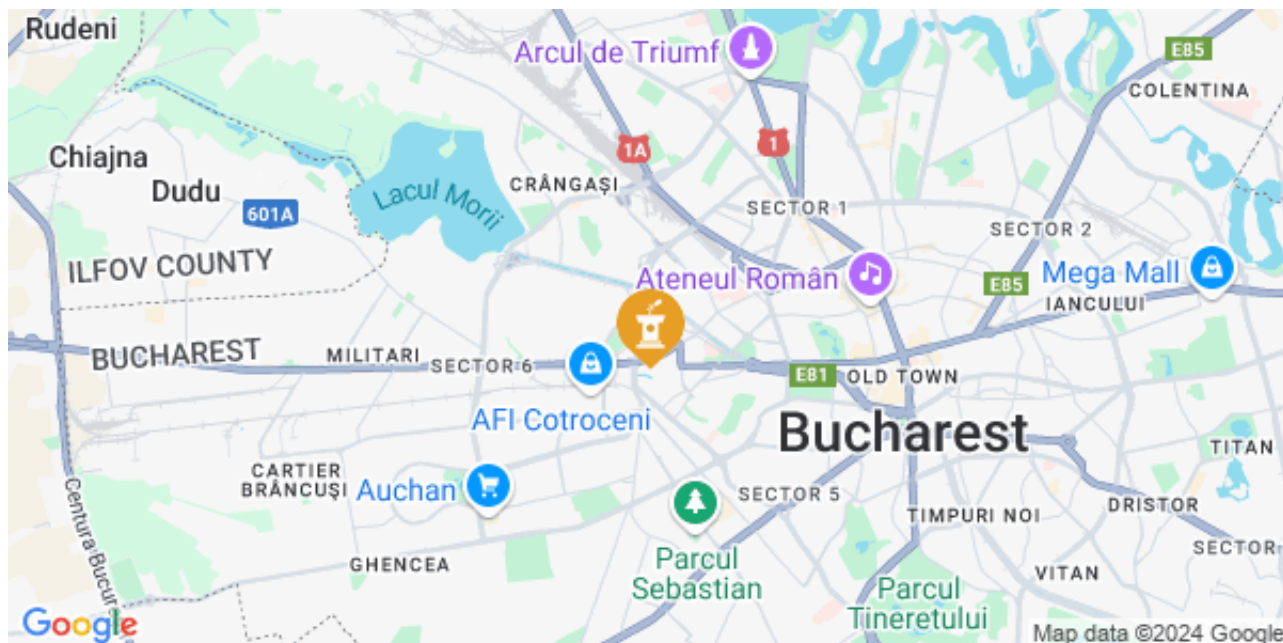


## Politics



# 23

NOV  
6:10 UTC

**Romania Tactical: First round of presidential elections slated nationwide, referendum to be held in Bucharest from 07:00 (local time) on November 24; maintain heightened vigilance**

## Current Situation

- Voting for the first round of Presidential Elections will take place nationwide on November 24.
- Polling stations will be open from 07:00 to 21:00 (local time).
- According to Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă, the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania, 14 candidates are contesting the elections.
- As per the latest opinion polls, Marcel Ciolacu from the center-left Partidul Social Democrat (PSD) is leading at 25.3 percent. George Simion from the populist right-wing Alianța pentru Unirea Românilor (AUR) party is second at 19.1 percent votes. Elena Lasconi from the Uniunea Salvați România (USR) party is expected to come third at 14.3 percent votes.
- If no candidate secures the required threshold of more than 50 percent votes, a second round will be held on December 8 between the top two candidates with the highest number of votes.
- Further details about the first round of presidential elections can be found [here](#) (in Romanian).
- Simultaneously, a local referendum will be conducted in Bucharest on November 24. The referendum concerns questions on the allocation of the city's budget and issuing of building permits, among other issues.
- Around 1.8 million residents in Bucharest are expected to take part in the referendum.

Source: [Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă](#)

## Assessments & Forecast

1. Political campaigning and spontaneous gatherings are liable to take place in the vicinity of polling stations, major public spaces, and outside government buildings in Bucharest and other major cities on November 24. Protests and gatherings are also likely to be held after the declaration of election results.
2. Given heightened sentiments among voters regarding issues such as corruption, judicial reform, economic inequality, and the preservation of democratic institutions, such gatherings and protests carry a latent potential for unrest in the form of clashes between supporters of opposing parties, as well as with law enforcement officers. If such violent incidents do take place, they are expected to remain localized near polling stations and party offices in Bucharest and other major cities, including Brasov, Cluj-Napoca, Constanta, Iasi, and Timisoara.
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

1. Those operating or residing in Romania on November 24 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of all polling stations and protests due to the latent potential for unrest during the election period.
2. Allot for disruptions to travel in the vicinity of polling stations nationwide due to the slated election and referendum.