



Romania

BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

During the 2025 presidential electoral campaign, anti-LGBTI rhetoric intensified and was repeatedly instrumentalised for political mobilisation. In February, presidential candidate Călin Georgescu publicly declared that he was "against LGBTQ". Prime Minister Marcel Ciolacu stated that he would not want Nicușor Dan to win the elections because he "does not want to be forced to wear a skirt", and made additional remarks suggesting that amendments to identity documents to accommodate legal gender recognition would create confusion and erode traditional norms.

In June, ACCEPT lodged a complaint with the National Audiovisual Council (CNA) concerning the debate programme "News Pass", broadcast by B1 TV on 5 June 2025 in the context of Bucharest Pride. The complaint addressed on-screen captions and statements framing Pride as a "provocation" against religious celebrations and portraying LGBTI visibility in derogatory terms. Following monitoring and public deliberation, the CNA issued a public warning to B1 TV in August for breaching provisions of the Audiovisual Code prohibiting generalised defamatory statements against groups defined, inter alia, by sexual orientation.

In August, the Deputy Mayor of Ploiești, member of the far-right AUR party, announced on Facebook that he would "never accept" the organisation of an LGBTI event in the city, signaling continued institutional hostility at local level.

In October, following the publication by the European Commission of the LGBTI Equality Strategy 2026–2030 recommendations, several Romanian political figures contributed to misinformation on social media, claiming that children would be able to "choose their gender without parental consent."

In October, Nicolae Păun, leader of the Party of the Roma and former Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, Religious Affairs, and National Minorities, was removed from his position as head of the Human Rights Committee. In the weeks preceding his dismissal, Păun published a series of social media posts targeting LGBTI

people and Romani organisations. He alleged that several Romani NGOs had been "founded and financed by Soros" to "poison the minds of young Roma" and called to "stop the campaigns promoting homosexuality in Roma communities." In his statements, Păun characterised homosexuality as a "sin" and associated it with "Satan," asserting that he could not be compelled to "sit at the table" with LGBTI people or organisations. He also publicly defended early child marriage as a purported means of preventing homosexuality, in contradiction to Romania's obligations under the Istanbul Convention. In addition, he circulated a list naming Romani, human rights, feminist, and LGBTI organisations, further contributing to a climate of hostility and stigmatisation.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

In June, the NGO MozaiQ reported that an abandoned apartment block was defaced with a giant homophobic message: "STOP LGBT". Although authorities were notified, the Capital Police initially refused to act, citing the absence of a formal complaint.

During the 2025 presidential campaign, several electoral posters of candidate Nicușor Dan, who was perceived as supportive of LGBTI rights, were vandalised with messages stating that "he should be voted if you want to legalize LGBTI marriage." Following a complaint by ACCEPT, they were removed by the Central Electoral Bureau.

FAMILY

Despite the binding ECtHR judgment in *Buhuceanu, Ciobotaru and 20 other families v. Romania*, requiring the state to provide legal recognition and protection for same-sex families, no legislative initiative has been adopted to guarantee family rights for LGBTI couples. In December, the Constitutional Court of Romania examined a case concerning equal access to healthcare for same-sex families, specifically regarding the recognition of same-sex spouses as co-insured persons within the public health insurance system.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

June 2025 marked the 20th anniversary of Bucharest Pride. For the first time, Pride was celebrated through an entire Pride Month, expanding beyond the traditional one-week format preceding the march. Despite the tense political climate following the turbulent presidential elections, approximately 31,000 people participated in the Bucharest Pride March. The march highlighted demands for civil union legislation, simplified procedures for legal gender recognition, and protection against hate speech and prejudice-based crimes. Although counter-protests were set up before the march, authorities managed to deescalate the situation quickly.

At the local level, however, restrictions persisted. In July, Oradea Pride took place despite the Municipality's renewed attempts to ban the event, continuing its pattern of obstructing Pride for the third year in a row. The local organisation Ark Oradea once again faced administrative refusals when attempting to organise the march. Although the event ultimately took place under strict conditions and heavy police supervision, nine organisers and participants were fined following the march. ACCEPT and Ark Oradea jointly lodged an application before the European Court of Human Rights concerning the repeated obstruction of Pride events in the city. The situation generated significant solidarity across civil society: 47 organisations publicly supported Oradea Pride and condemned the municipality's restrictive approach. Pride events in Cluj-Napoca, Braşov, Timişoara, and Iaşi took place without incidents, with few protesters on the side of Pride.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

In May, Nicuşor Dan was elected president of Romania defeating far-right rival George Simion. In a subsequent report, the newly-elected president had initially parted ways with his party on the basis of their opposition to equal marriage, but he avoided taking strong public stances on the matter during the campaign and after his election.

In October, three training-of-trainers sessions were organised by ACCEPT for police officers,

prosecutors and social workers, aimed at strengthening institutional capacity to recognise, investigate and effectively respond to hate crimes targeting LGBTI people.