

Political Science Research in the Digital Age: Leveraging New Media Intelligence Tools to Navigate Online Political Data

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NewsVibe

ecpr

Research motivation & context

Digital battleground: The 2024-25 Romanian presidential race had a strong digital component, a space where misinformation spreads rapidly (Del Vicario et al., 2016) and fake news can have significant agenda-setting power (Vargo et al., 2018); social and news platforms drive agenda formation faster than traditional campaigning (Vargo et al., 2014), a dynamic central to modern political communication (Theocharis & Jungherr, 2020), turning these platforms into a key “digital public sphere” (Papacharissi, 2002; Schäfer, 2015).

Case focus: Călin Georgescu (quasi-unknown outsider turned populist front-runner) rose, was legally disqualified and faded within six months of intense digital scrutiny.

Analytical need: High-resolution media-intelligence data can reveal how online narratives, sentiment and source dynamics orchestrated that swift political arc.

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Objective & Research questions

POLITICAL
SCIENCE

Objective

- To empirically examine and understand the evolution of online media narratives, issue salience and public discourse surrounding the political trajectory of Călin Georgescu across three distinct periods around the Romanian presidential elections (Nov 2024).

Research questions

RQ1. Narrative Framing: Which interpretive frames dominated coverage of Călin Georgescu in each period (pre-election, immediate post-election, subsequent post-election)?

RQ2. Issue Salience & Agenda Dynamics: How did the relative shares of those frames change over time?

RQ3. Network Relationships (NAS): How did co-occurrence networks reposition Georgescu relative to issues, actors and institutions across periods (*interpretation is descriptive, not causal*)?

RQ4. Sentiment & Public Perception: How did global and entity-level sentiment indices evolve across periods and shock peaks, and how did these changes mirror Georgescu's political trajectory?

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Theoretical framework

Theoretical Framework

Connecting media salience, issue-networks,
cross-media influence and narrative interpretation

01

Agenda-Setting Theory

(McCombs & Shaw, 1972;
McCombs, 2014)

media determine
which issues and
attributes become
salient for the public

02

Network Agenda-Setting (NAS)

(Guo & McCombs, 2011; Guo,
2012; Vu et al., 2014; Guo &
Vargo, 2015)

media transfer bundled
networks of co-occurring
issues and actors to
audiences

03

Intermedia Agenda-Setting (IAS)

(Harder et al., 2017; Vargo &
Guo, 2017)

news outlets steer one
another's agendas in
real time within a
hybrid media system

04

Framing Theory

(Entman, 1993; Meraz &
Papacharissi, 2013)

narrative frames guide
how audiences
interpret issues, actors
and events.

Methodological Challenges and Solutions

Traditional methods' limitations in digital contexts

Velocity problem: online narratives mutate hourly; manual coding and periodic surveys lag behind.

Volume & variety problem: millions of posts, articles, hashtags and emojis overwhelm traditional hand-crafted content analysis.

Relational complexity problem: network-level phenomena (NAS, IAS) require high-dimensional co-occurrence matrices that manual methods cannot build.

Why computational methods are essential for political research

(Tucker et al., 2018; Stieglitz et al., 2018; Lazer et al., 2020)

Keeps pace with rapid change. Automated data collection tracks how stories rise and fade in real time.

Handles massive volumes. Computational text analysis sifts through large volumes of posts and news items, distilling key themes, sentiments and actors.

Reveals hidden connections. Network-based analytics show how issues and outlets link together, exposing influence patterns that remain invisible in traditional approaches.

Computational Mixed-Methods Platform: **NewsVibe**

(Social Monitor, 2025)

A mixed-methods approach for online media analysis (Andreotta et al., 2019; Graffigna & Riva; 2015, Lewis et al., 2013)



MENTION EXTRACTION

Collect all mentions related to a query from relevant online & social media sources



ENTITY EXTRACTION

Identify people, organizations and locations mentioned

A Llama3.2-1B-based model (Grattafiori et al., 2024) fine-tuned on platform news automatically annotated with Llama3.3-70b (five entity types: Person, Location, Institution, Company, Product) achieves F1 = 82.5%



TOPIC COMPUTATION

Cluster texts into major thematic topics

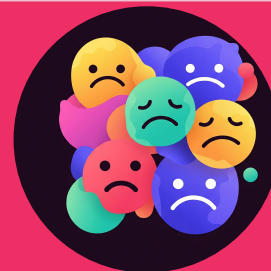
Articles were embedded with the multilingual MiniLM L12-v2 sentence-similarity model. Facebook items used body text, other sources used titles. Agglomerative clustering was applied on vectors, distance threshold = 0.4.



SEMANTIC NETWORK ANALYSIS

Map relationships between entities, identifying clusters (Doerfel, 1998; Doerfel & Barnett, 1999; Leydesdorff & Welbers, 2011; Hansen et al. 2020)

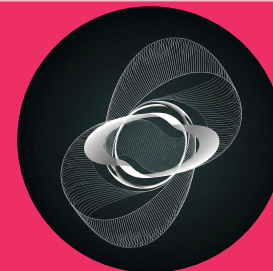
Nodes = entities; edges = frequency-weighted co-occurrences; Louvain detects communities (Blondel et al., 2008)



SENTIMENT CLASSIFICATION

Score tone as positive, negative or neutral, both at entity-level and at mention-level

450 k platform news items were annotated for entity & global sentiment with Llama3.3-70b; a Llama3.2-1B model fine-tuned on this set achieves macro F1 = 83% (entity) and 85% (global).



INTER-MEDIA INDICES

Identify first appearance of similar stories across outlet types to flag cross-media influence

Work in progress

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Research Design

Research Design

Observation window

6 months bracketing election

P1 (Build-up): -60 → 0 days before election

P2 (Peak): 0 → +60 days after election

P3 (Decline): +60 → +120 days after election

Corpus selection

Query “Călin Georgescu” → export every online mention (Web + Facebook) for each day in P1–P3.

Analytical steps in-app (NewsVibe.ro)

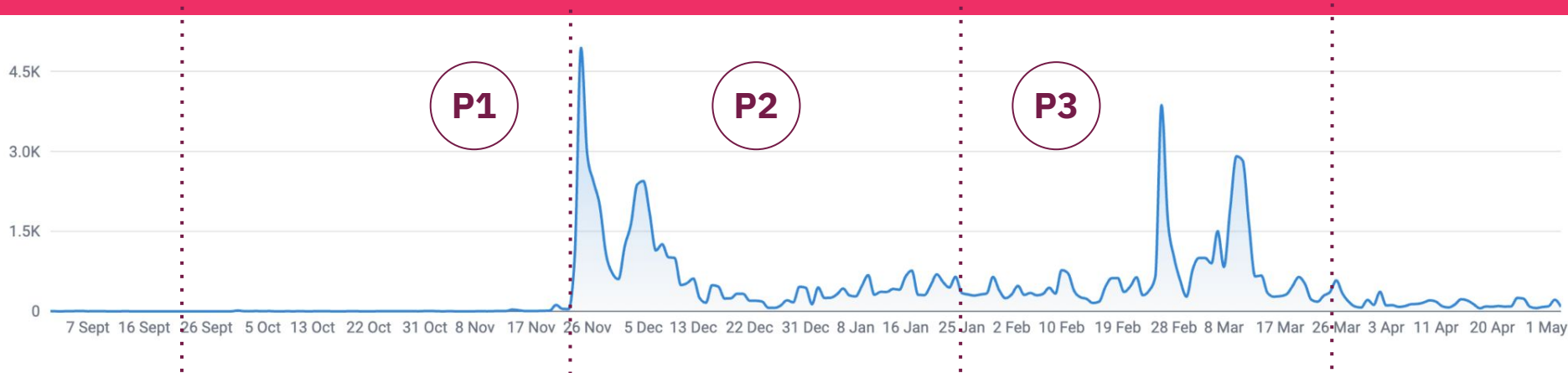
Entity extraction + sentiment

Topic clustering

Impact peaks • compare between Web and Facebook

Source diagnostics • top individual outlets and top curated source-collections for each period

(Similarity checks & cross-media influence metrics: work-in-progress.)

