

Weekly Report - NRRP and EC Priorities

Report prepared by C. Petrescu, A.M. Anghel, E. Aignătoaei, E. Stamate



National Recovery and Resilience Plan

EC Priorities. Priority 1: Prosperity & competitiveness

Priority 2: Defence & Security

Priority 3: Social rights

Priority 4: Life quality

Priority 5: Democratic Europe

Priority 6: Foreign affairs

National Recovery and Resilience Plan

C1. Water management

Reforms

No relevant updates.

Investments

No relevant updates.

C2. Forests and biodiversity protection

Reforms

No relevant updates.

Investments

INVESTMENT 1, T26 - AMENDING PRIVATIZATION LAW FOR REFORESTATIONS WITH EU FUNDS. The law on the approval of the ordinance which proposes amendments to Law no. 268/2001 regarding the privatization of companies managing state-owned agricultural land was signed into law by the President. The ordinance aims to efficiently implement **Investment 1, Target 26** which focuses on

afforestation and reforestation of land, including urban forests. Next, the law will be published in the Official Gazette.

INVESTMENT 2, T29 - UPDATED GUIDELINES FOR FOREST NURSERY INVESTMENTS. The Ministry of Environment published in the Official Gazette a new Specific Guideline for Investment I.2.B under Component 2 of the NRRP, replacing the October version. The update aligns the scheme with legal limits on advance payments, adjusts the timetable so the call opens no later than 19 December 2025 and closes by 15 January 2026, and maintains the non-competitive “first come, first served” approach for the EUR 2.956 million allocation. The call supports the **achievement of Target 29, Investment I2, Component C2**, requiring 90 forest nurseries to be established, developed or modernised by 30 June 2026. Eligible beneficiaries include public and private forest owners and authorised producers of forest reproductive material with previously signed and later cancelled contracts.

C3. Waste management

Reforms

No relevant updates.

Investments

No relevant updates.

C4. Sustainable transport

Reforms

No relevant updates.

Investments

INVESTMENT 1, T74 - BEI LOANS FOR RAILWAY MODERNISATION. The two draft bills approving the EUR 300 million financing contracts each with the European Investment Bank (EIB) for the Cluj-Napoca – Oradea - Episcopia Bihor and Caransebeş – Timișoara - Arad railway projects were registered in the Senate for final debate and sent to the responsible committees to issue a report by 16.12.2025. Both loans are part of the national co-financing mechanism for NRRP railway investments under **Component C4, Investment I1, and support the implementation of Target 74**, which requires the completion of at least 50% of works by Q2 2026. The loans cover up to half of project costs, with maturities of up to 25 years, and will secure the financial flow needed to maintain construction schedules.

C5. The Renovation Wave

Reforms

No relevant updates.

Investments

No relevant updates.

C6. Energy

Reforms

REFORM 3, M123 - GREEN BUDGETING. The law on the approval of the ordinance which establishes a framework for regulating the labeling of budgetary and fiscal expenditures, to promote green budgeting, in line with **Milestone 123, Reform R3, Component C6 of the NRRP**, was signed into law adopted by the President. Next, the law will be published in the Official Gazette.

Investments

No relevant updates.

C7. Digital transformation

Reforms

No relevant updates.

Investments

No relevant updates.

C8. Tax reform and pension reform

Reforms

REFORM 4, M205 & M207; INVESTMENT 7, M237 – TAX REFORM 2ND PACKAGE. The Constitutional Court

(CCR) decided that the **law on tax reform and efficiency of collection** – part of **the 2nd Package of fiscal-budgetary measures**, based on the reforms undertaken through the **NRRP, Component 8** – is constitutional. We recall that the law, as amended by Parliament, provides an extensive package of legislative amendments to strengthen financial discipline, increase fiscal responsibility and modernize public administration, measures taken to fulfill **Milestones 205 and 207 (Reform 4) and Milestone 237 (Investment 7)**. The aim is to reduce the deficit and modify the fiscal framework to make revenue collection more efficient. Because the complaint of unconstitutionality was rejected, the act is now to be signed by the President before being published in the Official Gazette.

REFORM 6, M213 – INCREASED CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE 2ND PILLAR. The Senate extended the debate and adoption deadline to 60 days (until 01.01.2026) for the legislative proposal aiming to increase the contribution rate to privately managed pension funds in Pillar 2 by 0.5 percentage points, from January 1, 2026, to reach the rate of 5.25%, and by 0.75 percentage points from January 1, 2027, to reach the rate of 6%. The amendment impacts **Milestone 213, of Reform 6 of Component 8 of the NRRP** which has already been fulfilled and provides for changes to the regulatory framework to ensure the sustainability of Pillar 2 pensions through an increase in contributions in accordance with the provisions of the Fiscal-Budgetary Strategy.

