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## DIVISION OF FUNCTIONS WITHIN ROMANIA'S CENTRE OF GOVERNMENT: A LONG HISTORY OF REFORMS

**Alina Georgiana PROFIROIU**

PhD, Bucharest University of Economic Studies,  
Department of Public Administration and Management, Bucharest, Romania  
alina.profiroiu@amp.ase.ro

**Cristina TITIRIȘCĂ**

Assistant Professor PhD, Bucharest University of Economic Studies,  
Department of Public Administration and Management, Bucharest  
cristina.titirisca@amp.ase.ro

### Abstract:

After the fall of communist regime in Romania, the structure of Romania's Government Working Apparatus (the Government Office) was subject to several reforms trying to establish an adequate role for each of the entities. Although the composition of the Government Working Apparatus may vary, its central piece is the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG), which, in governments with a strong prime minister, has tried to share power with the Prime Minister's Chancellery.

The aim of this paper is to explore the evolution of the reforms of the Government's Working Apparatus (Government Office) in Romania after 2001 and how the functions between the General Secretariat of Government and the Prime Minister's Chancellery are divided after the recent reforms within the Centre of Government in order to assure a better coordination. The methodology of this paper consists in a content analysis of the legal framework, public administration reform strategies, technical reports of some projects conducted by the General Secretariat of Romania's Government and World Bank's studies and reports. This paper reports aspects on a longitudinal study between 2001-2021, which set out to examine and evaluate the roles of different organisational structure within Romania's Government Office. The empirical data of this paper were also collected through a series of discussions with top public policy makers in charge with reform of central public administration.

The General Secretariat of the Government (GSG) has always possessed a central role in the structure of the Government Office, its part being to assure the technical and strategic operations regarding Government acts and to solve the organisational, judicial, economic, and technical problems of Government and prime-minister's activity, also the representation of the Government in the justice. GSG is the element of connection and stability of governance that assures the framework for decision making process.

Recently, in February 2020, the Orban Government has approved two government decisions by which both the Prime Minister's Chancellery and the General Secretariat of the Government have been reorganised. Both measures were part of the priorities of the Government Program, namely improving the efficiency of public administration, aiming at reforming the Centre of Government. Thus, the functions of the two structures were better defined and delimited, in the sense that the General Secretariat of the Government was to provide the technical / administrative secretariat of the Government, while the Chancellery would have the role of strategic coordination. In this sense, within the Chancellery operated the Centre for Analysis and Strategy and the Independent Scientific Council, while subordinated to the General Secretariat of the Government were the institutions which were to provide data and information to the Chancellery for analysis and studies that would underpin public policy programs. The essential role of the Chancellery thus became to coordinate the ministries in the process of elaboration and monitoring of the institutional strategic plans, to approve the governmental strategies, precisely to ensure the correlation of these strategies, as well as to correlate the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of public policies.

Unfortunately, this reform was implemented only for a short period of time and nowadays, in January 2021, when a new prime-minister has come, the role of the Chancellery was diminished once again. Its role was focused on communication and relation with media and on the coordination, at the level of the Government Office, of the reform process regarding public administration and relation with civil society and social partners.

**Keywords:** Center of Government, General Secretariat of the Government, coordination, reform

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## INTRODUCTION

Romania's Government Working Apparatus constitutes the Centre of Government (COG) that in literature is considered as "the body or a group of bodies that provides direct support and advice to the head of the government and the council of ministries" (OECD 1996, 11).

After the fall of the communist regime in Romania, the structure of Romania's Government Working Apparatus was the subject of several reforms trying to establish an adequate role for each entity. But as Dunleavy and Rhodes have shown (1990, 4), the Centres of Governments (COGs) in Central and East Europe failed to "pull together and integrate central government policies or act as final arbiters" for conflicts between different entities of government machinery. This situation is explained by Goets & Margetts (1999,425-453) as "a lack of nodality, authority and policy expertise at the COG".

Other researchers explained that EU rule adoption in Central Europe has been dominated by EU Conditionality, considered as the key mechanism that shaped adaptation of domestic laws in Central Europe (Zubek, 2008).