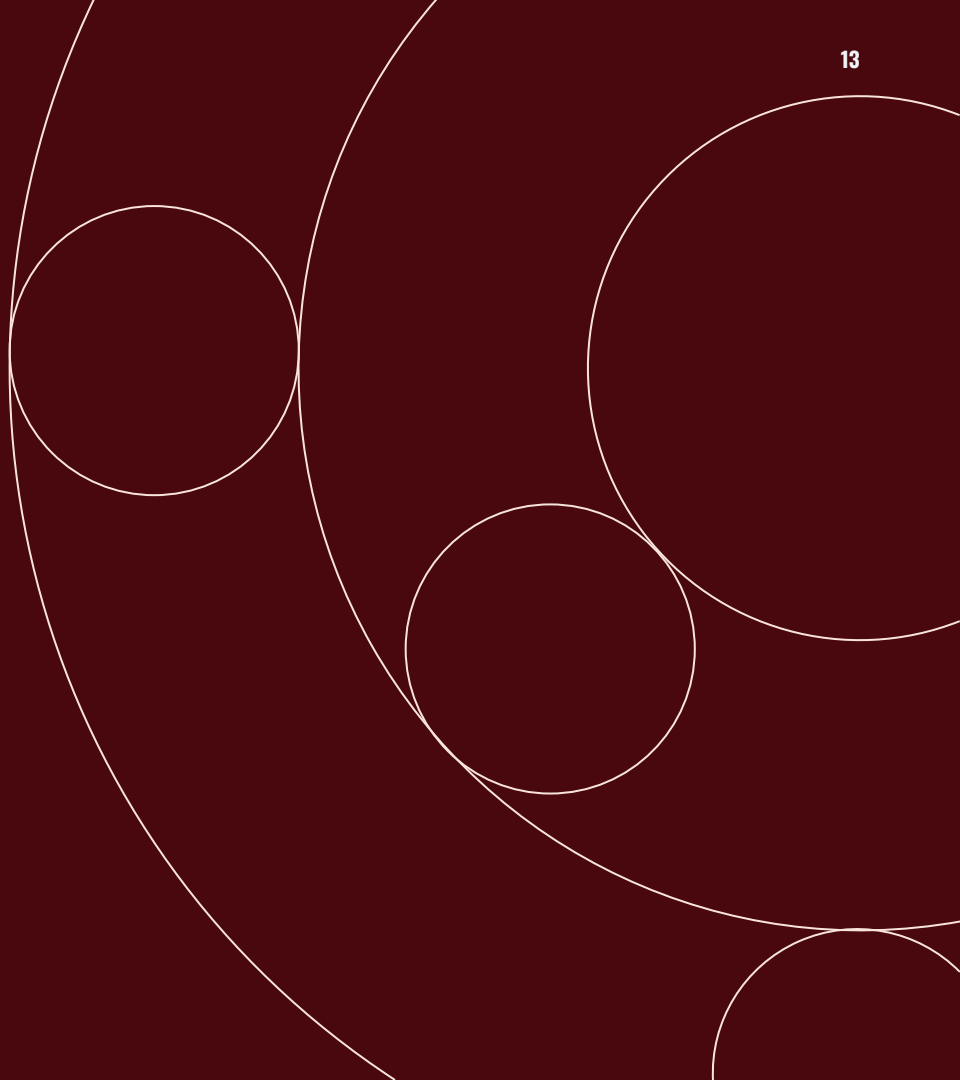


Results

Frames (labels) answer **RQ1**;
Their percent shares answer **RQ2**;
Semantic networks answer **RQ3**;
Sentiment panels answer **RQ4**

P1 (pre-election)

Sept 23 - Nov 23



P1. Dominant frames

N=408 (Sep 23, 2024 - Nov 23, 2024)

- Candidacy announcement
 - Main presidential contender messages
 - Survey results
 - Online campaign controversy (the most impactful narrative)
- Online campaign controversy $\geq 40\%$ of all mentions (top-15 only, 64.2% coverage). Candidacy announcement: 30%

Top15Topics

from a total of 408 hits

- 1 Călin Georgescu has filed his independent candidacy for the Presidency of Romania: 'My party is the Romanian people'
- 2 Unprecedented decision by the BEC. A presidential candidate must delete all online promotional materials
- 3 Nicolae Ciucă, after Călin Georgescu was forced by the BEC to delete electoral materials: "PSD is helping Simion once again"
- 4 Călin Georgescu has filed his candidacy for the presidential election. "We are not changing the masters, but changing the system"
- 5 EXCLUSIVE The last big poll before the presidential elections. Elena Lasconi is ahead of George Simion, but the difference is small. Călin Georgescu's surprise cont...
- 6 Ciucă accuses PSD of eliminating sovereignist candidates to favor George Simion. After Diana Șoșoacă, it's Călin Georgescu's turn"
- 7 Who will advance to the second round of the presidential election, according to the latest poll. A surprise candidate is coming from...
- 8 What presidential candidates Alexandra Bertalan-Păcuraru and Călin Georgescu say about Putin and Ukraine and what they want for Romania
- 9 Călin Georgescu abolishes the BEC decision: 'An attempt at intimidation' / He draws attention to other candidates who would not have used the proxy code
- 10 Presidential elections 2024: Cristian Diaconescu, Ana Birchall and Călin Georgescu, the independents who can influence the results
- 11 #CG11 People's Phone
- 12 #CG11 Our voice, the people's, is being heard!
- 13 Nicolae Ciucă: From here, in Craiova, where I spent the first 7 years at home, we give the signal of victory. PSD will lose the presidential elections once again - VIDEO
- 14 How would educated Romanians vote in the presidential elections? Diaspora, the great unknown. The surprises of the study...
- 15 INSCOP poll: Ciolacu and Simion enter the second round / Next ranked: Lasconi, Geoană, Ciucă / Atlasintel poll: Ciolacu in first place, Lasconi and Simion are comp...

Top-15 topic clusters cover 64.2% of mentions; residual 35.8% not frame-coded.

