

## CHRONOLOGY OF THE ROMANIAN POLITICAL LIFE, APRIL 01 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2024<sup>1</sup>

### April 01

- Starting March 31, Romania joins the Schengen Area for air and maritime borders.

### April 02

- During a meeting in Vienna with Romanian Minister of Internal Affairs Cătălin Predoiu, following Romania's accession to the Schengen Area for air and maritime borders, Austrian Minister of Internal Affairs Gerhard Karner states that it would be inappropriate to set a specific date for Romania's accession to the Schengen Area for land borders. He also emphasizes his commitment to further cooperation to improve the Schengen system.

### April 03

- Romanian President Klaus Iohannis states that he has no intention of withdrawing his candidacy for the position of NATO Secretary General or negotiating for another European-level position, despite some foreign officials expressing their support for Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte for the role.
- The strike by Romanian Post Office employees, which began on April 1, ends after just one day. Negotiations between the Trade

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<sup>1</sup> Under the coordination of Domnica Gorovei, Teodora Lovin and Alexandru Găzdaru, the following students of the Faculty of Political Science, University of Bucharest, have contributed to the chronology (press monitoring and/or translation): Bălan Oana Doriană, Cosma Anca-Mălina, Iacob Maria Matilda, Teodor Andreea, Tivdă Radu-Alexandru, and Vasiliu Diana. The main sources of information used were the online editions of: Mediafax, RFI România, Agerpres, Spotmedia, Biziday, Digi24, Revista 22, G4Media, Romania-Insider.com, Press One.

Union of the Romanian Post Office and the Ministry of Research, Innovation, and Digitalization resulted in an agreement for a salary increase in two stages: the first on July 1, coinciding with the minimum wage increase to 3,700 LEI, and the second with a gross raise of 420 LEI starting September 1. Employees who participated in the strike will not be paid for the days they were on strike.

- Cristian-Gabriel Pascu is removed from his position as Vice-President, with the rank of Undersecretary of State, at the National Gambling Office by decision of Prime Minister Marcel Ciolacu, just two days after his appointment. The dismissal followed Pascu's admission that he had no experience in the gambling sector and no knowledge of the relevant legislation.
- The Central Electoral Bureau (BEC) adopts a decision allowing electoral alliances to support independent candidates for mayor, local councils, and county councils in the June 9 elections.

#### April 04

- The Government issues an Emergency Ordinance (GEO) exempting oncology patients, with oncological diseases, mothers with sick children, and pregnant women from paying social security contributions for sick leave allowances. The ordinance also includes a provision for a one-time grant of 2,000 LEI for each newborn child until 2027, aimed at disadvantaged, low-income mothers and mothers in life-threatening situations.
- The High Court of Cassation and Justice (ÎCCJ) dismisses the Romanian Government's appeal (dated August 23, 2023), in a dispute with businessman Puiu Popoviciu. The Government had sought to overturn a decision of the Bucharest Court of Appeal of June 20, 2023, which annulled two Government Decisions (HGs) of 1999. These decisions had transferred a 224-hectare plot of land in northern Bucharest – where IKEA, the Băneasa Mall, and the US Embassy are located – into public state property. The ÎCCJ ruled that the land is not part of the public domain of the state. The National Anticorruption Directorate (DNA) had previously sentenced Popoviciu to seven years in prison, based on allegations that between 2000 and 2004, the then rector of the University of Agronomy, Alecu Ioan Niculae, transferred the land to SC Băneasa Investments SA, a company

controlled by Popoviciu, at a price significantly below market value. At the time, the DNA considered the land to be public property. After his final conviction in 2017, Popoviciu became an internationally wanted man, and Romania sought his extradition from London. However, in 2023, Judge Adriana Pencea of the Bucharest Court of Appeal granted Popoviciu's request for a case review, suspending his seven-year sentence and ordering a retrial. Judge Liana Arsene, who handled the civil aspect of the case, withdrew the European Arrest Warrant, and the UK Court of Justice rejected the extradition request. The criminal retrial is scheduled to resume on May 31, 2024.

#### April 05

- The Social-Democratic Party and the National Liberal Party Alliance (*Alianța electorală Partidul Social-Democrat-Partidul Național Liberal/ PSD-PNL*) submits its joint list of candidates for the European Parliament elections to the BEC. The list is headed by Mihai Tudose (PSD) and Rareș Bogdan (PNL), and it includes Gabriela Firea (PSD), Dan-Ștefan Motreanu (PNL), Claudiu Manda (PSD), Ioana Vălean (PNL), Victor Negrescu (PSD), Vasile Dîncu (PSD), Buda Daniel (PNL).

#### April 08

- The United Right Alliance (*Alianța Dreapta Unită – ADU*, including the *Save Romania Union/Uniunea Salvați România/USR*, the *People's Movement Party/Partidul Mișcarea Populară/PMP* and the *Force of the Right/Forța Dreptei/FD*) submits its list of candidates for the European Parliament elections to the Central Electoral Bureau. The list includes 43 candidates, starting with Dan Barna (USR), followed by Vlad Voiculescu (USR), Eugen Tomac (PMP), Vlad Marius Botoș (USR), Cristina Maria Prună (USR), and Violeta Alexandru (FD).
- The Senate tacitly adopts the GEO to merge the European and local elections, scheduled for June 9. Candidates will be allowed to run simultaneously for the European Parliament and for positions such as local councilor, mayor, county councilor, or president of the County Council.
- The European Commission (EC) approves the reintroduction of a Romanian state aid scheme worth approximately 2.5 billion euros

(12.5 billion LEI) to support companies affected by Russia's war against Ukraine. The scheme is approved under the Temporary Crisis and Transitional State Aid Framework, which was adopted by the EC on March 9, 2023, and amended on November 20, 2023. The support, provided in the form of loan grants, will be available until June 30, 2024, benefiting approximately 11,500 Romanian companies through the IMM INVEST PLUS state aid scheme.

- The Alliance for the Union of Romanians (*Alianța pentru Unirea Românilor/AUR*) submits to the BEC its list of candidates for the European Parliament elections to be held on June 9, 2024. The list includes 43 candidates, starting with Cristian Terheș, Claudiu Târziu, and Gheorghe Piperea, followed by Maria Teodorescu, Adrian Axinia, and Șerban Sturdza.

#### April 09

- Gabriela Firea is unanimously re-elected as president of the PSD Bucharest branch at a PSD congress, receiving the support of 591 of the 631 social democratic delegates in attendance.

