

Kremlin Calls Romanian Presidential Election 'Strange' After Centrist Defeats Far-Right Rival

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Daniel Mihailescu / AFP

The Kremlin on Monday cast doubt on the results of Romania's presidential election, where a pro-EU centrist defeated a far-right rival and self-professed Trump admirer.

"The elections were strange, to say the least," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov [told](#) reporters when asked to comment on the vote.

Bucharest Mayor Nicușor Dan won Sunday's tense runoff, defeating nationalist candidate George Simion in a race seen as crucial for the EU and NATO member state that borders war-torn Ukraine.

Telegram founder Pavel Durov on Sunday accused French intelligence chief Nicolas Lerner of pressuring him to ban conservative Romanian accounts ahead of the vote, a claim that Romania's government linked to a viral disinformation campaign with alleged Russian

fingerprints.

France's foreign intelligence agency also "strongly" refuted Durov's claims.

Former far-right frontrunner, Călin Georgescu, was [barred](#) from Sunday's vote after Romania's Constitutional Court annulled last December's results. Authorities suspect Georgescu of ties to Russia, which both he and the Kremlin deny.

"We know the story of the candidate who had the best chance and who was simply removed from the race without [Romanian authorities] even bothering to come up with a reason," Peskov said, calling Dan's victory one that occurred "in the absence of the favorite."

AFP contributed reporting.

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