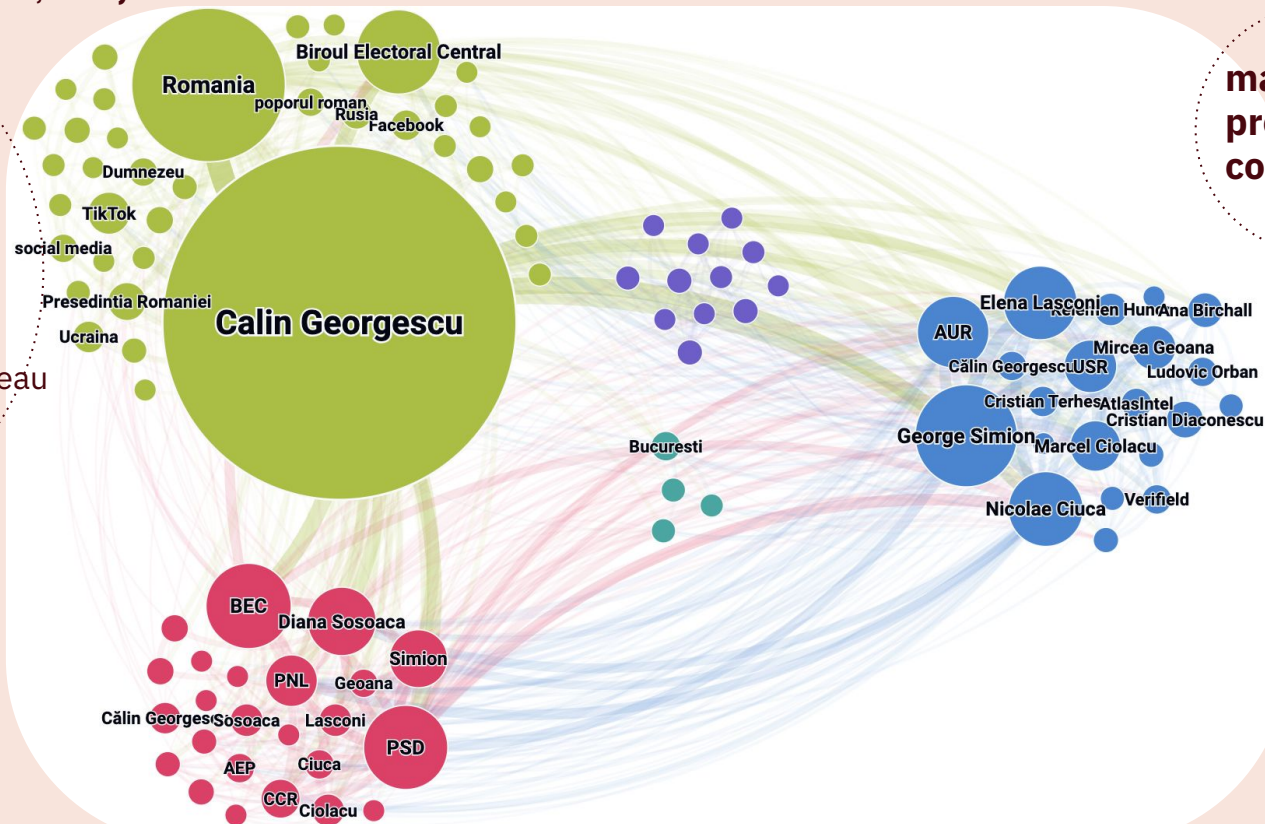
P1. Semantic network

N=408 (Sep 23, 2024 - Nov 23, 2024)

own campaign messages, campaign controversy

- God
- the people
- TikTok
- Facebook
- Central Electoral Bureau

campaign-related discussion (institutional, procedural)



main presidential contenders

P1. Sentiment profile

N=408 (Sep 23, 2024 - Nov 23, 2024)

- Query-level sentiment is emotionally charged, with a dominance of negative tone over positive, indicative of a controversial issue
- Along with political names, negatively-charged entities like “globalists”, “Satan”, “Russia”

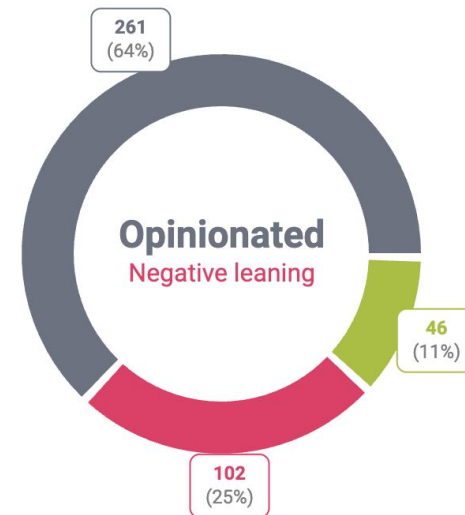
Sentiment Drivers

keywords ordered by hits

George Simion Europa Poporul Roman Nicolae Ciuca Doamna Stelea Elena Lasconi Simion
TVR ValoriAdevarate needucat poporul roman statului Romaniei Dictatura statului
Anatol Basarab **Calin Georgescu** Diana Sosoaca Călin Georgescu Putin
Cristian Terhes PNL Partidul meu Ion Antonescu poporul Dumnezeu CCR
Biroul Electoral Central Elena Lasconi Mircea Geoana Donald Trump Geoana George Simion
Klaus Iohannis Ciolacu Marcel Ciolacu Romanii AUR Chisinau Piedone Alina Gorghiu BEC
Simion Vladimir Putin Călin Georgescu Hrebenciuc Sosoaca **PSD AUR**
Catedrala Mitropolitana Nasterea Domnului Ciuca globalistilor Satan Romania Cristian Diaconescu
Rusia **Calin Georgescu** Asociatia Numerologilor din Romania Adevarul Satanel
Luminita Odobescu

Tone distribution

within 408 hits



- Neutral 64%
- Negative 25%
- Positive 11%

P1. Media source impact ranking

N=408 (Sep 23, 2024 - Nov 23, 2024)

Relevant Content Sources

sources ordered by hits

Source	Hits	Score
Calin Georgescu	51	24.5K
Anamaria Gavrila	15	7.9K
stiripesurse.ro	10	580.3K
G4Media	9	616.7K
Adevarul	8	646.1K
Ziare.com	7	511.7K
G4Media	6	5.0K
Ștefan Mandachi	6	16.2K
ActiveNews	5	115.7K
Cotidianul RO	5	110.1K
PS News	5	1.9K
Fanatik.ro	5	267.0K
Ringo Dămureanu	5	394
stiripesurse.ro	4	51.0K
Digi24	4	77.0K

Main mentions: candidate's Facebook page

Next-largest share: posts by the leader of his sole backing party

Overall visibility/bulk of reach driven mostly by alternative & radical outlets

V. low percentage coverage in local news

Top Source Collections

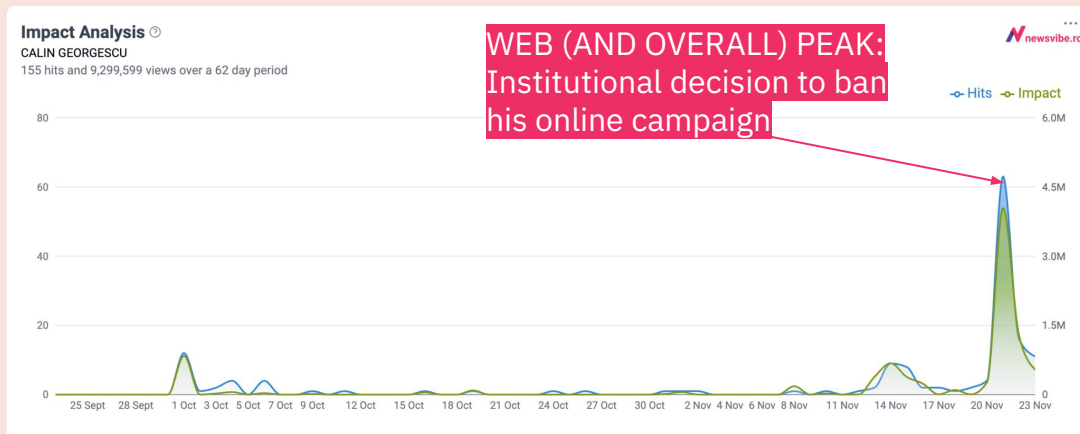
collections ordered by hits

List	Hits	%
Alternative/radical voices	112	28
Digi24 & similar	57	45
Local news	42	6
Pro AUR sources	32	20
Generalist media	29	41
MPs 2024-2028	28	3
Top leaders	18	27
Antena3 & similar	16	25
Top influencers	11	15
Anti-PSD influencers	11	41
USR voices	8	7
Sports news	7	11
Business news	4	12
MEPs	3	6
PNL voices	3	2

P1. Impact timeline

N=408 (Sep 23, 2024 - Nov 23, 2024)

24h overall spike accounts for 30% of all period mentions, 40% of all period web mentions

