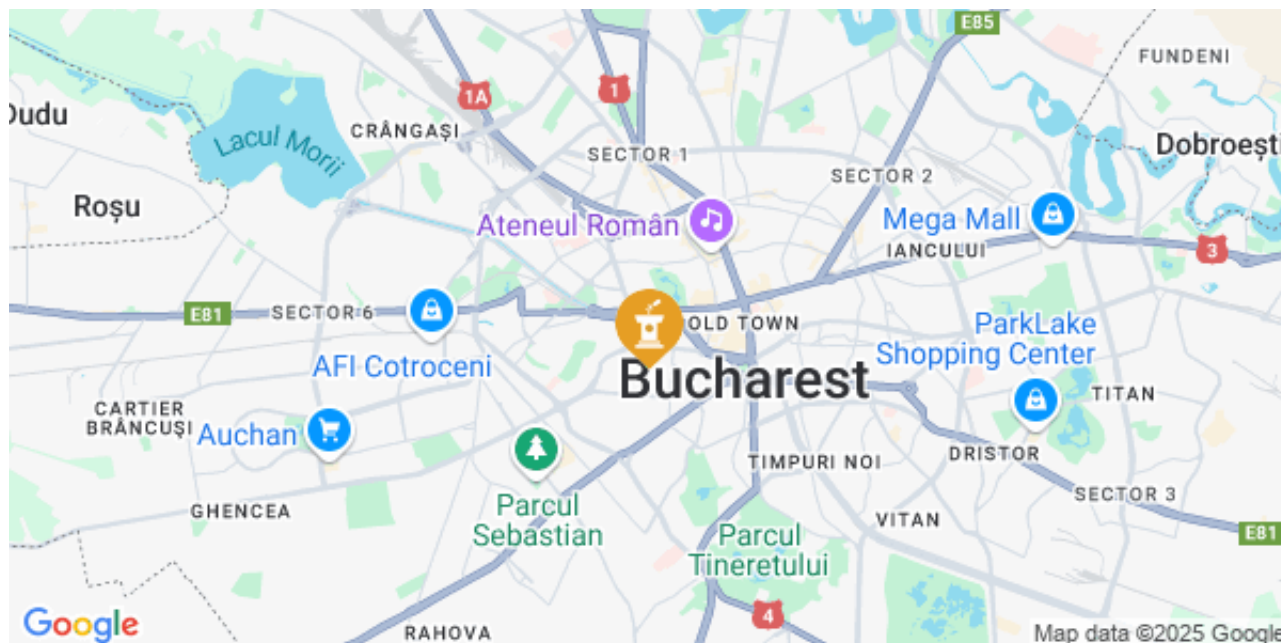


## Politics



# 28

APR  
12:06 UTC

**Romania Tactical: Voting for first round of presidential elections to be held nationwide from 07:00 (local time) on May 4; maintain heightened vigilance**

## Current Situation

- Voting for the presidential elections will take place nationwide on May 4. The polling stations will be open from 07:00 to 21:00 (local time).
- According to Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă, the Electoral Authority of Romania, 14 candidates are contesting the elections.
- Further details about the presidential elections can be found [here](#) (in Romanian).
- As per the latest opinion polls, George Simion, the joint candidate of the far-right parties Alianța pentru Unirea Românilor (AUR) and Partidul Oamenilor Tineri (POT), is leading with 29 percent. Crin Antonescu, from the center-right Partidul Național Liberal (PNL) party, is second at 22 percent. Nicușor Dan, the Mayor of Bucharest and a nonpartisan candidate, is polling third, with 20 percent.
- If no candidate secures the required threshold of more than 50 percent votes, the second round of the election will be held on May 18, between the top two candidates with the highest number of votes.
- In recent months, Romania has experienced heightened political tensions and frequent large-scale, violent protests. In December 2024, the Constitutional Court annulled the results of the first round of the presidential election, held on November 24, and canceled the scheduled runoff on December 8.

- This decision followed the emergence of intelligence documents revealing that Russia had orchestrated an online campaign supporting far-right candidate Calin Georgescu, who had led in the first round. The court cited evidence of Russian cyberattacks, the illegal use of digital technologies, and undeclared campaign funding linked to Kremlin-backed organizations, particularly through coordinated influencer campaigns on social media platforms.
- Later, in March, authorities rejected Georgescu's candidacy for the May 4 rerun of the election, prompting large-scale and violent protests by his supporters. Additionally, Romania has recorded multiple instances of politically motivated violence in recent months, including physical and verbal assaults targeting opposing politicians and political activists.

**Source:** [Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă](#)

## Assessments & Forecast

1. Political campaigning and spontaneous gatherings are expected to take place in the vicinity of polling stations, party offices, major public spaces, and outside government buildings in Bucharest and other major cities on May 4. Protests and gatherings are also likely to be held after the declaration of election results.
2. Given heightened political polarization and dissatisfaction with the political establishment, such gatherings and protests, especially those organized by right-wing groups, carry a heightened potential for unrest. Incidents of unrest are likely to manifest in the form of clashes between supporters of opposing parties, as well as with law enforcement officers.
3. As such, security is liable to be heightened outside polling stations, key government buildings, and prominent public squares. In the event of escalating unrest, police officials are liable to use forcible crowd control measures, including conducting arrests.
4. Disruptions to travel are expected nationwide. Road traffic and public transport systems are expected to face congestion over the weekend with people moving to their registered districts to vote. Security cordons and pre-emptive road closures or diversions are likely to be set up, especially in Bucharest and other major cities.

## Recommendations

Those operating or residing in Romania on May 4 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance and allot for travel-related disruptions in the vicinity of all polling stations and potential protests.