



ORIGINAL PAPER

Electing the Mayors in Romania's Big Cities in 2020: Voter Turnout, Legislative Changes, and the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract:

Local elections have been theorized by many scholars as lower rank or second-order national elections: they are less important, less relevant, and just not as interesting as national elections. In Romania, turnout in local elections was, until the mid-2000s, quite high, even if lower than in parliamentary elections. Since 2008, however, turnout in local elections has been consistently higher than in parliamentary elections.

The electoral reform that started in 2011 had, over time, a negative influence on the electoral process in the local elections. In this paper, we argue that the transition from the election of mayors using a majority electoral system in two rounds to a single round has contributed to the decline of citizens' interest in local elections, exerting a detrimental influence on the quality of political representation in general. Despite the arguments used by many of the supporters of this electoral reform, that electing the mayors in just one round will generate an increase in turnout because the competition will be fiercer, the effect was the opposite.

The year 2020 marked a historic low in terms of turnout in local elections in Romania. Analyzing the official electoral data at county level and for each county capital, we will show that the health crisis generated by the COVID-19 pandemic had a minor influence on voting turnout. Instead, the specifics of the electoral law meant that, in the vast majority of county capitals, the turnout was significantly lower than the county average and the mayor was elected without reaching 50% of the votes (in many cases, the winning candidate failed to obtain more than 30% of the valid votes cast), which poses a major problem regarding the representativeness of elected mayors, as well as the stability and political balance within local political institutions.

Keywords: *local elections, turnout, mayor, electoral laws, COVID-19 pandemic.*

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Introduction

The literature on local elections usually defines this type of electoral contests as lower rank, less important, not so relevant, second-order national elections (Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Miller, 1998; Heath et. al., 1999; Berry and Howell, 2007; Clark and Krebs, 2012; Kjaer and Steyvens, 2018). This tendency to award less importance to local elections is not, as it might seem at first sight, a marginal one, but a phenomenon found in many consolidated democracies. In fact, in the last decades, most of the studies on local elections have analyzed the trend of declining voting participation from various perspectives, trying to propose possible solutions to slow down this phenomenon (Reif et. al., 1997; Kostadinova, 2003; Blais and Rubenson, 2013; Fenwick and Elcock, 2014; Breux et al., 2017). When tackling this issue, most studies address single-case studies (Heath et. al., 1999; Blais, 2014; Fenwick and Elcock, 2014; Breux et. al., 2017) or comparisons between two countries (Hoffman-Martinot et al., 1996; Boulding and Brown, 2015). More recently, cross-national comparative research has sought to analyze the “institutional sources of low turnout” and to propose possible solutions for increasing citizens’ interest in local elections (Kouba et. al., 2021).

As Daniel J. Hopkins suggestively put it, low turnout in local elections “is something of a paradox since cities control a variety of policy levers that can have major impacts on citizens’ day-to-day lives” (Hopkins, 2021: 4). But the low interest in local elections and, therefore, the low rate of participation in these elections also negatively affects the quality of political representation. Although focusing mainly on the case of the United States, various research demonstrated that there is a clear connection between low turnout and the favoring of certain interest groups or certain categories of citizens (Oliver, 2012; Anzia, 2014; Fraga, 2018). Moreover, turnout can influence policymakers’ decisions and priorities (Hajnal and Toronstine, 2013). On the other hand, when local communities find themselves in financial troubles, as it was the case during the pandemic, “city officials are unlikely to prioritize communities with low levels of turnout” (Hopkins, 2021: 3).

However, local elections are of particular relevance for local communities, for the way in which public policies are constructed and implemented at the local level, but also, more generally, in terms of the quality of democracy. This last element becomes an important topic of debate especially where the quality of representation at the local level suffers, either because of low participation or because of uninspired electoral reforms. In the case of Romania, this should not be ignored, because after 2011, the electoral reform that changed the way of electing mayors contributed to accentuating the decline in electoral turnout. Despite the arguments used by the supporters of this electoral reform, who insisted that the election of mayors in a single voting round will simplify the voting procedure and increase participation in the polls because the electoral competition between the candidates will be fiercer, the reform had the opposite effect. This could be seen especially in large cities, where voter turnout was already lower than in small towns or in the countryside. As Alexandru Radu and Daniel Buti noted, the electoral reform of 2011 “weakened the representativeness of the minority winners of the competition and affected the equal opportunities of the competitors by favoring incumbent mayors” (Radu and Buti, 2015: 10-11). Analyzing the results of the local elections from 2012 in all the county capitals of Romania, plus Bucharest with all its six sectors, the two researchers observed that 20 of the 48 winning candidates for the mayor position have won their seats with a relative majority and 23 of those winning candidates were mayors who renewed their mandates (Radu and Buti, 2015: 11).