REFORM 6, M215 – SPECIAL PENSIONS REFORM. After the Government assumed its responsibility, the law that regulates special pensions was adopted by the joint plenary sessions of the Parliament, in the absence of a vote of no confidence being submitted within 3 days, the term established by the Constitution. The act aims to regulate the conditions for granting service pensions in the justice system, namely the pensions of judges and prosecutors, the pensions of specialized auxiliary staff of courts and prosecutors' offices attached to them, as well as the pensions of assistant magistrates and legal specialized staff assimilated to them within the Constitutional Court, in accordance with **Milestone 215, Reform 6, Component 8 of the NRRP**. However, the High Court of Cassation and Justice (ÎCCJ) filed a complaint of unconstitutionality regarding it, that CCR should have debated on December 10th, but instead postponed for December 28th, on the first Sunday after Christmas. The legislative process is now blocked until the decision of the Constitutional Court is issued, and the initial NRRP deadline was already exceeded.

Investments

No relevant updates.

C9. Support for the private sector, research, development, and innovation

Reforms

No relevant updates.

Investments

I5 - COMPETENCE CENTERS. The Ministry of Education published **Order 6.855/2025**, according to which the “Competence Center” State Aid Scheme (**Investment 5 – “Establishment and operationalization of competence centers”**), applies from its publication in the Official Gazette, Part I, until the allocated budget is exhausted but no later than June 30, 2023, and payments may be made until June 30, 2026, within the limits of the available budget.

I4 - UPDATE OF THE SPECIFIC GUIDE – CALL 2 “PIIEC ME/CT – INDIRECT PARTICIPANTS”. The Ministry of Investments and European Projects published the updated version of **the Guide** on the conditions for accessing European funds related to **the NRRP, call 2 "PIIEC ME/CT - indirect participants" (Component 9, Investment 4)**. According to it, the period for signing contracts has been extended until **December 31, 2025**.

C10. The local fund

Reforms

No relevant updates.

Investments

No relevant updates.

C11. Tourism and culture

Reforms

No relevant updates.

Investments

No relevant updates.

C12. Health

Reforms

No relevant updates.

Investments

No relevant updates.

C13. Social reforms

Reforms

No relevant updates.

Investments

No relevant updates.

C14. Good governance

Reforms

REFORM 1, M405 - NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATION. Last week, the Romanian Government adopted a decision on the **National Strategy for Public Sector Innovation (2026-2030)**, in line with the OECD Declaration on Public Sector Innovation. Adopted under the NRRP framework (**Component 14, Milestone 405 – Reform 1**), the strategy aims to accelerate and strengthen the public administration's capacity to implement innovative working methods, delivering efficient, user-centered public services. The strategy focuses on three pillars: **1) fostering a culture of innovation** within public administration; **2) enhancing the innovation capacity of public authorities and institutions** through skills development, institutional support, and financing mechanisms; and **3) ensuring collaborative governance of innovation processes** by promoting open innovation, leveraging synergies with other strategic initiatives, and strengthening the coordinating role of the General Secretariat of the Government (SGG). Now, the decision is to soon be published in the Official Gazette.

REFORM 9 - NEW MEASURES FOR STATE COMPANY GOVERNANCE. In the same meeting, the Government has also adopted (and later published in the Official Gazette) the new ordinance supporting **NRRP Reform 9**, which requires **supervisory authorities to complete board member selection processes and appoint new administrators by March 31, 2026**. AMEPIP will audit these processes, identify any irregularities, and impose fines. Where management duties are delegated and vacancies remain, boards may appoint interim directors until May 31, 2026, when current mandates expire. The ordinance has already reached the Parliament, the draft

bill for its approval being registered in the Senate (first chamber) for the start of the debates.

REFORM 9, M439 - CORPORATE GOVERNANCE REFORM FOR STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES. Instead, the Chamber of Deputies' committees endorsed the draft bill approving GEO no. 108/2024, which **aligns Romania's corporate governance framework for state-owned enterprises with CID requirements by removing all exemptions, including for RA-APPS**, thus fully implementing **NRRP Milestone 439**. The ordinance also extends the security vetting required for board members in the defence and national security sectors to those selected for RA-APPS, given its activities related to national security and protocol infrastructure. Additionally, the provisions clarify procedures for dismissing the leadership of the Public Enterprises Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Agency (AMEPIP): the General Secretariat of the Government must promptly launch a new selection process, while the Prime Minister may appoint interim leaders for a maximum of six months.

