# Romania faces pivotal election amid concerns over Russian interference



Romania is preparing to hold a significant election on 4 May 2024, which many observers regard as a crucial indicator of Russian influence within Europe. This upcoming election is a rerun of the vote initially conducted in November 2023, which was annulled by the country’s constitutional court due to concerns over Russian interference.

The annulled election attracted international attention after Calin Georgescu, a relatively obscure far-right candidate and known admirer of Vladimir Putin, unexpectedly won the first round. However, questions arose concerning the legitimacy of his victory after declassified documents released by Romania's top security council revealed that the nation was targeted by "aggressive hybrid Russian attacks" at the time of the election. These documents suggested that Georgescu's online campaign may have been boosted by Russian efforts aimed at installing a leadership more favourable to Moscow. Following the annulment, Georgescu was disqualified from the race.

In the forthcoming election, George Simion, leader of the far-right Alliance for the Union of Romanians (AUR), will now stand as the replacement candidate. Simion has swiftly surged ahead in the polls, causing apprehension in Brussels and other parts of the European Union. Polling data indicates that approximately 40% of Romanian voters remain undecided, leaving a competitive field and raising questions about further foreign influence that may affect the final outcome.

Simion is one of four candidates with a realistic chance of winning the election. Other contenders include Crin Antonescu, who represents the current governing party; Nicușor Dan, an independent centrist; and Victor Ponta, a left-leaning nationalist. Each of these candidates has led in various opinion polls at different times, but the unpredictability demonstrated in the November election — where none anticipated Georgescu’s initial success — means the race remains open.

Romania, as a member of NATO and the European Union, has recently taken part in significant alliance exercises, underscoring its strategic importance in Eastern Europe amid heightened tensions. The forthcoming election is being closely monitored both domestically and internationally, as many seek to understand the extent to which external powers, particularly Russia, may continue to exert influence over Romanian politics.

The Express is reporting that as election day approaches, the focus remains on how Romania will navigate the dual challenges of domestic political competition and external pressures, which together shape its democratic processes.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2024_Romanian_presidential_election> - Confirms that the November 2024 Romanian presidential election was annulled by the Constitutional Court on 6 December 2024 due to allegations of Russian interference, and that Calin Georgescu, an independent far-right candidate, unexpectedly won the first round before being disqualified.
* <https://www.politico.eu/article/romanian-election-scenarios-data/> - Supports that the upcoming May 2025 Romanian presidential election is a rerun following the annulled 2024 vote, with George Simion, leader of the far-right AUR, now leading in polls after Georgescu was disqualified.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2025_Romanian_presidential_election> - Details the scheduling of the 2025 Romanian presidential election for 4 May 2025, confirms the annulment of the 2024 election citing Russian meddling, and the barring of Georgescu from running again with Simion taking his place.
* <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2025/04/16/nearly-40-of-romanian-voters-remain-undecided-ahead-of-presidential-election> - Provides data showing that nearly 40% of Romanian voters remain undecided ahead of the May 2025 election, along with information on the declassified Romanian top security council documents revealing aggressive hybrid Russian attacks boosting Georgescu's campaign.
* <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2025/04/04/as-romania-gears-up-for-presidential-election-rerun-who-are-the-frontrunners> - Confirms that George Simion is the frontrunner in the rerun election following Georgescu’s disqualification, and mentions other key candidates such as Crin Antonescu, Nicușor Dan, and Victor Ponta, as well as concerns over Russian meddling and the political tensions surrounding the rerun.