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The aim of this study is to analyze Romanian local elections from 2020 in order to see how much the COVID-19 pandemic influenced this process. Our main research question is whether the safety measures taken during the pandemic and the social context generated the lower turnout or whether this drop in turnout (compared to the previous Romanian local elections, from 2016) is influenced by other factors (such as the electoral legislation) and was not a direct consequence of the pandemic context.

The specific of Romanian local elections is somewhat different from the cases of other European countries: since the fall of the communist regime, turnout has been relatively high in these elections over the last three decades, and until 2016 it had not dropped below 50%. Also, for the last four electoral cycles, turnout in local elections has also been visibly higher than in the general elections, registering a difference between 8.68 and 14.68 percentage points – with the bigger difference being registered most recently, in 2020 (Romanian Permanent Electoral Authority, 2022). If in the Romanian local elections from 1992, almost two-thirds of the population participated in the polls (65%), in the following local elections the turnout decreased, though for a longer time, it remained around 50%: 56.47% in 1996, 50.85% in 2000, 54.23% in 2004 (Romanian Permanent Electoral Authority, 2022). In 2008, voter turnout in the local elections dropped for the first time below 50%, to 48.81%, but in 2012 it exceeded this threshold again and Romania recorded one of the highest turnout rates in the local elections after 1990, namely 56.26% (Romanian Permanent Electoral Authority, 2022). In the last decade, however, a new downward trend can be observed, the last two rounds of local elections registering the lowest turnout rates in the recent history of Romania: 48.17% in 2016, respectively 46.62% in 2020. Essentially, the Romanian political parties seem to be unable to mobilize the population to vote in local elections, despite the fact that these elections are always given increased importance since both the media and political leaders consider them the best tool to predict the performance of the parties in general elections, which usually take place several months after the local elections.

In this article, we begin by presenting the main legislative changes that were adopted for the Romanian local elections in 2020 in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic; secondly, we compare the turnout for those elections with the one from 2016, for all the counties and county capitals of Romania. Then, we take into consideration the specifics of the pandemic context (measures taken and the cumulative incidence of infections on the elections day) in order to assess the influence of those elements on the electoral turnout. All the electoral data we used was retrieved from the Romanian Central Electoral Bureau and the Permanent Electoral Authority; for the data regarding the cumulative incidence of infections we used daily information provided by the authorities.

Pandemic-related changes in the electoral legislation for the local elections

In accordance with Law no. 115/2015, the mayors and presidents of the County Councils are elected by uninominal majority vote in a single ballot, while the members of the local, municipal councils and of the General Council of Bucharest – are elected by proportional vote, on closed lists (Law no. 115/2015: art. 3-4). The 2020 local elections were also held based on this law, even though then Prime Minister of Romania, Ludovic Orban, wanted to amend it, so that the elections of mayors were organized in two rounds. In January 2020, Orban presented the Parliament a modified legislative act even though he intended to pass the law through the government's unilateral decision-making mechanism. This change was the result of a series of debates in recent years advocating

for a return to the two-round election system, which had previously been in use from 1990 and until the law was amended in 2011. At that time, the Social Democratic Party (PSD) threatened to file a no-confidence motion in the event that the law would be amended, but it never came to this since the prime minister's request was rejected by the Constitutional Court (Europa Liberă, 2020). The Court ruled that the electoral legislation could not be changed on the eve of an election, arguing that these measures should be taken a year in advance.

Since late February 2020, more than 80 countries worldwide postponed national, regional, or local elections due to the unexpected global crisis generated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) showed, in a report issued in 2020 and continuously updated since, that most of the elections that were supposed to take place in the first half of 2020 were postponed (IDEA, 2022). At that time, most countries were trying to implement what they considered to be the most efficient measures to manage the upcoming health crisis and, lacking the experience with such situations, they imposed a state of emergency and forbade all types of public events. Things started to improve over the summer and in the fall of 2020 – on the back end of the first wave of the pandemic – the adoption of various legislative measures enabled the states to start and reschedule the previously canceled electoral contests.