#### April 10

- The Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (*Uniunea Democrată a Maghiarilor din România/UDMR*) submits to the BEC the list of candidates for the June 9 elections to the European Parliament (EP). In the top ten positions are Winkler Gyula, Vincze Loránt-György, Szilágyi Dóra-Emese, Szilágyi Zsolt, Zazula Béla, Faragó Péter, Lőrincz Helga, Szilágyi Róbert-István, Bors Béla, Turos Lóránd.
- The Renewing Romania's European Project Party (*Reînnoim Proiectul European al României/REPER*) submits its list of candidates for the European Parliament elections to the BEC. The list is led by MEP Dacian Cioloș, followed by the two party presidents, Ramona Strugariu and Dragoș Pîslaru. The list also includes Oana Cambera, Andrei Lupu, Andreea Leonte, and Cristian Presură.

#### April 11

- According to the BEC, fifteen parties and alliances and seven independent candidates have submitted their candidacies for the

European Parliament elections. The parties and alliances are: (1) the PSD-PNL electoral alliance, (2) the ADU, (3) AUR, (4) REPER, (5) UDMR, (6) S.O.S Romania Party, and (7) The Social Liberal Humanitarian Party (*Partidul Umanist Social-Liberal/PUSL*). The seven independent candidates are Octavian Jurma, Paula Pîrvănescu, Vlad Gheorghe, Ilie Mustăţea, Nicolae Ştefănuţă, Petru Mîndru, Dumitru Şoşoacă.

- The Coordination Committee of the PNL in Bucharest validates the new Bucharest Political Bureau, with Sebastian Burduja as president, Stelian Bujduveanu and Diana Baciuna as first vice-presidents, and Valentin Ştefan as secretary general.
- The presidents of the PSD and PNL Bucharest branches, Gabriela Firea and Sebastian Burduja, sign a protocol for cooperation for the electoral alliance between the two political organizations in Bucharest for the local elections.

#### April 13

- The ADU calls for the resignation of Toni Greblă, President of the Permanent Electoral Authority (AEP), for publishing the personal data of more than 1,300 electoral experts and potential heads of polling stations, in violation of GDPR regulations. In response, Toni Greblă states that he would take all appropriate measures against those responsible for the incident.

#### April 15

- USR MP Emanuel Ungureanu files a complaint with the DNA against independent candidate Cătălin Cîrstoiu, who is supported by the PSD-PNL alliance in the race for the General City Hall of Bucharest. The complaint accuses Cîrstoiu of abuse of office, using his position to favor certain individuals, and fraud. Additionally, Ungureanu filed a complaint with the National Integrity Agency (ANI), suspecting Cîrstoiu of incompatibility and conflict of interest. The complaint follows a report by Hotnews journalists, alleging that Cîrstoiu used his position to appoint his wife as head of an electoral section.
- Political parties, alliances, organizations of citizens belonging to national minorities, and independent candidates are able to submit

their candidacies for the June 9 local government elections from April 16 to April 30, 23:59, with the electoral offices.

#### **April 16**

- The BEC invalidates the candidacies of the United Diaspora Party and Paul Octavian Jurma for the European Parliament elections, as they failed to collect the required number of signatures. Additionally, the BEC validates the candidacies of the ADU, the Socialist Romania Political Alliance, the Alternative Right Party, the PUSL, the REPER, and the independent candidate Paula Marinela Pîrvănescu.
- Mihai Enache, the AUR candidate for mayor of Bucharest, files a complaint with the DNA against his opponent Cătălin Cîrstoiu, the independent candidate supported by the PSD-PNL Alliance. Enache suspects Cîrstoiu of incompatibility and tax evasion.
- The BEC decides that voters residing abroad who registered their residence in Romania after April 11, 2024, will not be able to vote in the local elections. However, those who registered their residence before April 11, 2024, will be eligible to vote in the local elections in the administrative-territorial units on the supplementary lists.

#### **April 18**

- The Bucharest Court of Appeals rejects the appeals of Cristian Diaconescu concerning the PMP Congress held for the appointment of the leadership. As a result, the party's Congress organized in March 2023, in which Eugen Tomac was elected President by a majority vote, is validated.
- PNL President Nicolae Ciucă states that Romania will not be able to introduce a compulsory army in the next two years due to the lack of the necessary infrastructure to support it.

#### **April 19**

- The current mayor of Sector 5 in Bucharest, Cristian Popescu Piedone, submits his candidacy for mayor of Bucharest on behalf of the PUSL party to the BEC.

**April 20**

- The first Congress of the FD party elects Ludovic Orban as president, with 1,203 votes in favor. The Congress also elected twenty-six vice-presidents, including Violeta Alexandru, Marius Arcăleanu, and Bogdan Bola.

**April 21**

- The incumbent mayor of Bucharest, Nicușor Dan, requests a poll on the local elections. According to the survey, to the question “If the local elections were held next Sunday,” 46.1% of the respondents would vote for Nicușor Dan, 41.1% for Cristian Popescu Piedone, and 10.01% for Cătălin Cîrstoiu. The survey was conducted by *Verifield* between April 10 and April 17, using the CATI method, with a sample of 1,800 people, and a maximum margin of error of +/- 2.31%, at a confidence level of 95%.
- Gabriel Resources and Roșia Montană Gold Corporation (RMGC) file lawsuits against the Alba National Commercial Registry Office (ORC), the National Agency for Tax Administration (ANAF), and RMGC itself. These lawsuits challenge the seizure of RMGC shares by the Alba Commercial Registry in a resolution issued on April 1, 2024, for a debt of approximately ten million dollars owed by Gabriel Resources to the Romanian State. This debt represents damages awarded to the Romanian State following a victory in a lawsuit in Washington. At the end of March, ANAF requested that the ORC impose an attachment on RMGC’s 80.69% stake in the company, preventing the mining company from selling or transferring the shares. The first trial date has not yet been set for any of the four cases.

**April 22**

- A five-judge panel of the ÎCCJ orders the termination of the criminal proceedings against Mircea Roșca, a National Liberal Party (PNL) deputy for Prahova, who was accused of influence peddling. The court ruled that the offenses for which Roșca was accused are time-barred. In 2011, while serving as vice-president of the party’s Prahova County organization, Roșca allegedly demanded 20,000

euros from a company administrator in exchange for using his influence on the president of the local organization in Azuga, Prahova County, to facilitate the acquisition of land in the area by the complainant's company.

### April 23

- The PSD-PNL alliance decides to withdraw Cătălin Cîrstoiu, its candidate for the mayor of Bucharest, from the race. The decision is made due to his low chances of winning, as indicated by the polls. As a result, the alliance will run separately in the upcoming elections: PSD will support Gabriela Firea, while PNL will back Sebastian Burduja.
- The Romanian government approves the "Electric Up 2" funding program, with a budget of 450 million LEI, aimed at supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as Hotels, Restaurants, and Catering (HORECA) businesses. The program will provide financial assistance for the installation of photovoltaic panels and electric vehicle charging stations.
- The Ministry of Finance, led by Marcel Ioan Boloș, publishes data on the execution of the general budget. In the first three months of the year, the execution of the consolidated general budget ended with a deficit of 35.44 billion LEI, which represents 2.06% of Romania's GDP. In comparison, for the same period in 2023, the deficit was 1.42% of the GDP. Additionally, the expenditures of the consolidated general budget increased by 22.7% compared to the same period of the previous year, now accounting for 9.66% of the GDP.
- The Government adopts decisions to start or continue investments in the fields of transport and environment sectors, with projects totaling 260 million LEI. Most of these investments are funded by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) and are managed by the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Development, and the Ministry of Transport. The primary goal of these investments is flood protection, specifically by improving the conditions for the safe operation of the permanent reservoir Solești on the Vaslui River and the hydro-technical junction on the Mureș River in the municipality of Târgu Mureș.