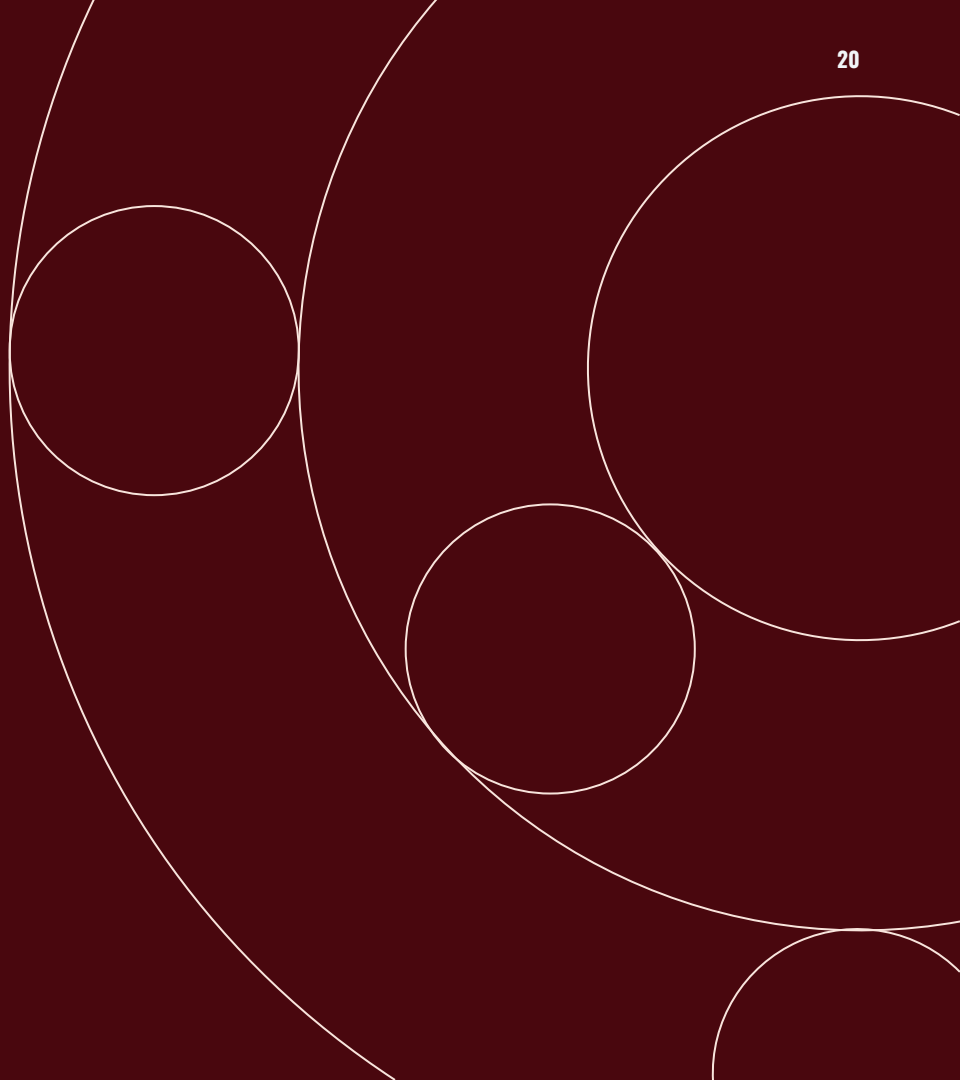


P1. Build-up phase: key insights

- Georgescu's visibility in the build-up phase was **minimal** and **controversy-driven** rather than policy-driven; the online ban story quickly eclipsed routine candidacy and poll coverage.
- The network splits into **two blocs**: a populist **self-presentation cluster** (religious/people-centric rhetoric + social platforms) and an **institutional cluster** (elections, procedure, rival contenders) → early tension between anti-establishment messaging and formal rules.
- Coverage tone already skews **negative** before the election, signalling that the ban narrative framed Georgescu defensively from the outset.
- Attention is concentrated on **own (and allied) social channels and fringe outlets**, not mainstream news. This underlines Georgescu's outsider communication strategy and helps explain why traditional media initially ignored him and framed him chiefly through controversy.

P2 (immediate post-election peak)

Nov 24, 2024 (election day) - Jan 24,
2025



P2. Dominant frames

N=46,200 (Nov 24, 2024 [election day] - Jan 24, 2025)

- Comments following results shock
- Election annulment
- Alleged foreign interference in elections
- Controversial Georgescu supporters
- Role of TikTok
- Shock result & speculations of foreign interference ≥ 30% of mentions each (top-15 only, 17.4% coverage).

Top15Topics

from a total of 46.2K hits

- 1 fanatic.ro: "Instead of Călin Georgescu, any other name could have been used. The context was created a long time ago." A specialist in mass psychology analyzed ...
- 2 What Marcel Ciolacu says about the reasons for the cancellation of the elections and about Călin Georgescu's candidacy. "I did not cancel any elections"
- 3 Latest Avangarde poll: AUR and Călin Georgescu lead in electorate preferences. How close are their competitors?
- 4 The Romanian Patriarchate is investigating His Holiness Teodosie for political involvement, after he said that Georgescu is "a messenger of God"
- 5 Burduja: Mr. Georgescu is a great impostor, he has effectively turned 180°. This should give Romanians something to think about
- 6 The network of Russian propagandists in London and the links to the promotion of Călin Georgescu
- 7 Călin Georgescu claims he was invited to Donald Trump's inauguration, but refused: "I have no reason to..."
- 8 Crin Antonescu: I wish Georgescu was in the presidential race, that we could see and hear him in a debate
- 9 Anti-Georgescu protests continue for fourth day in a row. Thousands of young people in major cities shout "democracy, not tyranny" in the streets
- 10 Călin Georgescu sued the Presidential Administration, SRI, SIE, MAI and STS. What he contested
- 11 Horațiu Potra was beaten by gendarmes at the AUR protest in the Capital
- 12 Revelations: A TikTok campaign paid for by the PNL would have actually promoted Călin Georgescu
- 13 Politico: How Putin Won the Romanian Election
- 14 The octopus around Călin Georgescu. Who are the people who supported the pro-Russian candidate?
- 15 Orban, on TikTok's influence in the Romanian elections: "An extremely interesting thing, the meeting..."

Top-15 topic clusters cover 17.4% of mentions; residual % not frame-coded.

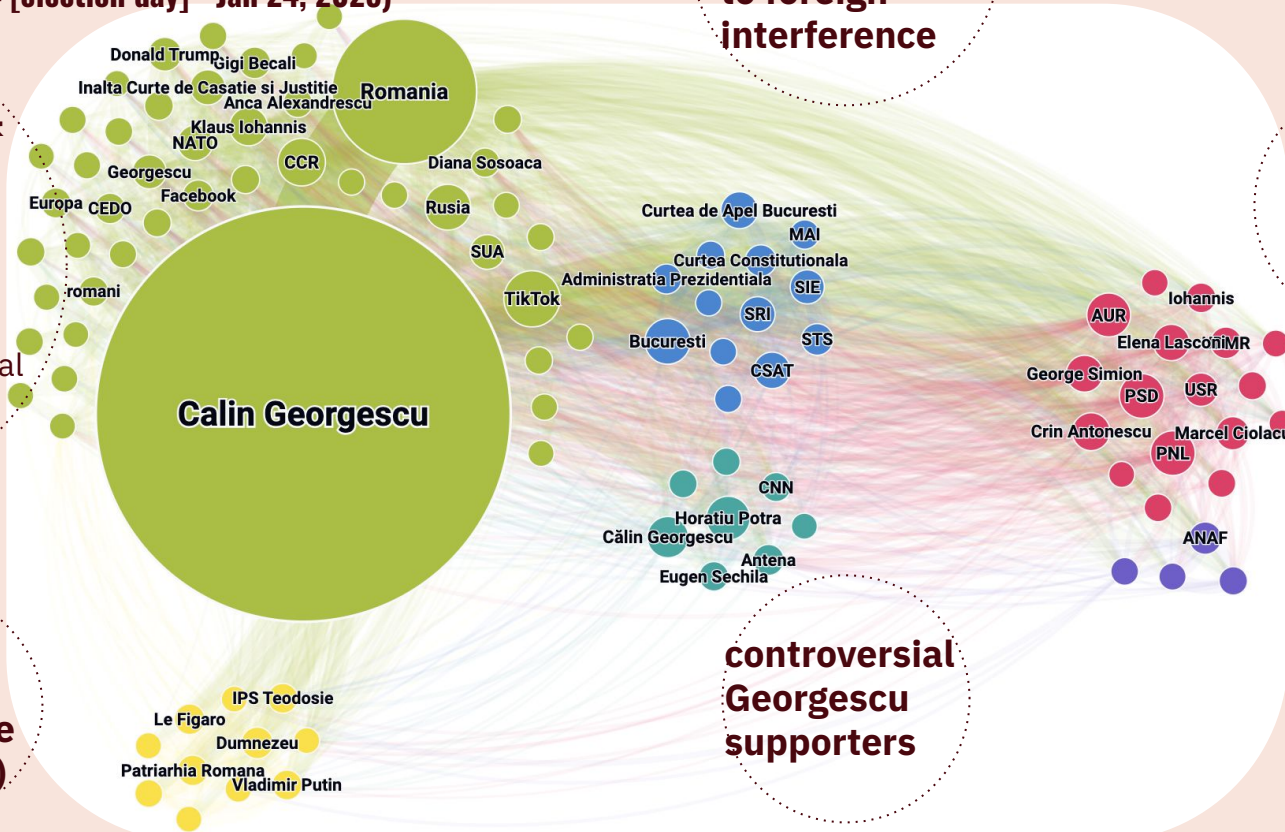
P2. Semantic network

N=46,200 (Nov 24, 2024 [election day] - Jan 24, 2025)

election result & annulment controversy

- TikTok
- Russia
- CCR (Constitutional Court)
- Facebook

support from controversial Orthodox figure (Putin admirer)



declassified intelligence reports pointing to foreign interference

main political voices

controversial Georgescu supporters

P2. Sentiment profile

N=46,200 (Nov 24, 2024 [election day] - Jan 24, 2025)