Investments

No relevant updates.

C15. Education

Reforms

REFORM 1, M452 - SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES TO PUBLISH KEY DATA ONLINE. This week, MPs from SOS have submitted a legislative initiative to the Chamber of Deputies requiring **all state and private schools and universities to publish key information on their websites in an open, reusable format**. The data would include educational offerings, staff, institutional performance, and accessibility features for students with disabilities, updated regularly. The Ministry of Education will set technical standards for publication. The provisions must be applied within six months of the law's entry into force and amend Education Laws 198/2023 and 199/2023, which previously has implemented NRRP **Milestone 452 (Reform 1, Component 15)**.

REFORM 1, M452 - AMENDMENTS ON TRANSPORT, CLASSES, AND STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS. The Education Committee of the Chamber of Deputies (first chamber) issued a negative report on the legislative proposal amending Law 198/2023, which previously

implemented PNRR **Milestone 452 (Reform 1, Component 15)**. The proposal aimed to provide **free school transport** for students in geographically or linguistically isolated communities, **extra funding to maintain separate classes**, and **incentives for teachers**, while allowing **multi-grade classes only in exceptional cases** for a maximum of one school year with annual reevaluation. It also sought to introduce a **performance scholarship** for students excelling in national and international competitions, ensuring that these scholarships **do not reduce other social rights or benefits**, regardless of their funding source. In this case, the plenary session shall soon vote (reject, most probably) these provisions before sending the bill to the Senate.

REFORM 1, M452 - AMENDMENTS ON TRANSPORT, CLASSES, AND STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS. The same Education Committee also issued a negative report on the legislative initiative amending and completing the Higher Education Law 199/2023, which implemented NRRP **Milestone 452, Reform 1 – Component 15**. The proposal clarified that the **funding for the 90% discounted or free local transport passes for students** should come from **local budgets**. In this case, the Chamber of Deputies is the decisional chamber, and the proposal now awaits final rejection by the plenary.

Investments

INVESTMENT 1, T457 – FOUR NEW NURSERIES OPENED. Development Minister Cseke Attila has inaugurated **four new nurseries under the government “Sfânta Ana” program** (part of NRRP, Component 15), which aims to build, equip, and operationalize **110 nurseries** nationwide to achieve **Target 457 – Investment 1**. The new facilities in Timișoara, Caraș Severin, Dej, and Târna Mare have capacities of 40 – 70 children, feature renewable energy systems, modern educational and administrative spaces, and accessible playgrounds, providing safe and inclusive environments to expand childcare access across Romania.

C16. RepowerEU

Reforms

No relevant updates.

Investments

No relevant updates.

General News

EXTENDING PUBLIC PROCUREMENT. The Chamber of Deputies, acting as the decision-making chamber, has adopted the law that regulates certain measures for extending public procurement contracts/sectoral contracts/framework agreements that are partially or fully financed through Romania's National Recovery and Resilience Plan, following the extension of the related financing contracts, in accordance with the deadlines established for them. The law will now be sent to the President of Romania for promulgation.

THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NRRP FUNDS. The Government adopted an emergency ordinance aims to ensure a coherent and operative legal framework for the efficient management and implementation of NRRP funds, in the context of fiscal risks and massive over contracting identified in public investment projects. Next, the GEO is expected to be published in the Official Gazette.

PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE - PRIVATE BENEFICIARIES. MIPE published Order 5832/2025 which amends the rules applicable to procurements carried out by **private PNRR beneficiaries** that do not fall under the scope of public procurement legislation. The new framework clarifies the scope, the rules on estimated value, competitive procedure, direct procurement and DNSH requirements, while updating the annexes used in the verification of procurements.

EC Priorities. Priority 1: Prosperity & competitiveness

A Clean Industrial Deal

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EU CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS ACT. The draft bill on the approval of the emergency ordinance implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1252 on critical raw materials was adopted by the Senate and registered in the Chamber of Deputies and sent to the responsible committees to issue a report by 23.12.2025. The act sets the national institutional structure and procedural rules for authorising extraction, processing, and recycling projects, with the objective of simplifying permitting, increasing administrative clarity, and strengthening Romania's capacity to handle strategic industrial developments.