**April 24**

- The BEC is challenging the violation of electoral laws concerning the drawing of lots for the presidents of district electoral bureaus and their deputies. The BEC highlights the unlawful expansion of the category of magistrates eligible for selection, as per the legal provisions, by including legal specialists assimilated to magistrates and other individuals. As a result, the BEC decides to resume the drawing of lots in the counties of Alba, Argeş, Buzău, Dolj, Giurgiu, Ialomiţa, and Mureş.

**April 25**

- The incumbent mayor of Sector 1 of Bucharest, Clotilde Armand, submits her candidacy for a renewed mandate, on behalf of the ADU.
- The incumbent mayor of Bucharest, Nicuşor Dan submits his candidacy for a renewed mandate, as an independent candidate, supported by the United Right Alliance (ADU) and the REPER party.
- The Government approves the memorandum on the conclusion of financing contracts for 225 infrastructure projects financed by the PNRR. Failure to sign the contracts will result in financial penalties. The signing of the contracts is necessary to achieve the milestones and targets set by the PNRR. This memorandum also approves the use of the uncommitted amount from the over-contracting related to the first call for projects necessary for the realization of 148.6 km of water supply networks in order to reach the final indicator of 1,282 km.

**April 26**

- The District Electoral Office of the Municipality of Bucharest decides to register the agreement on the dissolution of the PSD-PNL Electoral Alliance, concluded at the municipal level, and approves the protocols on the establishment of the PSD-PNL Electoral Alliance at sector level. According to the BEC, the protocols for the dissolution of electoral alliances can be registered until April 26. The coalition will have joint candidates for the sector mayors and local councils but will run separately for the general mayoralty of the capital, where the PSD candidate is Gabriela Firea, and the PNL candidate is Sebastian Burduja.

**April 28**

- Gabriela Firea submits her candidacy as the PSD candidate for mayor of Bucharest to the Bucharest District Electoral Office.
- The candidacy of Marin Voicu, the incumbent mayor of the Prahova municipality of Ciorani, who is on trial for fraud in the 2020 local elections and indicted in another case for similar offenses related to the parliamentary elections of the same year, is accepted by the Communal District Electoral Office. The Electoral Bureau's decision states that Marin Voicu meets "all the underlying and formal conditions" required by law to run as a candidate.

**April 29**

- For the EP elections, the BEC accepts twelve out of the fifteen candidacies submitted by electoral alliances, political parties, and independents. The final candidates include those submitted by the following political organizations: The Electoral Alliance PSD-PNL, ADU, Socialist Romania, AUR, S.O.S. Romania Party, Alternative Right Party, PUSL, REPER, UDMR, Great Romania Party (*Partidul România Mare*/PRM), Patriots' Party, United Diaspora Party. Additionally, the independent candidates are Paula-Marinela Pîrvănescu, Gheorghe Vlad-Dan, Nicolae-Bogdănel Ștefănuță and Dumitru-Silvestru Șoșoacă. Two Romanian MEPs, Vlad Gheorghe and Nicolae Ștefănuță, are running as independent candidates for a new mandate in the European Parliament after leaving the USR due to internal conflicts. Paula Marinela Pîrvănescu, an economist and president of Romania's Chamber of Business, has also entered the race. The BEC also validates the candidacy of Silvestru Șoșoacă, the former husband of Senator Diana Șoșoacă, who is the president of the S.O.S. Romania Party.

**April 30**

- The BEC decides that the electoral alliances formed for the EP elections will be represented in the Electoral Bureau for Polling Stations Abroad by a single member, regardless of the number of political parties within the alliance. This decision aims to simplify the process of representation of alliances in the polling stations abroad during the elections.

- President Klaus Iohannis promulgates the law aimed at hastening the presidential elections. The law amends Article 5 of Law No. 370/2004, which governs the election of the President of Romania. The new provisions stipulate that presidential elections must be held no later than three months before the end of the current president's term. Additionally, the election date must be set at least 75 days before the voting day through a Government Decision.
- Mihai Enache, the AUR candidate for the General Mayoralty of Bucharest, files a criminal complaint with the DNA, against Nicușor Dan, the incumbent mayor and candidate for re-election. Enache alleges that Dan's electoral campaign financing is not transparent, particularly regarding the funding of his street billboard campaign. Enache claims that Nicușor Dan secured hundreds of billboards, many of them in highly visible locations across Bucharest, ahead of other candidates. He also claims that the actual cost of Dan Nicușor's campaign exceeds the amount publicly declared and calls for an urgent investigation into these matters.

#### May 01

- Diana Șoșoacă's candidacy for mayor of Bucharest is accepted by the Bucharest District Electoral Office (BEM) after she submitted additional lists of supporters. Initially, her candidacy was rejected due to irregularities in the signature lists, where 1,462 out of a total of 19,344 supporters were removed because of errors found in the list's drafting. After correcting the issue and providing the necessary additional signatures, her candidacy was validated by the BEM.

#### May 02

- The PMP appeals to the ÎCCJ the Decision 93 of the BEC on the representation in polling stations abroad and asks for its annulment, arguing that, for polling stations abroad and for district electoral bureaus, electoral alliances will not have only one representative. Thus, the PMP demands that the BEC establish a uniform practice for all polling stations.
- The Electoral Bureau of Bucharest validates 9 candidates for the office of General Mayor of Bucharest, namely: Gabriela Firea (PSD),

Sebastian Burduja (PNL), Nicușor Dan (Independent candidate), Cristian Popescu Piedone (PUSL), Diana Iovanovici-Șoșoacă (S.O.S Romania), Dorin Iacob (Alternative Right Party), Mihai Adrian Enache (AUR), Alexandru Pânișoară (Romanian Ecologist Party), Filip Constantin Titan (Independent).

#### May 08

- The PSD and PNL majority in the Chamber of Deputies rejects a bill in the plenary session that aimed to extend Parliament's control over the work of the Romanian Intelligence Services (SRI). The proposed bill would have barred SRI personnel from working in the media, justice sectors, and in the Romanian parliament. The bill was rejected after brief debates in the Defense Committee. Opposition parties accused PSD and PNL of preventing a real debate on the bill to avoid the declassification of information regarding the involvement of secret services in politics.