The Government's Working Apparatus consists of a number of bodies. In Romania, the composition of the Government Office varies from one government to another, depending on the political power of the Prime Minister, who can choose whether he will be supported by a more extensive administrative structure or not. Just as in France, within the Centre of Government, in addition to the General Secretariat of Government (GSG), which has mainly an administrative role, the Prime Minister of Romania is assisted by a Cabinet, with political functions, which has sometimes been integrated into a larger structure called the Prime Minister's Chancellery., In Romania, as in France "the General Secretariat of Government is an original institution emerged from combination between French ministerial cabinet model and English General Secretary" as Eymeri -Douzans and Magenot (2019) have defined.

According to the Law on the Government's organisation (Article 20 of Law no.90/2001), Romania's Government Working Apparatus consists of the Prime-Minister's Office or from the Prime-Minister's Chancellery, a structure that has in its composition the advisers of the Prime Minister), GSG, departments and other organisational structures established by Government Decision. As Stamule Tănase (2018) mentioned, these structures depend on the changes in the ruling party strategy: if the Prime Minister is the leader of the ruling party, he would prefer to have a strong Prime Minister's Chancellery, while if the Prime Minister is not a strong leader of ruling party, it would be preferable to have a strong General Secretariat, which would share the influence within the party.

Alongside with the GSG and the Prime Minister's Chancellery (which in some governments is called the Prime Minister's Office) also works the Deputy Prime Minister's Office (sometimes there are even two Deputy Prime Ministers, each with his own apparatus), as well as the Department for the fight against fraud - DLAF, which is the liaison institution with the European Anti-Fraud Office - OLAF, the Prime-Minister control department, a structure, subordinated to the Prime-Minister, belonging to the Government Working Apparatus, financed through GSG budget, as well as other departments whose names vary. We mention here the Department for Interethnic Relations, the Department for Relations with the Parliament, the Department for Relations with the Republic of Moldova (which accomplishes the Romanian state policy aiming at consolidating the community of language, culture, religion, spirituality and history that is the basis of Romania's relationship with the

Republic of Moldova, considered to be the "little sister" of the Romanian state) or the Department for Romanians from Everywhere. The latter plays a very important role in the elaboration and application of the Romanian state policy in the field of relations with Romanians who lived abroad (which are quite large in numbers), and acts to strengthen ties with them and to preserve, develop and express their identity, respecting the state legislation whose residents or citizens are, such as and in accordance with relevant international standards.

The aim of this paper is to explore the evolution of the reforms of the Government's Working Apparatus (Government Office) in Romania after 2001 and how the functions between the General Secretariat of Government and the Prime Minister's Chancellery are divided after the recent reforms within the Centre of Government, especially how the eight dimensions of the coordination identified by SIGMA (2004) are covered by the components of COG in Romania.

The methodology of this paper consists in a content analysis of the legal framework, public administration reform strategies, technical reports of some projects conducted by the General Secretariat of Romania's Government and World Bank's studies and reports. This paper reports aspects on a longitudinal study between 2001-2021, which set out to examine and evaluate the roles of different organisational structure within Romania's Government Office. The empirical data of this paper were also collected through a series of discussions with top public policy makers in charge with reform of central public administration.

## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

In literature, Rhodes(1995) payed attention to the core executive and all range of organisations which coordinate central government policies and could be final mediators of conflicts between different components of the government machine. He identified some weaknesses and strengths of different theoretical approaches regarding the core executive.

Hefferman (2003) studied the leadership predominance in UK that allow to the prime minister to accumulate personal and institutional power resources and to exercise an intra-executive authority within the core executive.

In France, General Secretariat of the Government has become an element of stability and permanence of the French State between the two Wars, which assures the continuity, and has benefit of the competence and the force of the civil service and it was define by Bonini (1987) as "an original institution, a combination between the model of French ministerial cabinet and General secretariat existent in England".

Zubek (2008) focused in his book on institutional mechanism that different cabinets and prime ministers from three Central and Eastern European countries have at their disposal to assure the mobilisation and monitoring ministerial compliance in the process of transposition of EU-legislation.