- Query-level sentiment is mostly neutral, with a clear dominance of negative tone over positive, indicative of a highly controversial issue
- Negatively-charged entities: “Russia”, “Kremlin”, “Miscarea legionara” (Romanian historical fascist movement)
- Positive: “NATO”, “EU”

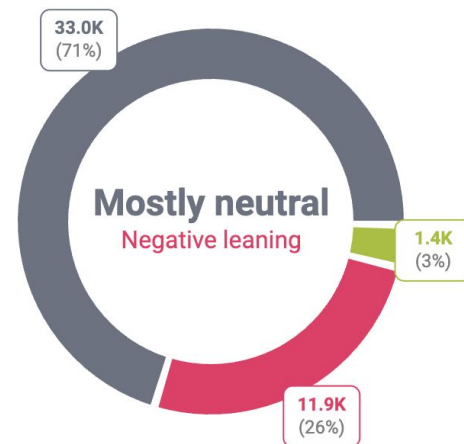
Sentiment Drivers ?

keywords ordered by hits

Gigi Becali **Miscarea Legionara** UE POT Lasconi UE **Calin Georgescu**
Elena Lasconi Federatia Rusa Eugen Sechila Curtea Constitutionala **PSD** **poporul roman** Makaveli Donald Trump
Vladimir Putin **Calin Georgescu** **Călin Georgescu** Europa clasa politica **AUR** George Simion
CCR Kremlinului **Rusia** **Kremlin** UDMR **Ciolacu** democratie democratia **NATO** Călin Georgescu **USR** TikTok
 Trump Ceausescu Toni Grebla CSAT **Romania** **Elena Lasconi** Georgescu George Simion **Soros** **Dumnezeu** **AUR**
 Diana Sosoaca **Romania** sistemul **Horatiu Potra** Moscova **Klaus Iohannis** **PNL** **Putin**
Uniunea Europeana **Georgescu** **Marcel Ciolacu** **NATO** Sistemul **Iohannis** **Bogdan Peschir**

Tone distribution

within 46200 hits



- Neutral
- Negative
- Positive

71%
26%
3%

P2. Media source impact ranking

N=46,200 (Nov 24, 2024 [election day] - Jan 24, 2025)

Relevant Content Sources

sources ordered by hits

Source	Hits	Score
Acasa in Romania	963	37.7K
stiripesurse.ro	854	580.3K
Adevărul	831	646.1K
Capital.ro	786	148.1K
Ziare.com	711	511.7K
EVZ.ro	659	292.8K
stiripesurse.ro	645	51.0K
Capital România	587	3.9K
ViralNews.ro	535	46.6K
Romania TV	521	362.0K
PS News	512	1.9K
Realitatea.net	485	465.1K
HotNews.ro	466	1.1M
B1TV.ro	456	77.8K
ActiveNews	448	115.7K

Large number of mentions:
“general interest” Facebook
pages promoting Georgescu

Overall visibility driven by
local news outlets, high
coverage for news media,
generalist media

but also alternative & radical
outlets,
plus sources supporting
populist AUR party
and Orthodox Facebook
pages

Top Source Collections

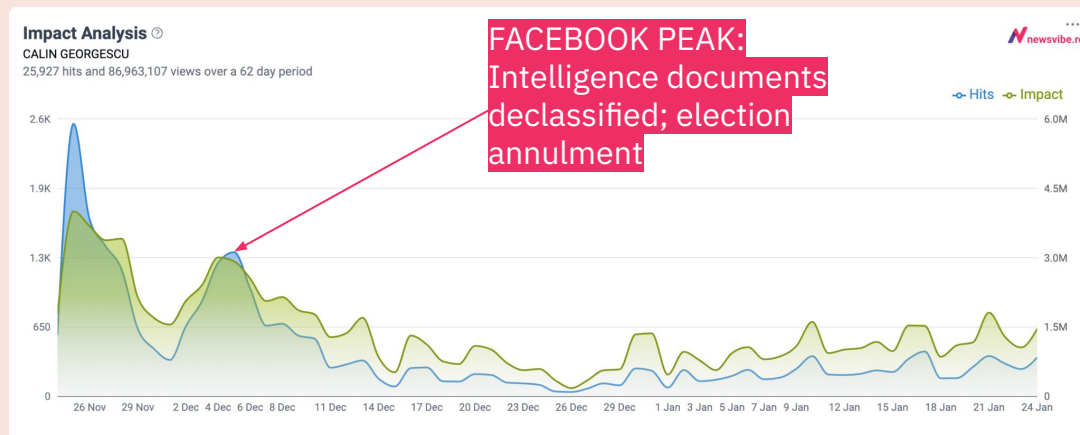
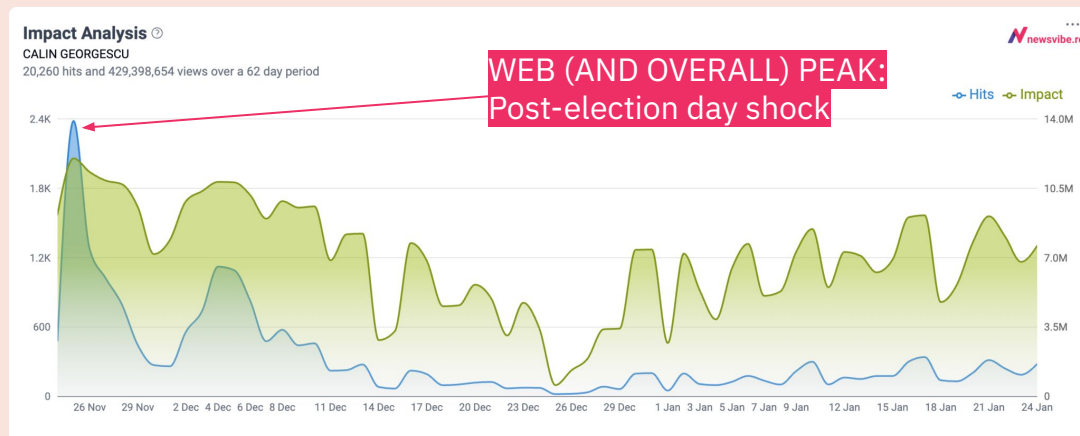
collections ordered by hits

List	Hits	%
Local news	8.6K	81
Digi24 & similar	5.6K	83
Alternative/radical voices	4.2K	71
Antena3 & similar	3.9K	69
Generalist media	3.3K	91
Pro AUR sources	1.3K	64
Sports news	1.0K	74
Business news	1.0K	76
Top influencers	870	70
Anti-PSD influencers	587	88
Tabloid	585	91
Health news	453	21
Orthodox Facebook	428	15
MPs 2024-2028	317	31
USR voices	308	73

P2. Impact timeline

N=46,200 (Nov 24, 2024 [election day] - Jan 24, 2025)

24h overall spike (Nov 25) accounts for 10% of all period mentions.