#### May 10

- President Klaus Iohannis promulgates a new law aimed at strengthening the capacity to combat tax evasion and amending certain normative acts. Under the new law, tax evasion offenses involving damages of less than one million euros will not be penalized if the damages are fully covered by actual payment, along with a 15% penalty. However, outside of this exception, tax evasion will remain a criminal offense, punishable by imprisonment from 1 to 5 years, or a fine. Prime Minister Marcel Ciolacu, one of the initiators of the law, described it as "an intermediate solution" designed to improve state budget revenue, explaining that, for years, detected tax evasion has not resulted in any significant recovery of funds for the state.
- The electoral campaign for the local and European Parliament (EP) elections officially begins. The campaign will run until 7:00 PM on June 8. However, the audiovisual campaign, which includes TV and radio advertisements, will conclude one day earlier, on June 7, at 7:00 PM.
- Adina Vălean, the European Commissioner for Transport, announces that Romania has secured 80 million euros in the latest tranche of European Union funding. This amount is on par with France, but

exceeds the funds received by Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands. Over the past five years, Romania has benefited from a total of 12 billion euros in European funding for infrastructure development.

**May 11**

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has organized 915 polling stations abroad for the upcoming European Parliament elections. This marks an increase of 474 polling stations compared to the number organized five years ago.

**May 13**

- The National Strategy against Human Trafficking for the 2024-2028 period is launched. The strategy aims to create a comprehensive system based on cooperation between central and local institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations. Its primary objective is to implement effective measures to reduce human trafficking in Romania, focusing on prevention, protection of victims, and the prosecution of traffickers.
- During discussions held in Washington between President Klaus Iohannis and U.S. President Joe Biden, as well as within NATO, the importance of providing a Patriot missile defense system to Ukraine was highlighted. Romania was among the countries asked to contribute. However, Romania's Defense Minister, Anghel Tîlvăr, expressed strong reservations about the country donating a Patriot system to Ukraine. Prime Minister Marcel Ciolacu stated that the final decision regarding the donation would be made within Romania's Supreme Council of National Defense (CSAT).
- European Investment and Projects Minister Adrian Căciu announces that contracts worth 36 billion euros are currently being concluded under Romania's PNRR. However, since Romania's allocation is only 28.5 billion euros, the remaining difference will be covered through co-financing.

**May 14**

- The Constitutional Court of Romania (CCR) rejects the appeal filed by the ÎCCJ regarding the GEO on the organization of the June 9 elections. This decision came after representatives of the REPER party filed

an application with the CCR, challenging the constitutionality of the provisions of the GEO 21/2024. The ordinance merged local elections with the parliamentary elections, and the REPER party argued that this merger violated constitutional principles. However, the CCR upheld the validity of the ordinance.

- Adrian Căciu, Minister for European Investments and Projects, states that tax evasion in Romania amounts to approximately 10% of the GDP, which translates to around 32-33 billion euros.

#### May 15

- The Ministry of Finance announces that in April, the National Agency for Fiscal Administration (ANAF) successfully reduced tax losses by 430 million LEI. This achievement followed nearly 5,000 checks, and the agency issued almost 3,000 notifications to taxpayers, highlighting fiscal/tax risks totaling 2 billion LEI.
- President Iohannis promulgates the law on aid to agriculturists and farmers within the context of the war in Ukraine. The law establishes state subsidies for total farmers worth approximately 28.7 million euros.

#### May 16

- Around 200 supporters of the AUR party, led by party president George Simion, stage a protest in front of the AEP, in response to its decision to close several polling stations in the diaspora. The protesters expressed their dissatisfaction, claiming that the AEP's decision restricts the voting rights of Romanians living abroad by limiting their access to polling stations and forcing them to vote on a single day.

#### May 20

- The Expert Forum NGO presents data based on the AEP regarding the funding of electoral campaigns for the upcoming EP (European Parliament) and local elections. According to their findings, the total campaign expenses for the EP elections are 11 million LEI, and for local elections over 3.8 million LEI. The expenses by parties: PSD has the highest expenses, amounting to 9.3 million LEI, primarily

for “clothing.” USR spent 411,343 LEI on the production and online broadcasting of electoral propaganda, plus 135,000 LEI for other campaign-related expenses, while AUR spent 1.19 million LEI on online propaganda. Additionally, the NGO analyzed the gender representation among local election candidates. They found that the percentage of female candidates at the local level remains low, at around 24%, although there is a 2% increase compared to the 2020 local elections. The parties with the highest representation of female candidates are SOS Romania with 35% and REPER party, with 33%.

### May 23

- The Government adopts an GEO that provides for a 10% wage increase in two phases for various categories of employees in the public administration sector. The first phase will take effect in June, while the second will begin in September. The ordinance also allows employers to cover the cost of eyeglasses for employees who frequently use display screen equipment for extended periods during the working day, with a reimbursement of up to 500 LEI per person.
- The Government approves an increase in the monthly allowances for children and adults with severe disabilities, starting in June. For severely disabled adults, the monthly allowance will increase from 70% to 80% of the social reference indicator (ISR), while for severely disabled children, the allowance will increase from 60% to 70% of the same ISR.
- The Government approves the National Strategy for the Prevention and Combat of Anti-Semitism, Xenophobia, Radicalization, and Hate Speech for the 2024-2027 period.

### May 24

- The BEC accredits CURS (Center for Urban and Regional Sociology), Avangarde Socio-Behavioral Studies Group, and Sodiso Research SRL to conduct exit polls. The "Bureau of Social Research" Foundation will conduct polls in Râmnicu Sărat, while Sodiso Research SRL will conduct polls in Mureș County. The poll operators will be permitted to remain within a 500-meter radius of the polling stations, but they will be prohibited from entering the polling stations.

- A diplomat from the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Bucharest is declared *persona non grata* on Romanian territory for engaging in activities that violate the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. This decision follows the arrest by the Directorate for Investigating Organized Crime and Terrorism (DIICOT) of a Romanian citizen accused of treason for sending to the Russian Embassy in Romania images of military objectives, either belonging to Romania or NATO, near Tulcea, as well as images of a military convoy heading towards Ukraine.

**May 27**

- The Ministry of Finance announces that the execution of the consolidated general budget for the first four months of 2024 ended with a deficit of 57.29 billion LEI, or 3.24% of the GDP. This represents a significant increase compared to the deficit of 27.35 billion LEI, or 1.70% of the GDP, recorded during the same period in 2023, effectively doubling the amount from last year.
- Radu Mazăre, the former mayor of Constanța, will be released on parole after serving five years in prison, following a final decision by the Ilfov Tribunal. Mazăre was convicted in 2022 for taking bribes and for abuse of office in the Polaris case, receiving a five-year sentence. Additionally, in 2019, he was sentenced to nine years for abuse of office in the illegal retrocession case and for forming a criminal group.