The health crisis generated by the COVID-19 pandemic meant, on the one hand, that governments had to adopt new legislative provisions regarding the conduct of electoral processes and, on the other, that parties and candidates had to adopt new election campaign strategies that focused more than before on the online environment. If, however, the pandemic decisively influenced the results of the elections or the voting participation rates, this must be analyzed by referring to the national or local specificities, to the time when the elections were organized, as well as to the restrictions faced by citizens, as well as politicians.

The 2020 Romanian local elections were postponed given that in the epidemiological context of the first half of 2020, it soon became clear that it would be unfeasible to hold them as originally scheduled (in the May of that year). Several notable measures were adopted through a government emergency ordinance from early April: (1) elections were postponed; (2) local public authorities' terms were extended until 31 December 2020; and (3) the minimum number of supporters required to run was halved (Government Emergency Ordinance no. 44/2020). Such a decision was to be expected, given that in mid-April, when the electoral campaigns were due to begin, Romania was under a state of emergency, which would remain in place over a period of two months, from March 16 until May 15, 2020 (Romanian Presidency, 2020). Afterwards, Romania moved to a state of alert. During this two-month period, 12 military ordinances were adopted which restricted several rights. The movement of the population outside their homes was allowed only on the basis of a sworn declaration which contained provisions regarding the type of (limited) activities that could be carried out.

Law no. 135 of July 16, 2020 set a new date for the local elections (September 27, 2020) and included a series of measures related to the organization and conduct of the electoral process in the context of the pandemic. These were subsequently the subject of a joint Order of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which imposed social distancing, mandatory temperature checks and masks in polling stations, and also limited the number of voters who were allowed to be in the polling station at the same time to no more than five (Order no. 1594/140/2020).

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The 2020 Local Elections in Romania: Electoral Turnout, Results, Comparisons. Did the Pandemic Collapse Electoral Turnout?

Although seen as the most relevant electoral test before the general elections, the local elections in Romania have often failed to predict the winner of the general elections or to build political alliances that will subsequently endure at the national level. More often than not, the Romanian parties adopted different strategies in the local and general elections, but even when they took into account the results of the local elections when adapting the strategies for the general ones, some developments in the electoral behavior still could not be accounted for. However, local elections remain the most important test that political parties must pass before the general ones. That was the case for the 2020 local electoral contest also.

Maybe the most relevant aspect is that the results of the local elections validated the drop in the Social Democratic Party's (PSD) earlier political dominance, against the backdrop of an election campaign rife with attacks on this party, both from the part of the National Liberal Party (PNL) and the Save Romania Union (USR-PLUS), which led to PSD losing the first position in voters' preferences. PNL managed to obtain more mandates of mayors and county council seats than back in 2016, steadily outpacing PSD. Thus, in the 2020 local elections, PNL obtained 34.58% of the votes cast for the election of mayors, compared to 31.50%, obtained back in 2016. On the other hand, PSD lost a few percentage points compared to 2016, receiving only 30.34% of the votes, compared to the 34.84% score from 4 years ago (Romanian Permanent Electoral Authority, 2020; Central Electoral Bureau of Romania, 2016).

Notably, while electoral turnout registered a drop compared to 2016, the difference between the two electoral contests was less than 2%: 46.67% of the voters participated in the local elections from 2020, compared to 48.17% in 2016 (Romanian Permanent Electoral Authority, 2016; Romanian Permanent Electoral Authority, 2020). From these figures it can be inferred that the COVID-19 pandemic and the health measures instated did not have an alarming effect on electoral participation. In support of this statement come the data on the cumulative incidence of Sars-Cov-2 virus infections, which on the day of the local elections was below the threshold of 1‰ at national level (in 17 of the 42 counties it exceeded the threshold of 1 ‰ - the highest incidence being 1.77 ‰ - and in other 25 counties it was between 0.37 ‰ and 0.97 ‰) (Graphs.ro, 2020). Also, the lack of a clear link between low turnout and the pandemic situation is further underlined by the fact that in several counties with a cumulative infection rate above the national average, turnout was higher than in some counties that recorded an infection rate below the national average.