FINANCING AGREEMENT FOR A1 MOTORWAY APPROVAL. The draft bill approving the EUR 500 million financing agreement between Romania and the European Investment Bank (EIB) for the co-financing of the A1 Sibiu - Pitești Motorway was adopted by the Chamber of Deputies as the first chamber. The project, part of the TEN-T Core Network, spans 122 km across five sections and is co-funded through the 2014–2020 Large Infrastructure Operational Programme (POIM) and the 2021–2027 Transport Programme, with total non-reimbursable EU support of around RON 9.27 billion. Next, the draft bill will be sent to the Senate for final debate.

SUPPORT MECHANISM FOR VULNERABLE CONSUMERS. The Ministry of Energy republished this week, for public debate, the draft ordinance establishing a dedicated financial mechanism for installing heat cost allocators in the homes of vulnerable consumers. The proposal introduces a one time support of up to RON 750 per eligible dwelling, defines income based eligibility verified through national databases, and sets up a card based system that can be used only for installation carried out by ANRE authorised operators. It also clarifies validation procedures involving the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Labour and STS, and temporarily suspends the enforcement of the legal obligation to install allocators during the programme's implementation.

EXTENSION OF THE GUARANTEE-RETURN SYSTEM (SGR) TO REUSABLE PACKAGING. The legislative proposal which amends Law No. 249/2015 to extend the Guarantee-Return System (SGR) to reusable beverage packaging from 1 January 2027 was sent to the responsible committees to issue a report by 17.12.2025. The proposal provides for the inclusion of reusable packaging for beer, cider, juices, soft drinks, water, wines and spirits, as well as non-reusable packaging for vinegar, borscht, distilled water and coffee-based drinks. It also introduces digital identification (barcode or QR code) for full traceability and sets annual minimum targets for reuse, return and recycling rates. Existing SGR infrastructure will be used for collection and reporting to reduce administrative and operational costs. Non-compliant packaging will be banned from 1 January 2027, with existing stocks allowed until 31 March 2027.

RED III TRANSPOSITION. The draft bill on the approval of the emergency ordinance implementing Directive (EU) 2023/2413 on renewable energy and Delegated Directive (EU) 2024/1405 on biofuel feedstocks was registered and sent to the responsible committees of the Chamber of Deputies to issue a report by 23.12.2025. The ordinance amends multiple national acts to accelerate permitting, extend guarantees of origin, support energy communities, and update hydrogen and biofuel provisions in line with the European framework.

Business & Economy

REDUCING THE RESIDUAL ERROR RATE TO BELOW 2%. The Ministry of Investments and European Projects has published for public debate a draft GEO that allows for the permanent exclusion of the amounts needed to reduce the residual error rate below 2%, so that Romania can submit the annual accounts and the assurance package to the European Commission on time. The draft Emergency Ordinance is expected to be adopted in a forthcoming Government meeting.

TRANSPOSITION OF DIRECTIVE (EU) 2024/927 (AIFMD II). The law on transposing Directive (EU) 2024/927 (AIFMD II), which updates the legal framework for liquidity risk management tools for investment management companies (IMCs) and alternative investment fund managers (AIFs) that manage undertakings for collective investment in transferable securities (UCITS) and/or alternative investment funds (AIFs), was adopted by the Chamber of deputies, the decisional chamber. Next, the law will now be sent to the President of Romania for its promulgation.

DAC8 TRANSPOSITION AND CRYPTOASSET REPORTING. The emergency ordinance which **transposes Directive (EU) 2023/2226 (DAC8)** into national law, by amending and supplementing the Fiscal Procedure Code, to **extend the automatic exchange of tax information and regulate the reporting of crypto-assets**, was adopted by the Government and published in the Official Gazette. Next, the normative act will be sent to Parliament for its approval.

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMS 2014–2020. The Ministry of Investments and European Projects published a draft GEO amends the legal framework applicable to the closure of the 2014–2020 operational programs and updates the rules on the management of unfinished, phased or non-functional projects, in order to avoid blockages and losses of European funds. The act also extends the deadlines and procedures for the distribution of electronic media intended for social support, ensuring the continuity of the measures until 2026. The draft Emergency Ordinance is expected to be adopted in a forthcoming Government meeting.

Commercial agreements

No relevant updates.

Digital tech, research and innovation

No relevant updates.

Health Union

PROHIBITION OF THE CONSUMPTION OF NICOTINE AND RELATED PRODUCTS BY MINORS. A new legislative initiative explicitly regulates **the prohibition of the consumption of tobacco and related products by minors**, both in closed and open public spaces, was registered at the parliament. The failure to comply with the prohibition is sanctioned with **a fine between 100 - 500 lei or a warning**.