**May 28**

- The AEP announces that 207,389 candidates have registered for the June 9 local elections, while 494 candidates are running for the EP elections. The total number of eligible voters is 18,025,324. A total of 18,995 polling stations will be set up within the country, with 915 polling stations organized abroad.

**May 29**

- Most NATO countries believe that President Iohannis should withdraw his candidacy for the top position in the alliance. The following day, the North Atlantic Alliance's foreign ministers will meet in Prague in order to outline decisions for the July Washington Summit and to endorse Mark Rutte as the next NATO Secretary General.



- PM Ciolacu confirms the proposal for Romania to provide Ukraine with a Patriot System, stating that if one such a system covers part of Ukraine, it does not mean that it would not cover Romania as well. He expresses his conviction that the final decision will not undermine Romania's security.

### May 30

- PM Ciolacu announces that the Government will allocate 1.85 billion LEI to finance European projects in the transportation sector, including major road projects in Romania, such as the Sibiu-Pitești Highway, the Transylvanian Highway, and the Târgu Mureș-Iași Highway.
- The Government approves a draft law amending Law No. 290/2004 on criminal records, which allows individuals to obtain their criminal record certificate online through the HUB services platform of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MAI).
- The Government approves a 50 million LEI project, coordinated by the Ministry of Research, Development, and Digitization, aimed at standardizing the websites of 1,000 municipalities and county councils and enabling their integration with electronic payment platforms such as Ghișeul.ro.
- The Government approves an GEO that amends and supplements Law No. 255/2010 on expropriation for public utility purposes, necessary for the realization of national, county, and local interest projects. This ordinance allows the Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, and Tourism to initiate and carry out expropriation procedures for public utility purposes, specifically for projects related to the construction, modernization, expansion, and conversion of production and/or service capacities in the national defense industry, aimed at defending national strategic interests.

### May 31

- Environment Minister Mircea Fechet announces that more than a half a billion PET bottles, cans, and bottles have been collected so far through the Guarantee Return System (SGR) launched on November 30, 2023.

- Several hundred doctors working in outpatient clinics protest in front of the Government, criticizing the inadequate funding of their sector and expressing dissatisfaction with the 4.5 LEI per service point paid to their offices by the Health Insurance House.
- Protests are held in front of the Government's headquarters, with union members from the administrative and cultural sectors taking to the streets. They are protesting the Government's decision last week to implement only a 10% wage increase. The proposed increase in the minimum wage to 3,700 lei is still pending, as the Government has yet to decide on the situation of employees in the agricultural and construction sectors, which have differentiated minimum wages.

**June 02**

- The Ministry of Finance (MoF) plans to borrow 6.2 billion LEI from commercial banks in June 2024, with the possibility of an additional 750 million LEI through supplementary non-competitive bidding sessions linked to bond auctions.

**June 05**

- The European Court of Justice (ECJ) rules that Romania must recognize the right of residence for same-sex spouses of European Union (EU) citizens, without the need to legalize same-sex marriages.

**June 06**

- The Government adopts a draft law amending the Romanian Citizenship Law to facilitate joining the Visa Waiver Program. Key amendments include the digitization of the citizenship application process, allowing applicants to track their file status online. Additionally, the identity of the citizenship card holder will be confirmed biometrically through facial recognition and fingerprints, replacing the paper certificate.

**June 08**

- The electoral campaign for local and European Parliament (EP elections) elections, which started on May 10, ends at 7:00.

**June 09**

- Local and EP elections are held. Polling stations open at 07:00 and close at 22:00. If there are queues at the entrance, the polling stations may exceptionally remain open until 23:59 at the latest.
- The leaders of the ADU and members of the AUR accuse the elections of "massive fraud" and claim that there are irregularities in the voting process. They claim that ballots were used that had already been stamped and handed to the voters.
- CURS and Avangarde conduct an exit poll for both the Bucharest mayoralty and the EP elections. In the mayoral race, Nicușor Dan, the independent candidate supported by the ADU, is leading with 45% of the vote, while Gabriela Firea, the PSD candidate, is in second place with 24%. In the EP elections, the PSD and the PSD-PNL Alliance is in first place with 54% of the votes, followed by the AUR in second place with 14%, and the ADU in third place with 11%.
- In the EP elections, the national turnout was 52.40%. In Bucharest it was 44.31%. At the county level, Giurgiu had the highest turnout with 62.83%, followed by Olt with 62.42% and Teleorman with 61.24%. The lowest turnout was recorded in Vaslui with 37.77% and Iași with 42.42%. In the diaspora, 216.002 people voted for the EP elections.

**June 10**

- According to the final results announced by the BEC, the turnout in the local elections on June 9, 2024, was 49,55%. The party with the most mayors was PSD with 2,900, followed by PNL with 2,856 and AUR with 1,898. As for the county councils, PSD won the most county council presidents with 24, followed by PNL with 11 and UDMR with 4.
- In the EP elections, the PSD-PNL alliance got the most votes with 48.55%, followed by AUR with 14.93%, ADU with 8.71%, UDMR with 6.48%, SOS 5.03% and the independent Nicolae Ștefănuță got 3.08% and entered the EP.
- Cătălin Drulă, the President of the USR, resigns from his position following the party's disappointing performance in the local and EP elections. As a result, new elections for the party's leadership will be organized.

- The incumbent mayor of Timișoara, Dominic Fritz (United Timișoara Alliance), won the elections with 49% of the vote, while his main challenger, Nicolae Robu, supported by the PSD Social-Democratic Party and the PSD-PNL Alliance, secured 35%.
- According to parallel counts by political parties in Iași, the winner of the city mayoral elections is National Liberal Party (PNL) candidate Mihai Chirica, with 32.6% of the vote. Meanwhile, Costel Alexe secured a new mandate as president of the County Council with 34.3%.
- The Fair Vote Coalition (Coaliția Vot Corect), consisting of civic organizations focused on democracy and human rights (such as Expert Forum, Politica la Minut, Asociația Civică, and Code for Romania), presents its preliminary conclusions from monitoring the June 9 elections. The coalition highlights that the elections lacked competitiveness, the electoral legislation had limitations, and voters were not adequately informed about specific voting procedures. A small number of violent incidents were reported during the election campaign. The coalition also identifies several irregularities in the electoral process, including non-compliance with electoral procedures, pressure on voters, and denial of access to accredited observers at polling stations.

#### **June 11**

- The incumbent mayor of the Sector 1 in Bucharest, Clotilde Armand, the ADU candidate for this year's local elections, announces that she has submitted a request for a vote recount and has notified the authorities about attempted fraud at several polling stations.
- The AEP announces that a total of 22,131,414 LEI was transferred to the parties' accounts in June. The party receiving the highest amount was the PSD, with 8,521,038 LEI, followed by the PNL with 7,223,695 LEI, and in third place, the USR received 3,894,141 LEI.