**Table 1 – Romanian Local Elections, 2020 and 2016
(Turnout rate + COVID-19 incidence of infections in the election day)**

No.	County	Turnout (%) local elections 2016	Turnout (%) local elections 2020	Cumulative incidence of infections (Cases per ‰ inhabitants in the last 14 days)
		5 Jun. 2016	27 Sept. 2020	27 Sept. 2020
	National average	48.17	46.62	0.91
1	Bucharest	33.23	36.76	1.67
2	Alba	53.03	49.69	1.10

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3	Arad	48.90	44.64	0.96
4	Argeş	50.85	49.78	0.39
5	Bacău	44.98	41.34	1.32
6	Bihor	53.52	51.82	0.85
7	Bistriţa-Năsăud	52.90	51.59	0.59
8	Botoşani	50.29	44.19	0.53
9	Braşov	45.33	41.68	1.33
10	Brăila	46.46	41.39	1.05
11	Buzău	54.55	52.89	0.44
12	Caraş-Severin	49.82	47.83	1.07
13	Călăraşi	55.89	53.88	0.54
14	Cluj	44.83	42.64	1.07
15	Constanţa	49.42	46.34	0.97
16	Covasna	43.60	40.46	1.05
17	Dâmboviţa	56.84	52.87	0.86
18	Dolj	51.79	49.35	0.92
19	Galati	45.88	40.15	0.97
20	Giurgiu	61.87	57.79	0.62
21	Gorj	55.58	53.64	0.65
22	Harghita	43.47	41.98	0.48
23	Hunedoara	50.72	45.57	0.80
24	Ialomiţa	53.49	50.12	0.59
25	Iaşi	42.22	37.40	1.23
26	Ilfov	56.49	51.75	1.17
27	Maramureş	47.26	45.82	0.95
28	Mehedinţi	52.95	53.37	0.69
29	Mureş	51.55	48.64	0.37
30	Neamţ	47.69	42.82	1.16
31	Olt	59.42	56.55	0.77
32	Prahova	51.18	47.65	1.04
33	Satu Mare	47.71	44.71	0.61
34	Sălaj	53.84	52.50	0.82
35	Sibiu	44.35	42.18	0.84
36	Suceava	49.82	44.87	1.04
37	Teleorman	59.37	56.09	1.13
38	Timiş	40.64	43.03	1.02
39	Tulcea	48.21	47.68	0.92
40	Vaslui	45.11	37.14	1.44
41	Vâlcea	55.86	52.02	1.77
42	Vrancea	50.92	49.84	0.44

Data sources: Romanian Permanent Electoral Authority, 2016; Romanian Permanent Electoral Authority, 2020; Graphs.ro, 2020

As it can be observed from the table above, in counties such as Ilfov, Teleorman, Vâlcea, Caraş-Severin, or Prahova, where the infection rate exceeded the national average, some of the highest turnout rates were registered. Also, if we compare the turnout rates in the 2020 local elections with those in 2016, we will see that turnout was higher in 2020 mainly in those counties where interest in local elections is

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traditionally higher. In all 14 counties where in 2020 the turnout in local elections was over 50%, the situation was similar in 2016; those counties are Bihor, Bistrița-Năsăud, Buzău, Călărași, Dâmbovița, Giurgiu, Gorj, Ialomița, Ilfov, Mehedinți, Olt, Sălaj, Teleorman, Vrancea. Based on this observation, we argue that the decline in interest in elections at the national level is more in line with a trend encountered in all elections in Romania from the last two decades (especially the parliamentary ones), and less of a byproduct of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the highest turnout in the local elections was recorded, both in 2020 and in 2016, in Giurgiu County (57.79% vs. 61.87%) while the lowest turnout was in Bucharest (36.76% vs. 33.23%, with the higher turnout being in 2020). Moreover, in two counties (Mehedinți and Timiș) the turnout was higher in 2020 than in 2016, and in the vast majority of the counties the differences in the two turnout rates were below 5 percentage points, all of which support our conclusion that the impact of the pandemic on turnout was minor.

Who Won the Mayoral Race in the Big Cities?

Annex 1 contains all the data regarding the electoral turnout at county and county capital level for the 2020 local elections, including the calculated difference between the two turnout rates and the results obtained by the main candidates for the mayor position. When looking at the election results for the big cities, in particular the county capitals, the first thing that can be observed is the big gap between the turnout rates at county level and in the county capitals. With no exception, in all of the 42 cases (41 counties and Bucharest), the turnout in the county capital was lower than the county average. In some cases, the differences were by more than 15 percentage points: in 12 county capitals, the difference was over 15%, while in 13 county capitals the difference was under 10%. The largest differences – above 20% – were registered in three counties (Caraș-Severin, Giurgiu, and Vaslui), while the smallest differences, under 3%, were registered in Buftea and Târgu Mureș.