Priority 2: Defence & Security

The European Defence Union

DEFENCE PROCUREMENT RULES UPDATED FOR SAFE-RELATED ACQUISITIONS. Two orders of the Ministry of Defence were published this week in the Official Gazette, updating the internal framework for defence procurement in line with the new EU SAFE instrument. The first order amends the Regulation of the Acquisition Council by expanding its mandate to include military products financed through the SAFE instrument and updating procedures for approval, reporting and program management, as well as revising annexes and institutional terminology. The second order complements the Instruction on the management system for defence equipment procurement by introducing a dedicated procedure for projects proposed under the SAFE instrument, detailing how requirements are set, how acquisition strategies are prepared and how decision points are structured throughout the project cycle.

Borders and migration

SPECIFIC GUIDE FOR THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS ACCESS TO HOUSING. The Intermediate Body Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, General Inspectorate for Immigration of the Ministry of Interior (MAI), has developed the preliminary version of the Specific Guide related to the call AM22K – Ensuring access to housing for third-country nationals, within the National Program 2021-2027 Asylum, Migration and Integration. The Specific Guide is applicable to applicants who wish to obtain funding within the call for projects, as well as to beneficiaries and co-beneficiaries, as the case may be, for whom non-reimbursable funding has been approved. The general rules regarding accessing and implementing projects are established by the General Guide.

Security & crisis management

PARLIAMENT ADVANCES LAW AGAINST FASCISM AND LEGIONARY GROUPS. The Romanian Parliament has resumed debate on the bill strengthening **measures to prevent and combat fascism and legionary movements**, especially online, following a request for reconsideration by the President. The Senate quickly approved the bill in its original form, and it has now been registered for final debate in

the Chamber of Deputies, expected to be voted upon next week. Key provisions include: clearer definitions of fascist, legionary, racist, xenophobic, antisemitic materials and “legionary”; prison sentences of up to **10 years for distributing antisemitic materials online**, with exemptions for art, science, research, education, or public debate; imprisonment for **3–10 years for forming or supporting legionary organizations; 1–5 years for distributing fascist or legionary materials**, increased by half if online; removal of fines and tougher penalties (6 months–5 years) for Holocaust denial or minimizing crimes against humanity, with online penalties increased by half; prosecution for online threats based on race, ethnicity, or religion only for individually targeted persons; and bans on public monuments and organization names honoring leaders of fascist, legionary, racist, or xenophobic groups, except in museums.

MEASURES FOR ACCURATE MOBILE EMERGENCY CALL LOCATION. Last week, Romania’s Ministry of Economy and Digitalization (MEDAT) launched a public consultation on a draft Government Decision to **improve the accuracy and reliability of location information for emergency calls** from mobile networks to the National Single Emergency Call System (SNUAU). The draft establishes a **funding mechanism of up to RON 45 million** for mobile operators implementing the required location solutions, assigns MEDAT responsibility for managing these funds, and links reimbursement to operators meeting STS-verified accuracy standards. It also updates the reception procedure to rely on STS reports and revises technical project requirements, including system architecture, functionalities, interconnection with SNUAU, resilience measures, cost justification, and supporting analysis. After public consultation, the decision will be adopted by the Government.

PNL PROPOSES HARSHER PENALTIES FOR SELLING DRUGS TO MINORS. Yesterday, two PNL deputies submitted a new legislative proposal to the Senate introducing **tougher penalties for selling drugs to minors**. Under the draft, selling drugs to a minor would be punishable by **5 to 15 years in prison and the suspension of certain rights**, while dealing in **high-risk drugs** would carry **10 to 20 years in prison and the suspension of rights**. In Romania, drug use and trafficking among minors has increased significantly, and the current law treats selling to children only as an aggravating circumstance, insufficiently severe. In order to better protect minors, considered an extremely vulnerable category, a distinct and much harsher sanctions regime is necessary for those who sell or offer drugs to them.

Priority 3: Social rights

Social fairness

GOV AND SOCIAL PARTNERS DEBATE 2026 MINIMUM WAGE. The Government and its social partners met on Tuesday at Victoria Palace to discuss the **minimum gross wage for 2026** during the National Tripartite Council for Social Dialogue. Prime Minister Ilie Bolojan noted that while a wage increase could protect low-income workers, it might also fuel inflation, pressure small businesses, and cause job losses in sectors like HoReCa, furniture, and light industry. Employers' organizations proposed keeping the minimum wage at the current **RON 4,050**, citing a 76% rise over the past four years that exceeds sustainable economic growth, while trade unions supported an increase to protect purchasing power and pledged to propose measures to preserve jobs. The Prime Minister stated all arguments will be analyzed, with a decision on the 2026 minimum wage expected **before Christmas**. Other issues discussed included the **2026 quota for non-EU workers** and human resources and salaries in health, social care, and education.