New Public Management approach has produced fragmentation and a lack of cooperation between public authorities and organisations to deal with "wicked problems", which exceed organisational boundaries. (Bouckaert et al, 2010, Lægreid, P and Rykkja, 2015) The multi-level and multi-organisational state apparatus have generated an increasing need of vertical as well as horizontal coordination. The coordination practices emerged from a need of efficiency of state machinery and determined an increasing capacity of the government to solve the complex societal challenges (Bogdanor, 2005, Christensen and Lagreid, 2007, Painter and Pierre, 2005, Lagreid et al, 2014).

In practice, SIGMA (2004) identified eight dimensions of the coordination at the level of Central Government: coordination of the preparedness of Government sessions; coordination of Government Programme and priorities, and their linkage with the budget; coordination of the policy content of Government's proposals; coordination of communications; coordination of the monitoring

of Government performance, coordination of relations with the President and Parliament, and coordination of specific horizontal strategic priorities (OECD/SIGMA, 2004).

## **2. THE LACK OF COORDINATION – THE MAIN DYSFUNCTION OF THE ORGANISATION AND THE FUNCTIONING WITHIN THE CENTRE OF GOVERNMENT (THE GOVERNMENT'S WORKING APPARATUS) IN THE LAST 20 YEARS**

Similar to other countries from Central and Eastern Europe, Romania suffered of institutional fragmentation in central government, due to the high number of line ministries (between 14 and 20) in each government, that poses “exceptional coordination challenges” and “at the same time, creates formidable obstacles to central coordination efforts”, as Goets and Margetts have mentioned.

Even in 2005, before Romania's accession to the EU, Prime Minister Călin Popescu Tăriceanu tried to create a large structure called the Prime Minister's Chancellery to monitor the activity of line ministries led, at the time, by ministers of coalition in power composed by four parties ( Democratic Party, National Liberal Party, Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania and Conservative Party) . The Chancellery was supervised by a head of the Chancellery with the rank of Minister and was a structure comprising of less than 13 compartments devoted to the monitoring of the activity of ministries and, in addition, the Department of Government Spokesperson and Press Relations and a Department for Social Dialogue.

Although the composition of the Government's Working Apparatus may vary, its central part is the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG), which in governments with a strong prime minister has tried to share power with the Prime Minister's Chancellery. Shaped after the French model, the GSG has always played a central role in the structure of the Government's Working Apparatus, its role being to “ensure the conduct of technical and strategic operations related to government acts, solving organisational, legal, economic and technical issues of the Government and the Prime Minister, as well as the representation of the Government and the Prime Minister before the courts”. The GSG is an element of liaison and stability of Government, providing the necessary framework for the decision-making system.

In the end, we could say, as Lasvignes (2006, p.6) already declared, that the “General Secretariat of Government is the entry door for Official Journal”. Its main responsibilities are to monitor the implementation of the government program, to organise and prepare Government meetings, to ensure the compliance with procedures for submitting draft regulations for adoption by the Government, and the representation of the Government and the Prime Minister before the courts.

A noteworthy issue, as Dinu et al.(2010) mentioned, was that numerous Agencies reported directly to the Centre of Government, that is time consuming for the Prime-minister itself or for those in charge with coordination responsibility in the name of the Prime-Minister, duplicating or reducing, in that case, the Ministers' authority. Even there sometimes a legal or a political reason or a EC's requirement to locate an agency at the Centre or to demonstrate its high priority for the Government, but in that could be an exception.

In fact, the Centre of Government was reorganised in 2009 by dissolving the Prime Minister's Chancellery and reducing the number of agencies subordinated to the Government or to the GSG, through absorption or merger but even so, an important number of agencies subordinated to the Centre of Government were unnecessary.

The OECD/SIGMA report (2004), which examined the extent to which the basic functions of the Centre of Government on Public Policy Coordination are ensured in Romania, has drawn two fundamental conclusions: “although exist the institutions and legal framework to support the efficient management of public policies, the execution itself is deficient; the public policy process operates in disconnected from the budgetary process.” At the time of Romania's accession to the EU, the

crucial dysfunctionalities that affected the quality of Romania's public policy process, recorded by the European Commission in its 2004 country report (OECD / SIGMA 2004), were the following: the poor link between public policies and financial planning; the poor quality of public policy deliberations and the prevalence of ad hoc decisions; the lack of information on performance, as well as the public policy function organisation and the functioning of Centre of Government.