As the results show, in only 17 of the 42 constituencies analyzed did the winner obtain more than 50%+1 of the validly cast votes. Most of the winning candidates come from the two largest political parties: PSD (with seven of these candidates) and PNL (with five candidates). Aside from those, other five mayor seats obtained an absolute majority split between candidates from the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR) (three seats), USR-PLUS (one seat), and one independent candidate.

When looking at the turnout rate, we can see that there was just one case (Ilfov county – Buftea) where turnout was higher than 50% at both county and county capital level. At county level, there were just 14 cases with turnout higher than 50%: Bihor, Bistrița-Năsăud, Buzău, Călărași, Dâmbovița, Giurgiu, Gorj, Ialomița, Ilfov, Mehedinți, Olt, Sălaj, Teleorman and Vâlcea (compared with the 2016 local elections, when the turnout exceeded 50% in 22 counties and there was one case – Giurgiu – where the turnout exceeded 60%). At the other extreme, the lowest turnout rate, at both county and county capital level was registered in Vaslui, one of the poorest counties in Romania.

Conclusions

As in 2016, the 2020 local elections showed that most of the Romanian electorate opted for traditional parties, while smaller or newly formed parties failed to gain its trust, despite the many debates about reforming the party system that have taken place in the Romanian society in recent years. Therefore, the observation that the Romanian researchers Alexandru Radu and Daniel Buti made while analyzing the results

of the local elections of 2012 and 2016, applies to those of 2020 as well: “the Romanians legitimized the classical parties and validated their dominant position in the political system” (Radu and Buti, 2017: 10).

Aside from this, the pressing issue that persists concerns the already institutionalized disinterest that voters show towards the electoral process in big cities. The lack of trust in the quality of political leaders at the local level has become more acute in recent years – a phenomenon to which the electoral reform that proposed the election of mayors in a single round of voting contributed. Therefore, beyond the challenges (not to be ignored) brought by the COVID-19 pandemic or other crises (economic, social, or geopolitical) a major priority of the Romanian government in view of the next elections should be the return to the election of mayors in two rounds of voting. Such a political decision could contribute to a better mobilization of the electorate in the big cities and would give better chances to those candidates who are suitable to occupy certain positions, but who are not supported by the big parties. In a country with a multi-party system, elections in two voting rounds represent, in our opinion, one of the basic conditions to ensure a fairer representation of citizens’ political preferences, while also providing political parties with the opportunity of forming alliances between the two voting rounds. The latter would show, on the one hand, that politicians have in mind the public good and not care only about the outcome of the elections and, on the other, would contribute to increasing the representativeness and legitimacy of the elected candidates and, in this way, to increase the quality of local democracy.

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Annex 1 – Romanian Local Elections, 2020 – Turnout Rates and Mayor Seats in County Capitals

No.	County	Turnout (%) local elections 2020 – County average	County capital	Turnout (%) local elections 2020 – County capital average	Difference % (percentage points)	Results
1	București	36.76	-	-	-	NICUȘOR DANIEL, INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE (WITH THE SUPPORT OF PNL-USR-PLUS) – 42.81% FIREA GABRIELA, PSD – 37.98% BĂSESCU TRAIAN, PMP – 10.99%
2	Alba	49.69	Alba-Iulia	36.21	-13.48	PLEȘA GABRIEL, USR-PLUS – 36.81% PAUL VOICU, PNL – 33.73%
3	Arad	44.64	Arad	29.92	-14.72	BIBART LAURENȚIU, PNL – 33.68% WIENER ADRIAN, USR-PLUS, 27.37% FIFOR MIHAI, PLATFORMA SOCIAL-LIBERAL CREȘTINĂ – 16.38%
4	Argeș	49.78	Pitești	34.19	-15.59	GENTEA CRISTIAN, PSD – 34.82% APOSTOLICEANU SORIN, PNL – 26.03% MOȘTEANU LIVIU, USR-PLUS – 23.31%