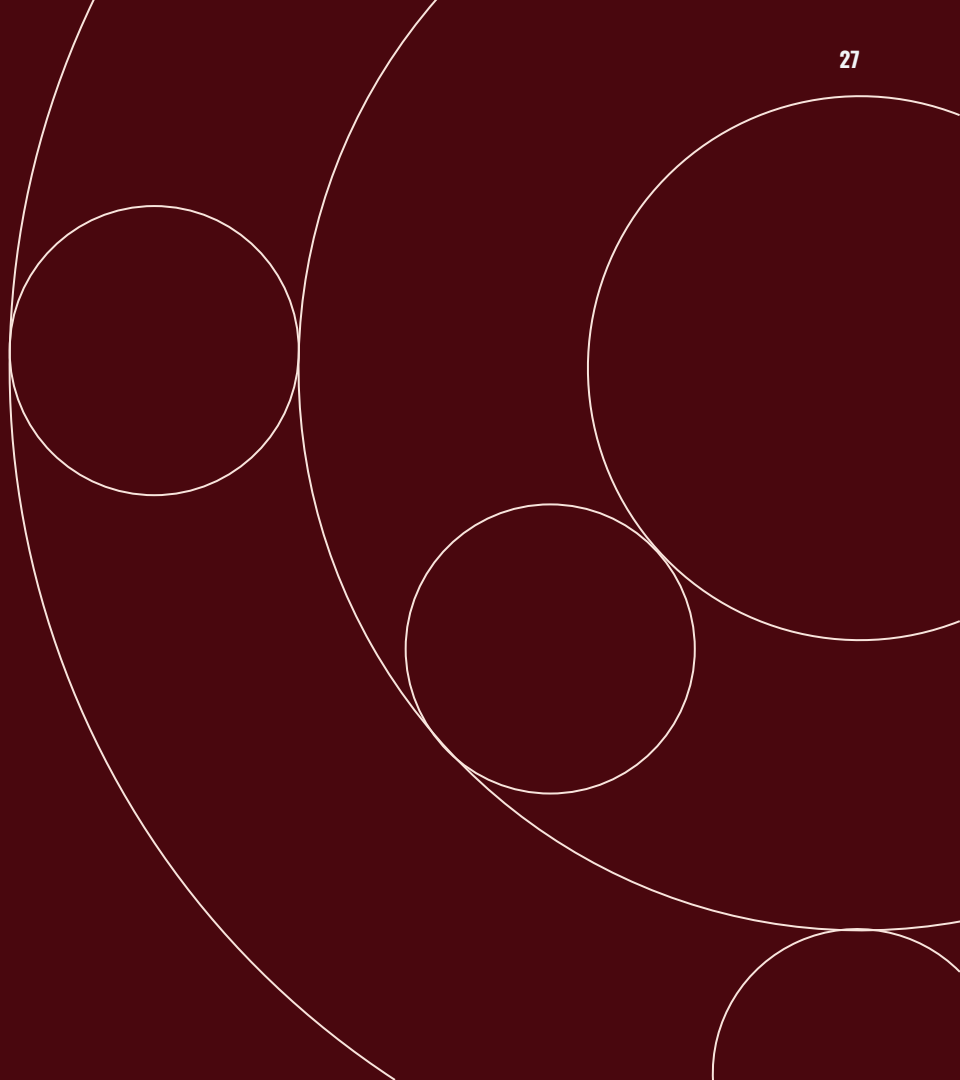


P2. Post-election crisis: key insights

- Legitimacy-crisis frame dominates – discourse pivots to shock election result + declassified foreign-interference files + annulled elections (≥ 70% of frame-coded mentions).
- Network realignment – Georgescu now co-occurs chiefly with controversial election and annulment
- Tone stays sharply negative – negative share peaks after intelligence reports on Dec 5 (Neg = 30%, Pos = 2%).
- Individual source hierarchy **shows a higher share for social sources overall** – Georgescu-linked FB pages (lower reach) and alternative portals top visibility chart; but legacy portals dominate on peak days (post-election day - Nov 25, post-declassification day - Dec 5), high percentage of coverage by generalist & tabloid media

P3 (ban/decline)

Jan 25 - March 25



P3. Dominant frames

N=40,931 (Jan 25, 2025 - March 25, 2025)

- Georgescu banned from running again in May
- First judicial troubles
- New top presidential contenders
- US comments regarding annulled election
- Candidacy ban $\geq 43\%$ of all mentions (top-15 high-volume clusters only, 33% coverage).

Top15Topics

from a total of 41.0K hits

- 1 Why was Călin Georgescu's candidacy rejected? How does the Central Electoral Bureau motivate the decision?
- 2 The name being circulated to replace Călin Georgescu in the presidential elections. POT leader: We have only one option / Firm reaction from the head of AUR
- 3 Nicușor Dan: US reactions regarding the cancellation of the elections in Romania are a misunderstanding, not a political support
- 4 "There is coordination somewhere." A former foreign minister interprets Georgescu's statements on the division of Ukraine
- 5 George Simion announces when Călin Georgescu will file his presidential candidacy. "He has over 300,000 signatures and more are coming"
- 6 Zegrean: For the CCR to be able to consider the serious accusations against Georgescu, a final conviction is needed
- 7 Nicușor Dan comes up with an unexpected hypothesis: Who is actually behind Călin Georgescu?
- 8 Hot details from the judges' motivation: How Călin Georgescu incited violence on the Zelea Codreanu model / He remained under judicial control
- 9 Protests in the Capital. Călin Georgescu's supporters demand the resumption of the second round and collect signatures for a new candidacy
- 10 Thousands of people have challenged Călin Georgescu's candidacy at the BEC. There is also a special online petition...
- 11 Horațiu Potra admits that he asked Frank Timiș for money for electoral campaigns. Who powered Georgescu's TikTok network
- 12 Gigi Becali celebrates after Călin Georgescu's candidacy was rejected: Well, how can you leave him! Does that mean you're done?
- 13 Crin Antonescu filed her presidential candidacy amid boos: Only I can defeat Călin...
- 14 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs responds to Elon Musk and those who believe that the Călin Georgescu case "is a mess." "Justice..."
- 15 www.stirileprotv.ro BREAKING NEWS! Călin Georgescu, pulled over from traffic and taken to interrogations >>> <https://tinyurl.com/2adrp692>

Top-15 topic clusters cover 33% of mentions (n=13842/40931; residual 67% not frame-coded).

P3. Semantic network

N=40,931 (Jan 25, 2025 - March 25, 2025)

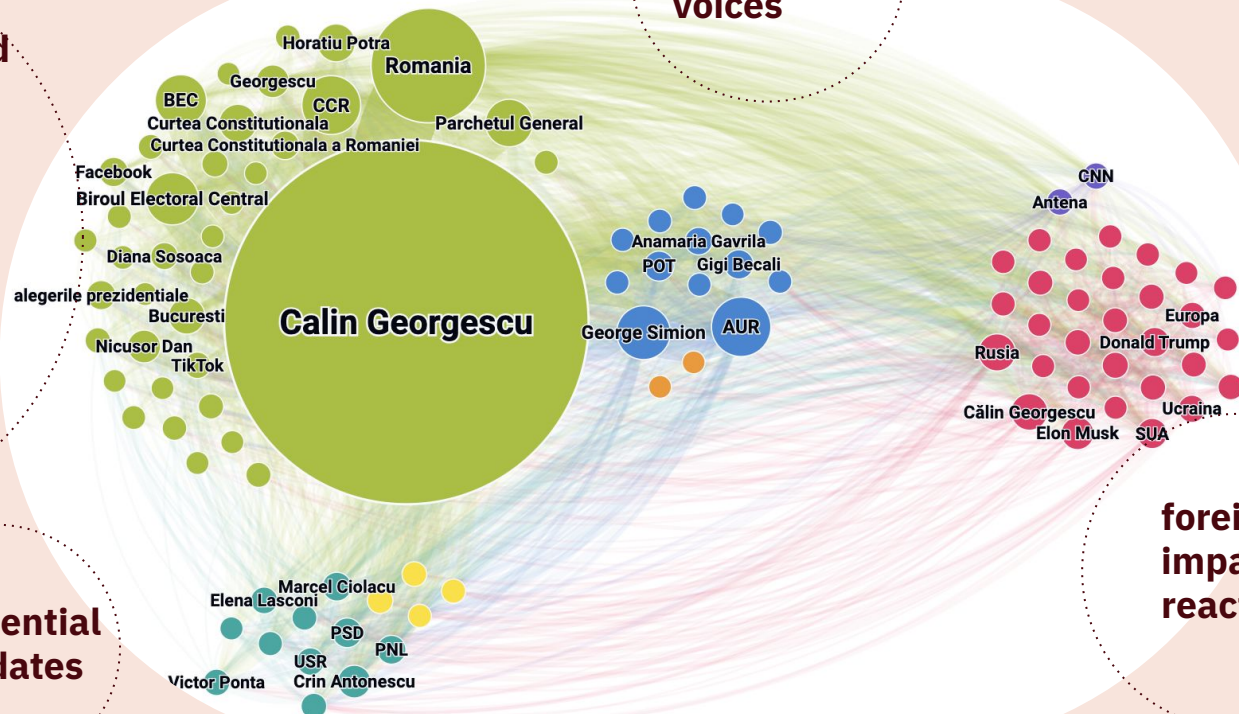
Georgescu banned from elections

- CCR (Constitutional Court)
- BEC (Central Electoral Bureau)
- TikTok
- Prosecutor's Office