#### **June 13**

- PM Ciolacu highlights at the opening of the weekly cabinet meeting that inflation has decreased to nearly 5%, emphasizing the government's ongoing efforts to protect the purchasing power.

- The government extends through an GEO the deadline for approving the income and expenditure budgets for economic operators under the authority of the central public administration until October 31. This extension is contingent upon an analysis of the causes of the delay by the chief authorizing officers. The ordinance also stipulates the suspension of state budget funds for operators that exceed the approval deadline, prohibits the allocation of funds if the budget is not approved by October 31, and introduces sanctions starting in 2025 for failure to meet the deadlines.

#### June 14

- A report by the NGO Expert Forum (EFOR) reveals that invalid votes in the June 9 elections accounted for 5.1% of all votes cast, marking one of the highest percentages relative to the number of voters. Out of a total of 9,440,962 votes, 488,261 were deemed invalid. In comparison, in 2019, 274,415 out of 9.3 million votes were invalid, representing 2.89% of the total votes.

#### June 15

- The AUR National Leadership Council unanimously decides that the party's president, George Simion, will be the party's candidate for the office of President of Romania.
- Aurelian Pavelescu, President of the Christian Democratic National Peasants' Party (*Partidul Național Țărănesc Creștin-Democrat/PNȚCD*), announces his candidacy for the Presidency of Romania.

#### June 16

- The BEC rejects the ADU's request to annul the elections in Electoral District Sector 1, as well as the REPER's requests to recount votes from 117 polling stations in Mureș County and 82 polling stations in Iași County.
- Radu Mihaiu, the USR candidate for mayor of Sector 2, announces that the Electoral Office of Sector 2 has decided to recount the votes from polling stations 195 and 265, but has rejected the recount requests for 34 other stations.
- Elena Lasconi, the mayor of Câmpulung municipality, announces that she is running for the presidency of USR, following the resignation of Cătălin Drulă.

**June 17**

- Ten USR members are running for the position of party president: Elena Lasconi, Cristian Seidler, Radu Hossu, Gabriel Dumitrescu, Vasile Dinca, Luiza Oancea, Adrian Dudu, Eduard Ene, Doru Ilie, and Vasile Filip

**June 18**

- The Chamber of Deputies adopts, with 216 votes in favor, one vote against, and 40 abstentions, a draft law outlining the procedures for the valuation of properties wrongfully seized during the communist regime in cases where no decision has been issued, or the decision has been appealed. The draft law amends Law No. 165/2013, which addresses measures to finalize the process of restitution, in kind or equivalent, for properties illegally taken during the communist regime in Romania. The Chamber of Deputies is the decision-making body in this matter.
- The BEC announces the official results of the EP elections. In first place is the PSD-PNL Alliance with 48.55% of the votes, securing 19 seats in the EP. In second place is AUR with 14.93% of the votes and six seats, followed by ADU with 8.71% and three seats, UDMR with 6.48% and two seats, SOS Romania with 5.03% and two seats, while the independent candidate Nicolae-Bogdănel Ștefănuță enters the PE with 3.08%. The following members are elected from the PSD-PNL Alliance: Adrian Benea, Rareș Bogdan, Daniel Buda, Gheorghe Cârciu, Vasile Dîncu, Gheorghe Falcă, Gabriela Firea, Maria Grapini, Mircea Hava, Claudiu Manda, Roxana Mînzatu, Dan Motreanu, Siegfried Mureșean, Ștefan Mușoiu, Victor Negrescu, Dan Nica, Virgil Popescu, Mihai Tudose, and Adina Vălean. From AUR, the elected members are Adrian Axinia, Gheorghe Piperea, Șerban Sturdza, Claudiu Târziu, Georgiana Teodorescu, and Cristian Terheș (Romanian National Conservative Party/*Partidul Național Conservator Român/PNCR*). On the ADU side, the elected candidates are Dan Barna, Eugen Tomac, and Vlad Voiculescu. From the UDMR, Loránt Vincze and Iuliu Winkler are elected, whereas from SOS Romania, Diana Șoșoacă and Luiz Lazarus become members of the EP.

**June 20**

- The CSAT holds a meeting where it is decided that Romania will donate a PATRIOT long-range surface-to-air missile system to the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

**June 21**

- The Government adopts an GEO extending the use of e-invoicing to transactions between companies and final consumers. As a result of this change, taxable persons issuing invoices to consumers will be required to report them in the RO e-Invoice system. This measure is optional until the end of the year and will become mandatory starting January 1, 2025.
- The AEP announces that a new mayoral election will be held in the municipalities of Chețani in Mureș County and Poșaga in Alba County. A new round of elections is required in both municipalities because two candidates tied for the first two positions.

**June 24**

- The National Committee of S.O.S. Romania unanimously decide, through a vote held in Poiana Brașov, that the party's president, Diana Iovanovici-Șoșoacă, will be the party's candidate for the Romanian Presidency.

**June 25**

- The BEC has canceled the elections for the mayor of the Costinești commune and ordered a repeat of the elections on July 7 at the request of the PSD Constanța, as it was found that several invalid ballots were actually valid, and that two Ukrainian citizens voted in these elections despite not having the right to do so.

**June 26**

- The Romanian President promulgates the law amending and completing the Penal Code. According to this law, the suspension of the execution of a sentence under supervision can no longer be ordered for offenses listed in the articles 209-211, which include slavery, human trafficking, and trafficking in minors.

- Elena Lasconi, the mayor of Câmpulung, has become the new president of the Save Romania Union (USR). She was elected with 7,701 votes out of the 25,607 USR members with voting rights, which represents almost one-third of the votes cast. The results of the election for the USR leadership: Elena Lasconi – 7,701 votes – 68.14%, Cristian Siedler – 1,873 votes – 16.57%, Radu Hossu – 1,471 votes – 12.54%, Gabriel Filip – 310 votes – 2.74%. There were 32 invalid votes (0.28%).

#### June 28

- The Government spokesperson announces that the value of meal vouchers or food allowances will be excluded from the calculation of the 4,000 LEI threshold for granting salary benefits. Additionally, RCA prices will remain capped until the end of September 2024, and the fine point will remain at 165 LEI until December 31, 2024.

#### June 29

- Elena Lasconi is elected as the USR's candidate for the presidential elections at the extraordinary congress with 94.31% of the votes (531). Octavian Berceanu received 4.44% of the votes (25), and Dumitru Stanca received 1.24% (7). USR validates the new National Bureau of the party. The new leadership includes, among others, Clotilde Armand, Allen Coliban, Dominic Fritz, Stelian Ion, Radu Mihaiu, Ionuț Moșteanu, Claudiu Năsui, Cristina Prună, and Vlad Voiculescu.