At the same time, the recommendations of the IMF's report (2010) emphasised the need of harmonisation of policies and financial planning, because the public policy and financial planning continue to operate largely separately. At the level of setting priorities, there is no formal process to ensure that decisions on resource allocation are guided by public policy priorities or that structured debates are held on determining budget envelope based on public policy reasons. National Reform Program and other national strategies approved by the Government were not directly transposed in the line ministries' priorities or approved budgets, which continued to be to the discretion of line ministries. Beyond the problems of the process, it was recommended to create an adequate decision-making forum, who introduced a possible source of political priorities, even if its decision-making process has worked on a consensus. Thus, it was established a Group of Coordination, chaired by the Minister of Public Finance, and composed by a large number of members (12 ministers, 4 heads of agencies, the GSG) and the form (open to the media, external guests) did not lead to difficult decisions related to the public policies. To address this shortcoming, several options were recommended by IMF(2010): the first option considered was the creation of a more powerful body, led by the Minister of Public Finance, the second one was to revitalise the Strategic Planning Committee, led by the Prime-Minister, in which the Minister of Public Finance has to be the Vice-President. Such option had an advantage: this body have allowed them to form a common front against the spending requests of the line ministries before it reached the Prime Minister's table in the government meeting. A third option was to discuss key issues at government meetings. Whatever chosen option, the but was to draw a sustainable fiscal strategy, based on clearly articulated government priorities ( Dinu et al., 2010).

A World Bank report (2010) analysed the following organisational structures: the function of public policies at the level of the Centre of Government; the function of public policies in the line ministries; organisation of the GSG and the institutions subordinated to the Centre of Government (COG).

Regarding the function of public policies at COG level, the main institution located in the Centre of Government is the Public Policy Directorate (PPD). Ever since 2004, the Public Policy Directorate was created for the first time within the GSG, which had the role of establishing the methodological and organisational framework for the system of planning, elaboration and implementation and evaluation of public policies at the level of line ministries and other specialised bodies of public administration. In addition, this entity establishes the general framework for defining the Government's priorities, monitors their correlation with public policies launched by line ministries and provides methodological support and advice to ministries on public policy formulation.

Although the Director of the Public Policy Directorate had excellent access to the Secretary-General, a policy implementation at the government-level would have been more readily accepted by line ministries if was led by a person with political engagement.

In 2007, the Public Policy Directorate had a reasonable number of employees (34 positions with analyst for each sector), organised into different sector. However, it was not structured as a conventional public policy direction and the most of the PPD's workload came from special tasks and support for the reform projects needed to join the EU, and unfortunately, not from policy management tasks. In order for to fulfil its mandate, it was necessary not only PPD to be restructured, but also the Government to be committed to implement the policy management reform.

Due to this fact, the employees of PPD did not have the capacity and the time to effectively fulfil their primary roles: strategic planning process, policy coordination and quality assurance, as well as monitoring and evaluation of public policies.

At that time, The Directorate for Government Strategies within the Government's Working Apparatus (24 positions) had also a policy mandate, but, in the past, it contracted external firms / external consultants to conduct research and studies. As a result, its activity was reduced in 2009 following the administrative reforms caused by the fiscal constraints triggered by the financial crisis.

Within the GSG also performed the compartment of Government Inspectors, consisting of persons who had held the position of general secretary or deputy general secretary of the ministries and other central bodies of public administration, as well as prefects and subprefects who were part of the high civil servants category, the only apolitical category of civil servants at that time, who since 2020 were again transformed in political positions.

As we mentioned, the GSG comprised of a wide variety of departments and functions. In order to assure a better coordination, it should be taken into consideration the possibility of removing from the GSG those departments that do not have mandate and responsibilities in the field of policy coordination (e.g., the compartment of Government Inspectors).