PNL PROPOSES UPDATES TO SOCIAL HOUSING LAW. PNL MPs have submitted a legislative proposal to the Senate amending and completing **Law no. 114/1996 on housing**, aiming to **improve the use of public housing**. The bill introduces **new eligibility criteria**, including income below the national average net salary and no outstanding local taxes, as well as proof of annual job-seeking registration with the public employment agency or other competent body. Local councils may also set additional transparent prioritization criteria.

Young people & equality

DIFFERENTIATED PARKING CARDS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. The Senate, acting as the first chamber, has approved a legislative proposal to introduce a **clear and fair differentiated system for issuing parking cards to persons with disabilities (or their legal representatives)**, creating two types of cards: Type A – Mobility, and Type B – General. Local authorities will also be required to distinctly mark parking spaces reserved for people with reduced mobility to ensure real and non-discriminatory access to public infrastructure. The bill has now been sent to the Chamber of Deputies, where the relevant committees have until December 23 to debate the measures.

DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION AND INDEPENDENT LIVING FOR ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES. The Senate recently adopted a second legislative proposal aimed at **developing a sufficient and diversified system of services to provide adequate support for all**

people with disabilities, regardless of type or degree. Key measures include reducing the number of institutionalized adults with disabilities by 32% by 30 June 2026 compared to 2020 levels, ensuring that at least 32% of institutionalized adults benefit from support measures for deinstitutionalization and independent living by 30 June 2028, and a further 10% reduction in institutionalized adults between 1 July 2026 and 31 December 2030. The bill has now been sent to the Chamber of Deputies, where committee debates are scheduled to conclude by December 23.

ACCESSIBILITY TO SOCIAL SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. The Senate this week also adopted a third bill, initiated by governing coalition MPs, which **sets explicit obligations for accredited social service providers, public or private, to ensure accessibility** of information, communication, internal procedures, and the informational environment according to the type of disability of direct beneficiaries. The proposal has now reached the **Chamber** of Deputies, with committee debates scheduled to conclude by 23 December. Under this bill, social service providers must ensure, where appropriate: accessible materials (Braille, audio, subtitled video, sign language interpretation, augmentative and alternative communication); trained staff in adapted communication, including sign language interpreters and specialists in augmentative communication; adapted signage (pictograms, tactile, sound, or vibration signals); simplified procedures and visual guides; and relevant assistive technologies.

DEEP ENDOMETRIOSIS DISABILITY BILL REJECTED. Instead, the senators rejected a legislative proposal initiated by SOS MPs, which sought **to recognize deep endometriosis (stages III-IV) as a disabling condition and allow affected individuals to be classified as having a disability**. The proposal aimed to ensure access to fiscal, professional, and social benefits for those diagnosed, including tax exemptions and deductions, flexible work arrangements, priority access to medical treatments and rehabilitation services, facilitated public transport, and preferential access to social programs. Now, the proposal is in the decisional forum of the deputies, with the report deadline set on December 23 as well.

YOUTH LABOR TAX CUTS REJECTED. The senators have also rejected the legislative proposal initiated by POT MPs, which aimed to **reduce labor taxation for young people to boost employment**. Key provisions included a 50% reduction of social and health contributions for employees under 30 for 36 months, coverage of the difference from the state budget, tax deductions for employers hiring young workers in strategic sectors (IT&C, green energy, education, health), the possibility to update the list of strategic sectors annually, and strict eligibility criteria in line with EU state aid rules. The proposal is currently under the debate of the deputies (deadline for report: December 23).

Priority 4: Life quality

Agriculture & biodiversity

BEAR INTERVENTIONS. The draft bill on the approval of the emergency ordinance on immediate interventions in brown bear incidents within localities was adopted by the Senate and registered in the Chamber of Deputies and sent to the responsible committees to issue a report by 23.12.2025. The ordinance revises the intervention framework, redefines operational methods, and clarifies the responsibilities of local authorities. It introduces the definition of the “habituated bear,” simplifies intervention procedures, and updates feeding rules.

PROMOTION OF AGRI-FOOD PRODUCTS THROUGH SHORT SUPPLY CHAINS. The legislative proposal on promoting agri-food products through short supply chains and digital traceability, and integrating them into public procurement, was sent to the responsible committees of the Senate to issue a report by 17.12.2025. The initiative, introduced by AUR, SOS, and POT MPs, together with several PSD deputies, aims to strengthen local agri-food systems by prioritising products sourced from short supply chains in public tenders and retail networks, supporting cooperation between farmers and public institutions. However, the initiative can be viewed as largely populist and lacking financial clarity, with low chance of adoption.