#### July 01

- Prime Minister Ciolacu initiates consultations with political parties to establish the calendar for the presidential and parliamentary elections.

#### July 04

- The PSD-PNL ruling coalition sets the election dates: the first round of the presidential elections on November 24, 2024, the second round on December 8, 2024, and the parliamentary elections on December 1, 2024, which coincides with Romania's National Day.

#### July 10

- The BEC announces the final results of the local elections. The PSD has the highest percentage of mayors, with 34.74%, followed by the PNL with 29.07%, and the ADU with 6.28%.



- The ANI announces that the mayor of Timișoara, Dominic Fritz, has been found to be in an administrative conflict of interest. ANI claims that Dominic Fritz took out a loan from an individual during the electoral campaign and, while serving as mayor in November 2020, he drafted an administrative act benefiting the company represented by this individual, which violates the legal regulations on conflict of interest.
- The ÎCCJ rejects REPER's request to recount votes in several polling stations both in Bucharest and across the country, after the Bucharest Court of Appeal had decided to recount the votes. The ÎCCJ's decision upholds the appeal filed by the BEC.
- The Romanian Parliament has adopted amendments to the Electoral Law, introducing measures to facilitate postal and electronic voting for citizens in the diaspora.
- President Iohannis withdraws his candidacy for the NATO chairmanship, after all member states, except Romania, declared their support for Mark Rutte as NATO Secretary General.

### July 13

- Claudiu Târziu, president of the National Leadership Council of AUR, calls on President Iohannis to appear before Parliament to explain the decision to donate a PATRIOT missile system to Ukraine, arguing that this action makes national defense vulnerable and requires justification before both the legislature and the citizens.

### July 15

- President Iohannis promulgates a law stating that individuals who are to become military officers must sign contracts with the Ministry of National Defense (MAPN) upon admission to an educational institution for the training of officers, military majors, or non-commissioned officers. These contracts are valid for a period of eight years from the date of their appointment to their first position.

### July 17

- In Bucharest, the local elections are won by Nicușor Dan (independent candidate supported by ADU and REPER) for the General City

Hall of Bucharest. In Sector 1, the elections were won by the PSD candidate Gheorghe Tuță, while in Sector 2, the winner was the PSD candidate Rareș Hopincă. In Sector 3, Robert Negoită (PSD) emerged victorious, and in Sector 4, Daniel Băluță (PSD) won. In Sector 5, the winner was Vlad Popescu Piedone from PUSL, and in Sector 6, Ciprian Ciucu from PNL won. Dominic Fritz from ADU won the mayoral election in Timișoara, Emil Boc (PNL) won in Cluj Napoca, Mihai Chirica (PNL) won in Iași, Vergil Chițac (PNL) won in Constanța, and George Scripcaru (PSD) won in Brașov.

### July 18

- Prime Minister Ciolacu announces the launch of the "Qualify Romania" campaign, which aims to include Romania in the Visa Waiver Program, thereby eliminating the need for visas for travel to the United States. This will be contingent on the condition that the refusal rate for visa applications does not exceed 3%.

### July 22

- George Simion, president of the AUR party, has launched "Plan Simion," a housing program. Under this program, he signs contracts with Romanian citizens in which he commits to building housing for them if he wins the presidential elections.

### July 25

- The charge d'affaires of the Russian Embassy in Bucharest is summoned to the MFA following the discovery of Russian drone fragments on Romanian territory.
- The USR officially launches its political program for the parliamentary elections, outlining its legislative priorities and proposed reforms. The program, titled "Politics = Involvement!" includes the following key directions: reducing taxes, eliminating political influence in education, focusing the healthcare system on prevention, and "debaronizing" the judiciary to ensure its independence.
- The Government issues GEO No. 98/2024 which provides measures for the organization and conduct of the 2024 presidential and parliamentary elections.

**July 29**

- The USR calls for the establishment of a parliamentary committee of inquiry to propose concrete measures in the case of sexual assaults in the education system. The request follows the case of university Professor Alfred Bulai of the National School of Political and Administrative Studies (*Școala Națională de Studii Politice și Administrative/SNSPA*), who is accused of sexual harassment.

**July 30**

- Representatives and supporters of the AUR protest in front of the Financial Supervisory Authority (ASF) against the “discriminatory pricing” of moto vehicle liability insurance (*asigurare de răspundere civilă auto/RCA*) for drivers from Bucharest and Ilfov. The ASF wants to introduce different rates for RCA policies depending on the residence of the driver. Drivers from Bucharest and Ilfov County will have to pay higher RCA premiums than drivers from other regions of the country because of the increased traffic in the capital.

**August 4**

- The Protocol on the establishment of the National Alliance of Greater Romania is signed. This alliance operates under the umbrella of the PRM, and ten political parties have signed the protocol.

**August 7**

- PUSL’s Executive Office appoints Cristian Popescu Piedone president of the Bucharest branch and vice president for public administration of the PUSL, thus deciding the termination of his position as executive president.

**August 8**

- The President of AUR, George Simion, files a criminal complaint with the General Prosecutor’s Office against the President of PNL, Nicolae Ciucă, for embezzlement of public funds for the illegal use of subsidies for public purposes. The complaint concerns the use of political billboards in public spaces during the May 10-June 9 electoral campaign, to promote the party leader’s book “In the service of the country” (*Un ostaș în slujba țării*).

- The Romanian Government approves an increase in the budget of the Ministry of Finance for 2024, by a total of 286,305 million LEI. Of this amount, 150 million LEI is allocated for the further implementation of state aid, and the remaining amount is allocated for the purchase of more X-ray scanners.
- The Government approves the Government Debt Management Strategy for the period 2024–2026.

**August 14**

- The AEP transfers 133 million LEI to six parties between January and June 2024, while the parties, in turn, have spent 198 million LEI. PSD receives the most, amounting to 52.1 million LEI, followed by PNL, with 44.1 million LEI, and USR, with 23.8 million LEI.

**August 21**

- The Government spokesperson Mihai Constantin declares that the Government is approving a program through which approximately 1.9 million children attending kindergarten or school will receive fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and baked goods in the coming school year. This program has a total budget of more than 760 million LEI, of which more than 86 million will be provided by the EU.

**August 22**

- The United States of America approves the sale of AIM-120 AMRAAM missiles to provide the Romanian Air Force with advanced air-to-air capabilities. The initial sale is valued at approximately 180 million U.S. dollars, with the option to purchase additional missiles in the future. The missiles are compatible with Romania's F-16s and other aircraft, including the F-35.

**August 24**

- The PSD Congress re-elects Marcel Ciolacu as President of the party and nominates him as the candidate for the 2024 presidential elections. He had no opponents either for the position of party president or in the race for the presidential election candidacy.