At the beginning of the crisis, in 2009, the next government led by Prime-Minister Emil Boc abolished the Prime Minister's Chancellery, replacing this large structure with a smaller structure called the Prime Minister's Working Apparatus, consisting only of the prime minister's office, the body of state secretaries and state advisers and the registry of the Prime-Minister, while the Spokesperson's Department became part of the GSG. During the Boc Government (2009-2011), the Prime-minister's working Apparatus consisted of only 34 positions, which included his policy advisers dealing with different policy sectors, such as public administration, economy, or social policy. The separation of the political roles and responsibilities and those related to administrative policy has never been fully clarified. Due to the poor working relations between the Prime-minister's advisers and Public Policy Directorate there was not a real coordination between them regarding the review of strategies, the substantiation notes or other policy documents, and their roles and responsibilities were not fully clarified. Thus, the GSG convenes and supervises the ordinary Government preparatory meeting attended by the line ministries in order to ensure inter-ministerial coordination before the Government meeting. ( Dinu et.al, 2010)

In addition to the abolition of the Prime Minister's Chancellery, the 2009 reform also aimed to reduce the number of agencies subordinated to the Government or the GSG. However, even after the restructuring, an unnecessarily large number of agencies continued to be subordinated to the Centre of Government.

In 2010, in addition to the GSG, but within the Government's Working Apparatus, there was also the Department for Relations with Parliament (with 65 positions) which coordinated the system of relations for preparing the legislative plan for the implementation of the Government Program and for promoting the Government 's proposals in front of the Parliament, as well as the Department for European Affairs (112 positions) whose role was to coordinate the process of reviewing and developing Romania's positions on European policy and legislation documents and to lead the planning process of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The economic and financial climate that followed the economic and financial crisis demanded new reforms in the different public policy and public finance domains and in order to maintain the fiscal parameters in the limits, European Commission has increasingly continued to monitor Member States' finances and public policy options.

In 2017, a new Government Decision no.21/2017 on the organisation, functioning and responsibilities of the General Secretariat of the Government would add to these structures two new functions: a function of strategy and a function of interinstitutional coordination, in order to increase the capacity of central authorities in the field of elaboration, implementation and monitoring of strategies, public policies and normative acts. In addition, were detailed the activities necessary for the organisation of the preparatory working meetings for the Government meeting.

At the same time, the role of the General Secretariat of the Government in terms of government strategies has been better defined, so that it:

1. develops and implements the policy in areas of open governance, transparency and access to information of public interest, public consultation and increasing the operational capacity of associations and foundations.
2. contributes to the substantiation of strategies and directions of action at government level and supports the knowledge and understanding of government strategies and projects in the country and abroad.

Pursuant to Government Decision no. 21/2017, the Prime Minister's Chancellery remained organised as a structure which does not have legal personality and it is subordinated to the Prime-minister.

### 3. RECENT REFORMS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S WORKING APPARATUS

Given all these shortcomings, signalled over time, the Government of Ludovic Orban, installed after the elections of December 2019, re-established the Prime Minister's Chancellery. In February 2020, the Orban Government approved the Government Decision no.137/2020 on the organisation, functioning and attributions of some structures within the Government's Working Apparatus, through which both the Prime Minister's Chancellery and the General Secretariat of the Government were reorganized. Both measures are in line with the priorities of the Government Program, namely improving the efficiency of public administration, with a focus on reforming the Centre of Government. Thus, the roles of the two structures were better defined and delimited, in the sense that the GSG will provide the technical / administrative support of the Government, while the Chancellery will have the role of strategic coordination. In this sense, at the level of the Chancellery was created the Centre for Analysis and Strategy and the Independent Scientific Council, while the institutions that can provide data and information to the Chancellery for analysis and studies that will underpin the policy formulation were subordinated to the GSG.

The reform aimed to have an impact on the Chancellery's organization and functioning, in terms of clarifying its roles and responsibilities and providing a greater coherence of Government policies coordination and a more fluid communication both within the Chancellery and with other public institutions of central Government. The Prime Minister's Chancellery exercises the function of strategy, which contributes to the formulation of prior public policy options and to the formulation of strategies and directions of action at governmental level.

However, the essential role of the Chancellery was to coordinate the line ministries in the process of elaborating and monitoring the institutional strategic plans and to approve the governmental strategies. The Prime Minister's Chancellery was responsible for inter-institutional coordination in order to formulate and implement public strategies and policies, in an integrated manner and in accordance with the Government Program.