main sovereignist voices

presidential candidates

foreign impact (US reactions)



P3. Sentiment profile

N=40,931 (Jan 25, 2025 - March 25, 2025)

- Query-level sentiment is emotionally charged, with an even clearer dominance of negative tone over positive, indicative of a highly controversial issue
- Negatively-charged entities: “Russia”, “Moscow”, “JD Vance”, “Trump”
- Positive: NATO, EU

Sentiment Drivers ②

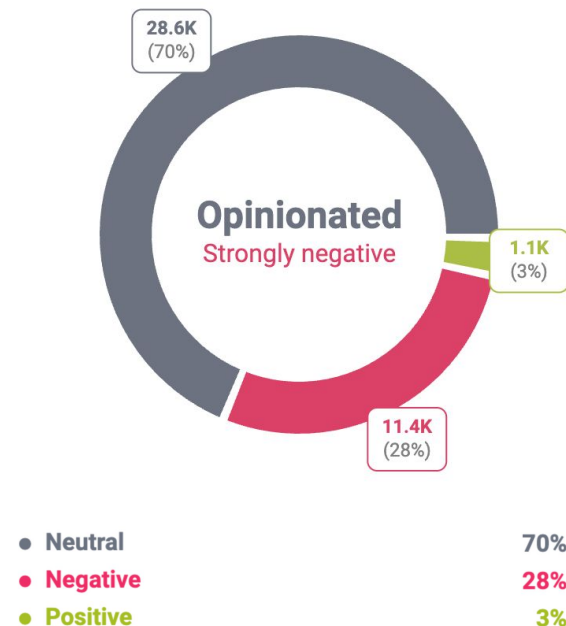
keywords ordered by hits

Putin Federatia Rusa **Calin Georgescu** Rusia poporul roman
Calin Georgescu Romania Dumnezeu POT Marcel Ciolacu Gigi Becali
 Elon Musk Catalin Predoiu UE Trump UE AUR Iohannis Moscova Călin Georgescu Horatiu Potra
 Călin Georgescu PSD Kremlin George Simion Klaus Iohannis Romania Soros Elena Lasconi
 Bogdan Peschir Vladimir Putin PNL USR George Simion democratia Nicusor Dan Crin Antonescu JD Vance
 NATO Anca Alexandrescu Kremlinului Simion sistemul Uniunea Europeana Ciolacu Uniunea Europeana
 AUR Nicusor Dan Donald Trump BEC Victor Ponta Biroul Electoral Central Georgescu CCR
 Anamaria Gavrila democratie Europa Georgescu Crin Antonescu Marian Motocu

Tone distribution

within 40931 hits

newsvibe.ro



P3. Media source impact ranking

N=40,931 (Jan 25, 2025 - March 25, 2025)

Relevant Content Sources ?



sources ordered by hits

Source	Hits	Score
stiripesurse.ro	807	51.0K
stiripesurse.ro	787	580.3K
Ziare.com	753	511.7K
Adevărul	710	646.1K
EVZ.ro	679	292.8K
Capital.ro	649	148.1K
Ziare.com	613	19.9K
PS News	609	1.9K
Romania TV	569	81.5K
Știri Antena 3 CNN	562	6.4K
Antena 3	543	26.7K
Capital România	542	3.9K
Romania TV	511	362.0K
Realitatea.net	501	465.1K
Sinteza Zilei Oficial	500	9.8K

Ranking dominated by top mainstream and news websites and associated Facebook pages

Generalist media - high coverage

Alternative & radical outlets – their lowest ranking across all three periods, with 10% fewer mentions vs. P2.

Sources supporting populist AUR party - lower coverage

Orthodox Facebook pages - similar coverage to P2

Top Source Collections ?



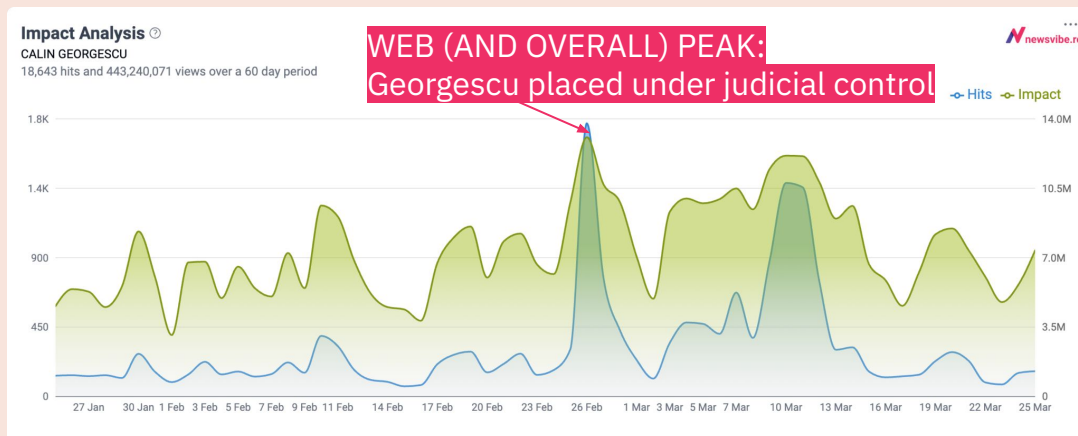
collections ordered by hits

List	Hits	%
Local news	6.7K	68
Digi24 & similar	4.6K	85
Antena3 & similar	4.4K	66
Alternative/radical voices	3.8K	60
Generalist media	3.2K	88
Pro AUR sources	1.1K	54
Business news	1.0K	68
Sports news	851	79
Top influencers	558	72
Orthodox Facebook	453	13
MPs 2024-2028	427	34
Anti-PSD influencers	310	94
AUR Voices	294	55
Tabloid	248	73
USR voices	247	57

P3. Impact timeline

N=40,931 (Jan 25, 2025 - March 25, 2025)

24h overall spike (Feb 26) accounts for 9.5% of all period mentions.