**August 26**

- The mayor of Sector 1, Clotilde Armand, files a complaint with ANI regarding the sums received by the president of the AEP, Toni Greblă, after journalists from Snoop.ro reveal that he has signed an illegal order, increasing his salary by 50%.

**August 28**

- The Romanian Government is extending for two years the National Local Development Program, which supports investment in local communities are supported, by two years. PM Ciolacu states that over 3,000 projects from the National Local Development Program are currently underway, which would expire either on December 31, 2024, or December 31, 2025, thus making the extension necessary.
- The National Alliance of Student Organizations in Romania, the Romanian Youth Council, and the National Council of Students launch the “We Know What We Want, But Who’s Taking Responsibility?” campaign, aimed at bringing the needs of students and youth to the attention of candidates in the parliamentary and presidential elections.

**September 2**

- The Romanian Government promulgates the normative act aimed at cancelling the interest and penalties for taxpayers who settle their debts by November 25. Furthermore, taxpayers who pay their taxes up to date will receive a 3% bonus starting in October.
- The AUR announces that it has notified the People’s Advocate of the inequities created by Law 360/2023 on the public pension system. The AUR claims that the law reduces the pensions of approximately one million retirees, especially for those who worked under hazardous conditions or have disabilities.

**September 3**

- The AEP announces that as of August 31, there are 18,974,516 citizens registered with voting rights, 3,931 fewer than the previous month.

**September 4**

- The Ministry for Development, Public Works, and Administration announces the financing of new projects through 68 contracts under

the “Anghel Saligny” National Investment Program, worth over 715 million LEI.

### September 5

- President Iohannis promulgates the law providing for the transfer of a PATRIOT anti-aircraft missile system to Ukraine.
- The BEC composition for the elections to the Senate and Chamber of Deputies is established: AEP President Toni Greblă, AEP Vice Presidents Zsombor Vajda and Cosmin-Gabriel Popp, five ÎCCJ judges (Adrian Glugă, Bogdan Cristea, Dorina Zeca, Irina Alexandra Boldea, Adina Oana Surdu), and representatives of the political parties in Parliament (Viorel Mocanu-PSD, Cristian Ene-PNL, Emil Dugnea-USR, Oana Anghel-USR, Laurențiu Plăeșu-AUR, Valentin Drăgoi-AUR, Maria Kolumban-UDMR, Eduard Manciu-FD, Vlad Măntoiu-FD, Ivan Truțer, representative of the Parliamentary Group of National Minorities in the Chamber of Deputies).

### September 6

- UDMR President Kelemen Hunor is designated by the Union Representatives’ Council as the presidential candidate.

### September 11

- Mircea Geoană, former NATO Deputy Secretary General (2019-2024) and the PSD candidate in the 2009 presidential elections, announces his candidacy for Romania’s Presidency as an independent candidate.
- The Government allocates 573 million LEI from the Budgetary Reserve Fund for projects in the transportation sector, for projects within the National Recovery and Resilience Plan – Component 4, for Sustainable Transport. The funds will ensure up to date payments for the Buzău-Focșani, Ploiești-Buzău, Buzău-Pășcani, Focșani-Bacău, Buzău-Pășcani Highways, and the Nădășelu-Poarta Sălajului section of the Transylvania Highway.
- The Government approves the increase of the tax exemption threshold for pensions in the National System for Public Order and Safety, allowing for the exemption of pensions up to 3,000 LEI.

### **September 13**

- The MFA strongly condemns the attack by the Russian Armed Forces on a commercial vessel transporting grain in the Black Sea. The Ministry also condemns the Russian Federation's violation of the United Nations Charter through the systematic and irresponsible bombing of ships transporting grain.

### **September 15**

- The National Council of the PNL unanimously validates Nicolae Ciucă as candidate for Romania's Presidency.

### **September 16**

- The PMP and FD announce a political alliance for the 2024 parliamentary and presidential elections. The alliance's presidential candidate is Ludovic Orban, president of the FD, who announces his candidacy on this occasion.

### **September 17**

- The President of the Chamber of Deputies, Daniel Suciuc, announces that a person has set fire inside the Parliament building, in the visitors' access area, using gasoline. There were no casualties as a result of the incident, although one woman suffered a panic attack.

### **September 19**

- According to a poll conducted by INSCOP Research, 69% of Romanians intend to vote in the first round of the presidential elections. As far as their voting intention is concerned, Mircea Geoană, an independent candidate, leads the race with 21.4%, followed by Marcel Ciolacu (PSD) with 20.3%, and Elena Lasconi (USR) with 14.2%. The survey was commissioned by the Institute for Freedom and Democracy, conducted between September 11-16, and it was based on a sample of 1,102 people with a margin of error of 3% and a degree of confidence of 95%.

### **September 23**

- The PNL requests a decision from the BEC on a proposal to amend Law 208/2015, which would allow President Iohannis to run in the

parliamentary elections. The proposal enables the Romanian president to run as an independent on the list of a party or alliance during the last three months of his mandate. This project amends article 52 of the Law on the election of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. Members of the National Standing Bureau of the PSD unanimously oppose the proposed amendment.

#### **September 25**

- Following the floods that affected important areas in Galați County, the Government allocates 15,000 LEI per family to those affected, to replace destroyed belongings or purchase heating fuel. Furthermore, an additional 10,000 LEI have been allocated, and local authorities in Galați receive 62 million LEI to repair the roads, bridges, and culverts destroyed or severely damaged by the floods.
- The Government extends the cap on RCA insurance prices until the end of 2024.
- The Government approves a decision to supplement the budget of the Ministry of Finance by 251.4 million LEI from the Budgetary Reserve Fund for the State Aid Program.

#### **September 26**

- The AEP announces that for this year's presidential elections, 6,751 diaspora voters have submitted requests to vote at polling stations and 4,562 have requested to vote by mail. For the parliamentary elections, 6,067 diaspora voters have requested to vote at polling stations, and 4,278 have requested to vote by mail.

#### **September 27**

- The Ministry of National Defense, Angel Tîlvăr, announces the deployment of four fighter jets to monitor the situation at the Ukrainian border, where Russian forces have attacked port infrastructure using drones.
- The USR notifies the EC, arguing that the new pension law (Law 360/2023) violates the principle of contributions for workers in labor groups. The party claims that the new calculation formula



excludes the additional contributions paid by these employees who have worked in labor groups.

- The BEC admits the candidacies of ten national minority organizations for the Chamber of Deputies elections on December 1: the Union of Bulgarians in Banat, the Cultural Union of Ruthenians in Romania, the Lipovan Russian Community in Romania, the Union of Ukrainians in Romania, the Union of Armenians in Romania, the League of Albanians in Romania, the Union of Poles in Romania, the Union of Serbs in Romania, the Federation of the Jewish Communities in Romania, and the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania.