial incentives for small and medium farms, and for eliminating the intermediaries between producers and processors. PNL

USR vows to lower barriers to credits, collective bargains, and eligibility to the Rural Development National Program. USR advocates for financially assisting farmers in setting up associations and deposits.

ALDE advocates for setting up large farms and then awarding substantial tax cuts. ALDE pledges irrigation systems for 2.5 million acres by 2020, support for cereals deposits, processing facilities, and greenhouses. ALDE advocates for wider efforts to register land, more



imports in order to detect counterfeiting. PSD vows to streamline legislation, register all lands by 2020 free, and increase the prerogatives of the National Authority for Consumer Protection.

advocates for infrastructure development (irrigation, land registration, works on the Danube) and national brand promotion both internally and on external markets. PNL pushes for taxing all agricultural producers and for training regarding European norms.

specialists in villages, and changing legislation so that only farmers with at least 5 years' experience can buy agricultural land.

ON EDUCATION

PSD pledges €45 million in new scholarships, rising the amount of current scholarships, and some more money for the integration of graduates into the workforce. PSD would like to have an entrepreneurship high school in each county and a new, online portal with available programs, jobs opportunities, financing schemes.

PNL pledges resilience scholarships for poor school children, a 20% yearly increase in teachers' salaries, 50 000 kindergartens, 18 000 new places in elementary and high school, new university campuses, the reopening of vocational high schools. PNL wants school to start at age 4, differentiated high school entry and finishing exams, external university evaluation, student loans. PNL advocates for tightening the relationship with the business community and rising the number of international programs.

USR pledges 6% GDP for education, more mentors, social workers, counsellors in schools. USR would like a greater involvement of local mayor's offices into supporting local schools and teachers and adopting teaching models from established NGOs. USR advocates for introducing new courses, more flexibility in choosing individual academic tracks, vocational schools next to industrial clusters and tax cuts for companies employing graduates, mentorship programs. USR would like to differentiate between vocational masters and academic masters.

ALDE wants more teachers in village schools, and a curriculum in line with market necessities and leaning towards entrepreneurship.

ON FAMILIES

PSD pledges more social housing, 42 social assistance centers, higher child allowances and pensions.

PNL pledges after school programs at the parents' job location, free in vitro insemination and women screenings, tax cuts for couples



having three children, and no taxes on pensions.

ALDE, PNL, and PSD support the referendum on changing the constitution to explicitly legalize heterosexual marriage. USR is split, some members are pro, some factions are against the referendum, while the leader Nicusor Dan stated that at the moment bigger issues are at stake.

ON CULTURE

PSD pledges youth summer camps and community cultural centers.

PNL pledges a Cultural Mall, new legislation regarding national patrimony and sponsorship, setting up the Communism Museum, support for international cultural programs and Romanian artists, and tax cuts to creative industries. PNL pledges to mark Romania at 100.

USR pledges to support artists, mobility schemes, artistic initiatives, to have professional management for institutions dealing with culture and artists, new legislation regarding national patrimony and expropriations.

ON BUREAUCRACY

PSD pledges a streamlining of commercial and administrative legislation, simplifying paper work, digitizing the payment of taxes, and reducing the number of taxes.

PNL advocates for deregulation, red tape reduction, a smaller number of both taxes and interactions between the citizen and the public administration based on the concept of one-stop-shop, interconnected databases.

USR pledges a simplified working relation between companies and the state, a lower number of competing institutions, periodic assessments of public servants, and updated online information regarding the day to day activities of the administration. USR advocates for a streamlined, digitized administration and for standardized prices for hardware for public institutions.

ALDE advocates for making information more accessible, linking databases, and making public administration more transparent and more reliant on digital means.

ON ENERGY

PSD pledges to modernize the electricity grid, to expand the gas

PNL pledges €50 million in guarantees for local companies investing in international projects,

USR pledges investments in renewables, regulated tariffs, a smart electricity grid, passing laws

ALDE pledges a new mining law, increased energy efficiency, support for investments and for big



system, and to build micro-hydro plants.

building the necessary infrastructure to bring gas from the Black Sea to the mainland, diversifying gas sources and further investing into new oil and gas discoveries, a balanced legal framework able to both satisfy the state's need for revenues and incentivize investors. PNL pledges to empower the local administration into keeping some of the taxes collected from energy projects in their jurisdiction. PNL plans to simplify the procedures for switching electricity providers.

on biomass, thermal insulation for 1.8 million houses, by 2030.

electricity consumers, allowing them to modernize.

ON INFRASTRUCTURE

PSD pledges to invest in the 3rd Corridor in a series of highways, in three subway lines, in extending the Otopeni airport, and in linking the port of Constanta though highways and rail to the national transportation system.

PNL vows 3% GDP for infrastructure and envisions Romania as a regional, logistics hub. PNL advocates linking national rail and road infrastructure to the European system, completing works on the European 4th Corridor and starting works on the 10th Corridor, increasing traffic on the Danube and modernizing the port of Constanta, developing the airports strategy, building a Bucharest Belt highway and two more subway lines.

USR pledges to depoliticize the institutions managing the transportation system, to give public bidding to companies with proven experience, to build national highways and the Bucharest Belt, to invest in existing roads, in the railway infrastructure, and to open a ferryboat line with Georgia and Turkey.

ALDE pledges to support R&D, the Măgurele Laser and the Danubius Center for maritime research.



ON the JUSTICE SYSTEM

PSD pledges to set up 12 more commercial courts.

PNL pledges to centralize and streamline the system, to invest in training, to separate the management of courts from the judicial matters, to draft a new anticorruption strategy, better reintegration programs, building new courts and jails, and increasing the number of judges.

USR pledges to speed up the court process, to set up assessment procedures of judges and prosecutors, to digitize courts workings, and to simplify the procedures.

ON the Environment

PSD pledges an afforestation program worth €290 million, €527 million for waste management systems, €140 million to decontamination efforts, and €600 million to preventing floods.

PNL pledges large afforestation programs, to reduce air pollution, to support hybrid transportation, to better manage waste, to register all water sources, to reduce the risk of desertification and floods along the Danube and in the Delta, and to restructure the Environment Fund.

USR pledges to depoliticize environment agencies, to stop illegal deforestation, and to establish the National Forest Registry, based on GIS data.

ON IT&C

PNL pledges to increase internet penetration to 60% in three years and to improve the infrastructure, to promote online shopping and banking.

USR pledges investment in professional training for those unemployed and under 35.

ALDE promotes the better usage of IT&C for the purposes of transparency and decreasing fraud.



ON RELIGION

PNL advocates for a state-church partnership for charitable work, in line with the religion affiliations of the population. PNL pledges to work with the Orthodox Church for a demographic policy and to support the orthodox churches outside Romania.

ON ELECTIONS

USR pledges to reduce the number of signatures required to enter electoral races, to allow for local parties, and to elect local governors in two rounds.