LOCAL PRODUCTS IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT. The legislative proposal amending Law No. 98/2016 on public procurement was also sent to the responsible committees of the Senate to issue a report by 17.12.2025. The initiative aims to encourage the purchase of local agri-food products through short supply chains. Initiated by USR MPs, the proposal introduces new definitions and rules that integrate freshness, social, and environmental criteria into procurement procedures and limit the price component to a maximum of 50% in the evaluation of food supply contracts. According to the initiators, the measure aligns with the EU “Farm to Fork” Strategy and the European Green Deal.

TRANSITION FROM PNDR 2014–2020 TO THE CAP STRATEGIC PLAN. The Ministry of Agriculture published a new draft emergency ordinance amending GEO 49/2015 to ensure the financial and operational transition from PNDR 2014–2020 to the CAP Strategic Plan 2023–2027. The proposal allows unfinished PNDR projects and commitments that remain ineligible after 31 December 2025 to be taken over for financing under the new programme, sets the conditions and guarantees for these transfers, and establishes the budgetary and financial rules applicable to funds resulting from the closure of the credit risk-sharing instrument. It also introduces transitional provisions on eligibility and links implementation to the European Commission’s approval of the updated CAP Strategic Plan.

Climate change

No relevant updates.

Priority 5: Democratic Europe

Democracy

CIPRIAN CIUCU WINS BUCHAREST MAYORAL ELECTION. Ciprian Ciucu (PNL) won the partial elections for Mayor of Bucharest, becoming the city's 17th General Mayor with 36.16% of the vote. His term will be short (about two and a half years) covering the remainder of the mandate left after the resignation of the former mayor, now President of Romania, Nicușor Dan. Ciucu, the former mayor of Sector 6, led by a 15-point margin over runner-up Anca Alexandrescu (independent, supported by AUR). Contrary to exit polls and pre-election surveys, he outperformed Daniel Băluță (PSD), mayor of Sector 4, who received 20.51%. Cătălin Drulă (USR) came fourth with 13.90%, followed by Ana Ciceală (SENS) with 5.85%. Other candidates each garnered less than 1% of the vote.

NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION AGAINST BOLOJAN GOVERNMENT. The opposition's no-confidence motion “Romania is Not for Sale – No Progressives in Government”, calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Ilie Bolojan's government, was presented in the joint session of Parliament and **will debated and voted on the following Monday, December 15**. The motion signatories, initiated by the PACE – Întâi România parliamentary group and supported by AUR, urge PSD MPs to support it as a means to remove “progressives,” referring to USR, from government. Instead, PSD leader Sorin Grindeanu announced that the **Social Democrats will not vote on the motion of censure** as long as they are in government. “If we decide to leave the government, we will leave with responsibility,” the PSD leader emphasized.

PARLIAMENT CONSULTATIVE ROLE FOR EU APPOINTMENTS. Already rejected by the Senate, the legislative proposal which would require **Parliament to provide a consultative opinion on candidates proposed by the Government for positions within European Union** institutions has reached the Chamber of Deputies. The relevant committees are expected to issue their report by 23 December.

MANDATORY ROeID INTEGRATION FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION. A legislative initiative, filed in the Senate by USR, PSD, and PNL MPs, proposes **mandatory use of the national digital identity system ROeID across all public administration digital platforms** to standardize electronic authentication nationwide. Key provisions include: all public institutions must integrate ROeID or another accredited electronic system within 12 months of the law's entry into force, while citizens' use of ROeID remains voluntary and access to public services cannot be denied to those who opt out. New digital platforms must support ROeID from the start, while the technical standards for authentication and alignment with the European Digital Identity Wallet must be met within 18 months. Institutions failing to comply within 12 months may face fines of RON 5,000 - 10,000. If approved, the law enters into force 12 months after publication in the Official Gazette, with implementing norms to be issued by the Government within 60 days.

SENATE TO REJECT DIGITAL CIVIC EDUCATION BILL. The Senate committees have also rejected, through report, a legislative initiative proposed by POT MPs that aimed to adapt the education system to technological realities by **introducing a mandatory “Digital Civic Education” course in middle and high schools**. The course would have focused on forming active, responsible digital citizens aware of their impact online. It was designed to cover digital rights and responsibilities, online safety, ethics and empathy, critical thinking, and combating misinformation. Teachers would receive accredited training, and students would participate in practical projects, campaigns, debates, and collaborations with NGOs and relevant institutions. The law also included measures for protecting students from online bullying and providing guidance on legal safeguards. Implementation rules were to be prepared by the Ministry of Education within 60 days of enactment. As the decisional forum, the Senate is expected to definitively reject the initiative during one of its upcoming plenary sessions.