Also, the Chancellery had a role of internal and external representation of the state or the Romania's Government and a role of regulation in its own field of activity.

Within the Chancellery was created also a structure in charge of preparing the Romanian Presidency of the EU Council in 2019.

Finally, within the Chancellery there was also the Coordinator for Information Technology, with a role in the development of e-government, the consolidation of personal data protection and security. The Coordinator for Information Technology also ensures the definition of a unitary vision in the field of e-government.

Within the Prime Minister's Chancellery, 6 secretaries of state and one or more state councillors were employed, appointed, or dismissed by decision of the Prime Minister, and the maximum number of positions necessary for the proper functioning of the Prime Minister's Chancellery was 220, excluding dignitaries and positions related to their personal cabinets.

Through the same normative act (Government Decision no.137/2020) were established the functions and attributions of the General Secretariat of the Government, as well as the entities under its authority and coordination.

Regarding the functions of GSG, its main function was ensuring the monitoring of the procedures for the elaboration, endorsement, and presentation of the draft normative acts. Also, GSG accomplished a role in the field of internal / managerial control systems. At the same time, the GSG exercises a function of controlling of the bodies placed under its authority and a regulatory function in its fields of responsibility. The GSG also assure the representation of the Government, of the Prime-minister and the Prime-Minister's Chancellery in front of the courts and finally, the administration of public and private property of the state belonging of its patrimony.

From an administrative point of view, in addition to the activity of managing financial and material resources, the GSG manages and develops the IT and communications system, at the level of the Government's Working Apparatus and provides support platforms necessary for Government's decision-making process.

Although the head of the GSG should have been a high civil servant, the legislation allows to appoint a dignitary instead of a high civil servant. Thus, the General Secretariat of the Government is headed by the Secretary General of the Government, with the rank of Minister, assisted by three Deputy General Secretaries, with rank as state secretary, which maintains a high politization at the top of the GSG. The General Secretary ensures the organisation of the entire activity of the GSG and is the main officer who authorises the payments for the whole Government's Working Apparatus.

Through the Directorate for Policy and Priorities Coordination( DPPC), the GSG ensures the coordination of public policies at the level of the central administration by:

- improving the decision-making procedure in the Government meeting
- developing an integrated mechanism for coordination of the public policies planning
- strengthening the institutional capacity of the Government to formulate policies, strategic planning, communication and inter-ministerial coordination;
- increasing the efficiency of the activity of the GSG;
- streamlining internal and external communication.

The GSG has been appointed coordinator of the strategic planning process that elaborates the Annual Work Plan of the Government (AWPG), the budget draft and estimates budget allocation for the next 3 years, in accordance with the Government Program and the international commitments made by Romania. The AWPG will assure an increasing predictability of regulatory activity of the government and is using an informatic system that support the objectives' planning and the monitoring. The DPPC ensure the coordination of strategic planning process, being in charge with monitoring of Government's priorities in the Institutional Strategic Plans of line ministries, ex-ante evaluation of policy documents in accordance with the Strategy for Better Regulation, creating the mechanism for integrated management of public policies.

Starting with December 2016, the General Secretariat of the Government, through the Policy and Priorities Coordination Directorate, was nominated as the sole national contact point of the Romanian state in relation to DG REFORM representatives, fulfilling the attributions of a Coordinating Authority for the Structural Reform Support Program / TSI. At the same time, the GSG



coordinated the implementation of the Strategy for a better regulation 2014-2020 and represented the Romania 's Government, at technical level, in the Working Group for a better regulation within the Council of the European Union.

Since 2019, through the Operational Centre for Emergency Situations, the GSG ensures the permanent information of the Prime Minister, of the Deputy Prime Minister, of the Head of the Prime Minister's Chancellery and of other dignitaries of the Government's Working Apparatus on the possible manifestation of risks generating emergencies. Finally, given the current conditions of the COVID 19 pandemic, the GSG coordinates the Working Group on the Resilience, by developing/ updating the Plan for Ensuring Continuity of Government and Critical Government Services.