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5	Bacău	41.34	Bacău	31.05	-10.29	STANCIU-VIZITEU LUCIAN, PNL-USR-PLUS – 29.32% SECHELARIU SERGIU, INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE – 20.32% NECULA COSMIN, PRO ROMÂNIA – 18.98%
6	Bihor	51.82	Oradea	37.39	-14.43	BIRTA FLORIN, PNL – 70.13% CSEKE ATTILA, UDMR – 11.4%
7	Bistrița-Năsăud	51.59	Bistrița	37.57	-14.02	TURC IOAN, PNL-USR-PLUS – 41.84% NICULAE CRISTIAN, ALLIANCE FOR BISTRIȚA-NĂSĂUD – 25.34% SIMIONCA IONUȚ, PMP – 15.25%
8	Botoșani	44.19	Botoșani	30.68	-13.51	ANDREI COSMIN, PSD – 37.18% FLUTUR CĂTĂLIN, PNL – 37.12%
9	Brașov	41.68	Brașov	34.46	-7.22	COLIBAN ALLEN, USR-PLUS – 42.05% SCRIPCARU GEORGE, PNL – 37.63%
10	Brăila	41.39	Brăila	31.24	-10.15	DRAGOMIR VIOREL, PSD – 63.2% CĂPRARIU LUCIAN, ALLIANCE PNL-BRĂILA NOUĂ – 17.24%
11	Buzău	52.89	Buzău	36.28	-16.61	TOMA CONSTANTIN, PSD – 78.07% ZOICAN ADRIAN, PNL – 7.38%
12	Caraș-Severin	47.83	Reșița	27.82	-20.01	POPA IOAN, PNL – 74.41% CHISĂLIȚĂ IOAN, PRO CARAȘ-SEVERIN – 12.48%
13	Călărași	53.88	Călărași	39.50	-14.38	DULCE MARIUS, PSD – 43.44% DRĂGULIN DANIEL, PNL – 32.96%
14	Cluj	42.64	Cluj-Napoca	35.60	-7.04	BOC EMIL, PNL – 74.76% UNGUREANU EMANUEL, USR PLUS – 8.26%
15	Constanța	46.34	Constanța	38.23	-8.11	CHIȚAC VERGIL, PNL – 28.49% ION STELIAN, USR-PLUS – 24.30% FĂGĂDĂU DECEBAL, PSD – 24.19%
16	Covasna	40.46	Sf. Gheorghe	27	-13.46	ANTAL ÁRPÁD, UDMR – 76.49% TATÁR IMOLA, HUNGARIAN ALLIANCE FROM TRANSYLVANIA – 7.61%
17	Dâmbovița	52.87	Târgoviște	35.04	-17.83	STAN DANIEL, PSD – 65.62% COTINESCU ILIE, PNL – 17.78%
18	Dolj	49.35	Craiova	35.76	-13.59	VASILESCU LIA-OLGUȚA, PSD – 34.29% GIUGEA NICOLAE, PNL – 24.56% SOLOMON ANTONIE, PER – 20.75%
19	Galați	40.15	Galați	31.27	-8.88	PUCHEANU IONUȚ, PSD – 59.19% RODEANU BOGDAN, USP-PLUS – 16.30%
20	Giurgiu	57.79	Giurgiu	35.75	-22.04	ANGHELESCU ADRIAN, PNL – 42.54% MĂROIU MARIAN, PSD – 26.89% BARBU NICOLAE, PRO ROMÂNIA – 22.09%
21	Gorj	53.64	Târgu-Jiu	35.40	-18.24	ROMANESCU MARCEL, PNL – 45.44% FLORESCU CIPRIAN, PSD – 28.18%
22	Harghita	41.98	Miercurea Ciuc	32.03	-9.95	KORODI ATTILA, UDMR – 73.78% TŐKE ERVIN, HUNGARIAN ALLIANCE FROM TRANSYLVANIA – 12.24%