P3. Decline phase: key insights

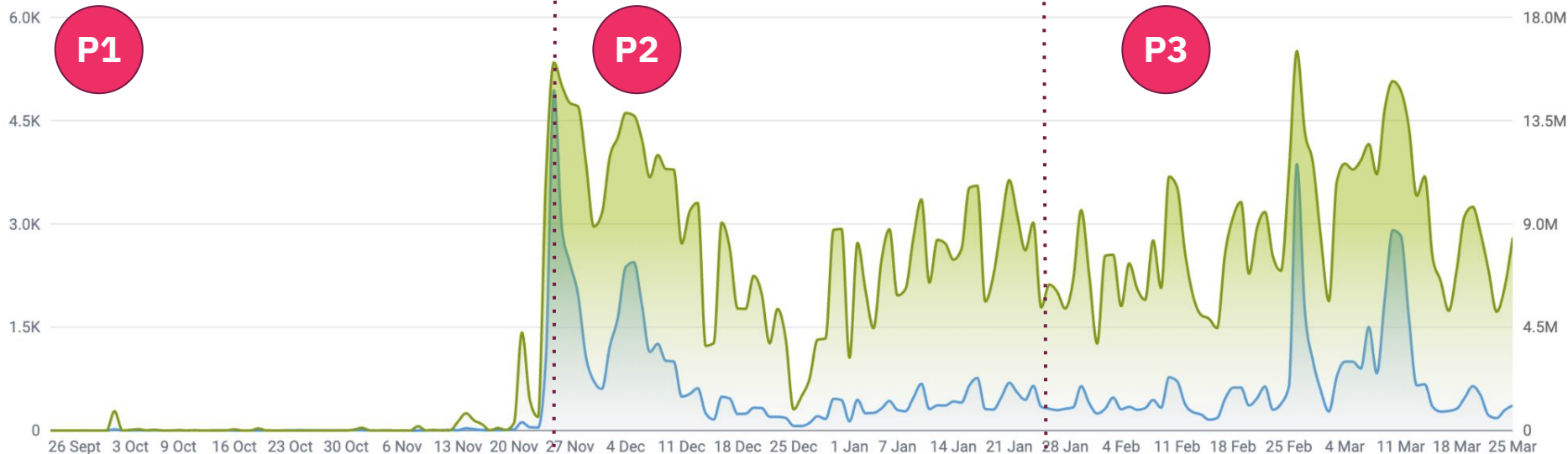
- Final-ban & aftermath frames prevail – debate centres on the Constitutional Court’s permanent ban on Georgescu, speculation about new front-runner contenders and U.S. comments on the annulled election. The ban accounts for roughly 43% of the top-15 topic clusters.
- Institutional & foreign-policy network – the semantic map is now dominated by references to institutions, plus a “foreign-impact” hub centered on U.S. reactions
- Tone remains negative - peak-day sentiment: 21% neg, 1% pos
- **Shift in source hierarchy** – for the first time mainstream news portals and their Facebook pages top the individual source ranking, while Georgescu-aligned and radical outlets slide down the list; Facebook-only activism shows a reduced share in this period

Comparison

n=408,
reach=10,017,691
sentiment: -0.26, 25% neg, 11% pos
top frame: online campaign
controversy

n=46,200,
reach=516,389,947
sentiment: -0.46, 26% neg, 3% pos
top frame: shock & foreign
interference

n=40,931,
reach=515,239,197
sentiment: -0.5, 28% neg, 3% pos
top frame: candidacy ban



Identifying trending topics.

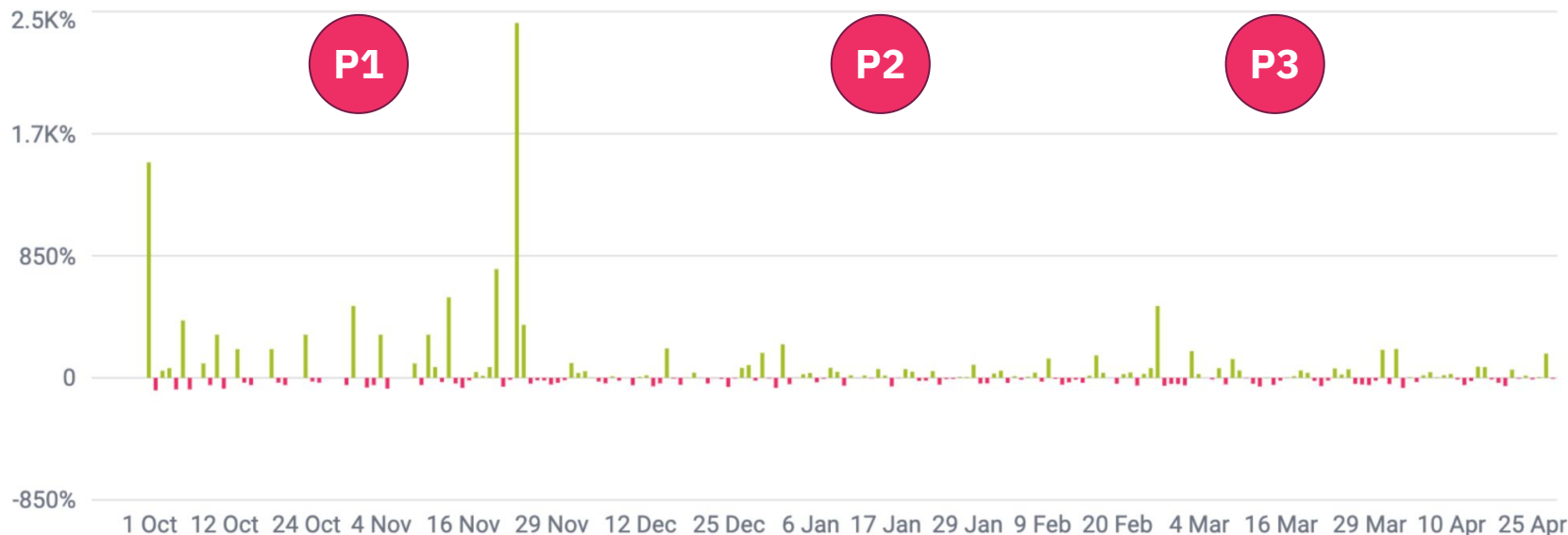
NewsVibe data showed increased visibility for Calin Georgescu before the elections

Daily Trends ⓘ

Calin Georgescu

93.0K hits over a 215 day period

Daily Trends: Shows daily acceleration of the topic, where acceleration means increased activity compared to previous daily averages over the last weeks.



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Conclusions & Discussion

Conclusions

- RQ1 (**narrative framing & temporal scoping**): Progression from controversial outsider (initial ban-centric framing, pre-election) → legitimacy crisis (shock result, annulment, foreign-interference) → institutional/legal delegitimization (final ban, judicial control).
- RQ2 (**issue salience & agenda dynamics**): Event-driven, not policy-driven. P1: ban/controversy dominated ($\geq 40\%$ of mentions within top-15 clusters). P2: shock and interference each $\geq 30\%$ (top-15 share). P3: candidacy ban led ($\geq 43\%$ within top-15 clusters).
- RQ3 (**network relationship - NAS**): Shift from self-presentation/populist clusters (religion/“people” + TikTok/Facebook) to institutional/legal clusters (CCR/BEC/Prosecutor’s Office) and a foreign-impact cluster (U.S. reactions).
- RQ4 (**sentiment & perception**): Consistently negative-leaning and crisis-sensitive

High-resolution & real-time analytics delivered **granular insights into temporal framing, salience peaks, network realignment and sentiment trajectories**. These are capabilities unattainable through manual coding or periodic surveys. This tool can become a portable laboratory for agenda-setting, framing and rapid political-communication diagnostics.

Media, public and political agendas.

What can be done next?

When do media, public, and political agendas align ... and when do they split apart?

Real-time agenda convergence / divergence. Track the latency between a newsroom push, online uptake and political reaction.

Sentiment as an early-warning indicator

Can swings in sentiment predict shifts in policy stances or media coverage intensity?
Entity-level sentiment trajectories can be overlaid with legislative calendars or other events to test lead-lag relationships.

Comparative cross-country agenda cycles

Do similar issues follow identical temporal patterns in different political systems?
The pipeline is re-deployable with minimal setup, enabling side-by-side timelines and framing maps for, say, Romania vs. Greece or EU vs. US.

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Contributions and Implications for Political Science

ADVANTAGES

Scale:

Using **NewsVibe**, an advanced AI-driven media intelligence platform, to operationalize several theories simultaneously on large amounts of data

Nuance:

The explicit demonstration of how computational methods (AI, NLP, semantic networks) can empirically validate and enhance theoretical frameworks with real-time digital data around a specific political event (the rise and fall of Georgescu).

Rapid insight generation:

Granular, real-time insights into a political phenomenon which was not predicted by other methods

ISSUES

- Algorithmic biases
- Representativeness
- Missing private or encrypted channels
- Context loss (irony, slang, politically charged speech)
- Interpretive overreach

* e.g. Lazer et al. (2020), Theocharis & Jungherr (2020), Stieglitz et al. (2018)

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