At the same time, starting with 2020, within the GSG was integrated the Department for Relations with the Parliament, a structure without legal personality, under the coordination of the Prime Minister, headed by a Secretary of State, who previously, during the governing of the Social Democratic Party, had been organised as distinct ministry.

Since January 2021, when Prime Minister's Decision no.76/2021 was passed, with the installation of the Government led by Florin Cățu, the Prime Minister's Chancellery takes over a series of responsibilities in the field of communication and press relations, ensures and coordinates the integrated and unitary production of public government message and coordinates the dissemination of public information by all means of communication.

Currently<sup>1</sup>, the Prime Minister's Chancellery contributes, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to the implementation of policies and objectives in the field of international relations, according to the Government Program and the obligations arising from national strategies and international legal instruments to which Romania is part.

It ensures, together with the General Secretariat of the Government, the good development of the relationship with the Parliament in its field of activity, analyses, verifies and capitalises the information in the field of national security. The Chancellery fulfils together with GSG the function of coordination at the level of the Government Working Apparatus of the reform process in the field of public administration and the relations with the civil society and the social partners.

Within the Prime Minister's Chancellery, under the direct subordination of the Prime Minister, carries out his activity the director of the Prime Minister's Office, with rank of the State Secretary, who coordinates the Working Apparatus of the Prime Minister, the Government Spokesman, and the body of state secretaries and advisers of the Prime-ministers.

In addition, within the Prime Minister's Chancellery carries out its activity the advisory council, an advisory body composed of 7 members, which are personalities representing the academic, scientific and non-governmental environment, unpaid, appointed by decision of the Prime Minister, at the proposal of the Chief Chancellor of the Prime Minister, who has the role to issue proposals and opinions in the area of competence of the Prime Minister's Chancellery.

Table 1

	<b>General Secretariat of Government</b>	<b>Prime Minister's Chancellery</b>
coordination of the preparedness of Government sessions	X	

<sup>1</sup> See Government Decision no 832/2022 on attributions, organisation and functioning of Prime-Minister's Chancellery published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no.645 of June, 29, 2022.

coordination of Government Programme and priorities, and their linkage with the budget	X	
coordination of the policy content of Government's proposals		X
coordination of communications		X
coordination of the monitoring of Government performance	X	
coordination of relations with the President and Parliament	X	
coordination of specific horizontal strategic priorities		X

Source: Authors, 2023 adapted by (OECD/SIGMA, 2004).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Over time, there has been a constant attempt to reform the Centre of Government, by dividing as much as possible the responsibilities between its two important components: The Prime Minister's Chancellery and the General Secretariat of the Government, so as to ensure a better strategic planning as well as a better inter-ministerial coordination. However, in Romania, as in other post-communist countries, as Goetz and Margetts (1999) mentioned, "their contribution to coherence in executive policymaking has remained limited", both related to coordination within the executive and between the executive and other key actors of the political process.

In the end, we could say that, at least in Romania, the division of powers between the two entities depends very much on the interests of the party at power. It is our view that the powers of the two structures should remain settled over time, which would confer them trust, political legitimacy and efficiency.

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### Legislation

- \*\*\*\* Government Decision no. 90/2001 on the organization and establishment of the attributions of the General Secretariat of the Government, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no. 592 of September 20, 2001
- \*\*\*\* Government Decision no. 463/2016 on the organization, functioning and responsibilities of the General Secretariat of the Government, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no. 515 of July 7, 2016.
- \*\*\*\* Government Decision no. 464/2016 on the attributions, organization and functioning of the Prime Minister's Chancellery, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no. 515 of July 7, 2016.
- \*\*\*\* Government Decision no. 21/2017 on the organization, functioning and responsibilities of the General Secretariat of the Government, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no. 58 of January 20, 2017.
- \*\*\*\* Government Decision no.137/2020 on the organization, functioning and attributions of some structures within the Government Working Apparatus, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no.123 of 17 February 2020.
- \*\*\*\* Prime Minister's Decision no.76/2021 on the attributions, organization and functioning of the Prime Minister's Chancellery, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no.88 of January 27, 2021.
- \*\*\*\* Government Decision no 832/2022 on attributions, organization and functioning of Prime-Minister's Chancellery published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no.645 of June,29 , 2022