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23	Hunedoara	45.57	Deva	36.57	-9	OANCEA NICOLAE, PNL – 37.45% CORBU PAULA, EUROPEAN ROMANIA PARTY – 19.77% MOȘ OVIDIU, PSD – 11.07%
24	Ialomița	50.12	Slobozia	37.27	-12.85	SOARE DRAGOȘ, PNL – 31.09% POTOR DĂNUȚ, PSD – 30.41% MOCIONIU ADRIAN, PRO ROMÂNIA – 21.25%
25	Iași	37.40	Iași	27.70	-9.70	CHIRICA MIHAI, PNL – 42.01% CHICHIRĂU COSETTE, USR-PLUS – 30.31% GAVRILĂ CAMELIA, PSD – 13.04%
26	Ilfov	51.75	Buftea	50.31	-1.44	PISTOL GHEORGHE, PNL – 64.60% TOBĂ BOGDAN, INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE – 20.35%
27	Maramureș	45.82	Baia Mare	35.33	-10.49	CHEREȘ CĂTĂLIN, COALLITION FOR MARAMUREȘ – 41.54% CIRȚ MIRCEA, PNL – 28.28% IVAN DAN, USR-PLUS – 12.78%
28	Mehedinți	53.37	Drobeta-Turnu Severin	36.50	-16.87	SCRECIU MARIUS, PSD – 40.38% CÎRJAN DANIEL, PNL – 34% GHERGHE CONSTANTIN, PRO ROMÂNIA – 12.33%
29	Mureș	48.64	Târgu Mureș	45.92	-2.72	SOÓS ZOLTÁN, INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE – 50.54% MAIOR SERGIU, PRO ROMÂNIA – 17.07% BENEDEK THEODORA, PNL – 13.52%
30	Neamț	42.82	Piatra Neamț	32.28	-10.54	CARABELEA ANDREI, PNL – 26.27% CHITIC DRAGOȘ, PMP – 21.97% CUC ALEXANDRU, ALLIANCE FOR PIATRA NEAMȚ 2020 – 20.88% IRIMIA MARIUS, USR-PLUS – 11.88%
31	Olt	56.55	Slatina	37.52	-19.03	MOȚ CONSTANTIN, PSD – 49.65% VOICULESCU LIVIU, PNL – 27.37%
32	Prahova	47.65	Ploiești	33.33	-14.32	VOLOSEVICI ANDREI, PNL – 57.52% GANEA CRISTIAN, ALLIANCE FOR PRAHOVA – 15.44% ENESCU RĂZVAN, USR-PLUS – 14.17%
33	Satu Mare	44.71	Satu Mare	36.87	-7.84	KERESKÉNYI GÁBOR, UDMR – 51.94% PANAIT RADU, USR-PLUS – 16.62% COICA COSTEL, PSD – 12.47% ALBU ADRIAN, PNL – 10.27% CIUNT IONEL, PSD – 50.94%
34	Sălaj	52.50	Zalău	37.03	-15.47	IORDACHE REMUS, USR-PLUS – 29.52% FAZAKAS NICOLAE, UDMR – 11.43%
35	Sibiu	42.18	Sibiu	34.05	-8.13	FODOR ASTRID, DEMOCRATIC FORUM OF GERMANS IN ROMANIA – 43.05% BIBU ADRIAN, PNL – 31.13% APOSTOIU RAULI, USR-PLUS – 10.25%
36	Suceava	44.87	Suceava	30.05	-14.82	LUNGU ION, PNL – 31.92% ANDRONACHE MARIAN, PMP – 19.67%

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						CUȘNIR IOAN DAN, PSD – 16.90%
37	Teleorman	56.09	Alexandria	36.23	-19.86	DRĂGUȘIN VICTOR, PSD – 50.56% MITRAN-PITICU VALENTINA, PNL – 29.22%
38	Timiș	43.03	Timișoara	34.17	-8.86	FRITZ DOMINIC, USR-PLUS – 53.25% ROBU NICOLAE, PNL – 29.87%
39	Tulcea	47.68	Tulcea	36.66	-11.02	ILIE ȘTEFAN, PNL – 40.36% LUCA ANDALUZIA, PSD – 30.35%
40	Vaslui	37.14	Vaslui	15.42	-21.72	PAVĂL VASILE, PSD – 62.02% POLAK TUDOR, PNL – 19.03%
41	Vâlcea	52.02	Râmnicu Vâlcea	35.25	-16.77	GUTĂU MIRCIĂ, PER – 47.81% PÎRVULESCU VIRGIL, PNL – 35.09%
42	Vrancea	49.84	Focșani	41.26	-8.58	MISĂILĂ CRISTI, PSD – 47.10% ȘTEFAN ION, PNL – 39.99%
National average						
46.62%						

The data presented in this table was compiled from official electoral data available at: Romanian Permanent Electoral Authority, 2020; Central Electoral Bureau of Romania, 2020.

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