Rule of law

RECORDER IS EXPOSING ROMANIA’S “CAPTURED JUSTICE”. This week, Recorder published an **investigative documentary “Justiție Capturată” (Captured Justice)**, which garnered over a million views within 24 hours, **exposing systemic corruption in Romania’s judiciary**. Through interviews with active and former prosecutors and judges, including anonymous testimonies, the report highlights how a small group of influential magistrates and politicians control promotions, case assignments, and disciplinary actions. The documentary details manipulated case distributions, blocked or delayed high-profile corruption cases, and pressures on independent judges, illustrating a self-perpetuating system that rewards conformity and undermines judicial independence, ultimately eroding public trust and weakening democracy.

The reactions from judicial institutions largely dismissed the documentary’s allegations. **The Bucharest Court of Appeal criticized the report, attacking the credibility of one interviewed judge**, claiming procedural compliance and emphasizing that all actions were legally justified. **The Judicial Section of the Superior Council of Magistracy (CSM) framed the documentary as part of a campaign to destabilize the judiciary**, insisting that current regulations provide adequate safeguards and that the majority of judges uphold independence and integrity.

Political responses were measured and focused on institutional processes. **President Nicușor Dan acknowledged the documentary’s importance, calling for internal investigations and verified evidence while urging magistrates to speak up.** **Prime Minister Ilie Bolojan stated he had not yet viewed the documentary but would analyze it with legal advisors.** **Justice Minister Radu Marinescu emphasized media freedom but stressed that any action must follow institutional procedures** and admitted he had not fully reviewed the material.

DEPUTIES REJECT LAW ON ABUSE OF POWER CLARIFICATION. The Chamber of Deputies' committees rejected a 2023 legislative initiative aimed at **clarifying and criminalizing abuse of power that infringes on fundamental rights or legitimate interests of individuals or legal entities**. Under the proposed law: abuse of power would be punishable by 2–7 years in prison plus restrictions on certain rights. Additionally, aggravated abuse (motivated by race, ethnicity, nationality, political or religious beliefs, or exploiting vulnerability) would carry 3–10 years. The bill also criminalizes attempts to commit such acts. We expect the bill to be definitively rejected by the plenary session of the deputies in the upcoming period.

Civil society

SENAT TO REJECT ESC RESTRUCTURING PROPOSAL. The Senate Labor Committee rejected, through report, a proposal to **restructure the Economic and Social Council, reducing its membership from 45 to 15**, with 5 members each representing employers, trade unions, and civil society. The proposal also included new rules for seat allocation, quorums, and the Executive Bureau. If adopted, current members' mandates would end within 60 days, and the Council's internal regulations would be updated within 30 days. The plenary session of the Senate shall soon vote upon this bill, before sending it to the deputies for a final debate.

Priority 6: Foreign affairs

Enlargement and wider neighbourhood

MOLDOVA INVESTMENT FUND. The legislative proposal which provides for the establishment of the Moldova Fund reached the Chamber of Deputies for final debate, being sent to the resort Committees for a report. The fund will have an initial capital of RON 1.25 billion, will be listed on the stock exchange and will operate based on strict administration and governance rules. Its activity will be supervised by the ASF, and investments will target priority areas such as infrastructure, energy, digitalization, education and health. The deadline for issuing the report is December 23rd.

POSITION OF ROMANIA TOWARDS UKRAINE. President Nicușor Dan stated in an interview with the French press that Romania cannot send troops to Ukraine, but continues to support Kiev by offering support through the military and civilian aid route, similar to Poland; he stressed the importance of Ukraine's long-term resistance and expressed concern about the consequences of its possible defeat, warning that such a situation would radically change security in Europe and Romania, which would find itself directly neighboring Russia, and being skeptical that Russia truly wants peace or an armistice.

A new economic foreign policy

INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS. The Government adopted a GEO aimed at providing the Government with the necessary tools to manage the impact of U.S. sanctions on Lukoil's assets. The proposal introduces an **enhanced supervision mechanism**, enabling the Government to intervene directly in the operations of companies in Romania that are affected by such sanctions. The GEO was also published in the Official Gazette and sent to the Parliament to be approved.

Reforming the international system

No relevant updates.