

Romania's New Urban Planning Code

Key Legislative Changes and Practical Recommendations

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Romania's new Code on Territorial Planning, Urbanism and Constructions - Law no. 169/2026 (the "**Code**") was published in the Official Gazette of Romania no. 661/10.08.2026 and is set to enter into force within 15 days of publication.

This new Law represents a systemic reform of the regulatory framework applicable to urban development and constructions, aiming to systematise existing legislation and adapt the processes governing territorial planning, urban planning, construction permitting, and the lifecycle of construction investment projects.

The current regulatory framework is based primarily on three pillars: Law no. 350/2001 on territorial planning and urbanism, Law no. 50/1991 on the authorisation of construction works and Law no. 10/1995 on quality in constructions, together with their implementing regulations and related secondary legislation.

The Code seeks to integrate all these areas into a unified legislative framework, with an emphasis on digitalisation, integrated approval, traceability, and coordination between the planning, permitting, execution, acceptance/handover, and operation stages of construction.

For developers, investors, lenders, and owners, the changes are significant not only administratively but also contractually and transactionally.

In practice, due diligence procedures, conditions precedent, permitting clauses, project budgets, the responsibilities of designers and contractors, as well as the mechanisms for acceptance and handover of buildings will need to be revised.

1. Summary of the Key Provisions

The impact of the new legislation on transactions, real estate developments, financing, permitting, execution, and operation of buildings arises mainly from the following:



1.1. Codification and integration of the urban planning, permitting and construction framework

The Code marks the transition from fragmented regulation to a single legislative act covering territorial planning, urbanism, construction/demolition authorization, and key aspects of quality in constructions.

In this context, property due diligence will need to be recalibrated, as it will require an integrated reading of the Code, including the transitional provisions from the current Laws no. 350/2001, no. 50/1991, and no. 10/1995.

1.2. Structural digitalisation of urban planning and construction permitting

The Code introduces an extensive digital infrastructure, through the use of GIS format (geospatial coordinates), geospatial records, IT platforms, and documents issued or communicated digitally.

As a result, urban planning checks will gradually shift toward digital data, national registers and urbanism documentation published electronically.

1.3. Introduction of new planning instruments (PUGZM and strategic or regulatory urbanism documentation)

The Code further develops the distinction between strategic documentation and regulatory documentation and introduces new urban planning instruments, such as the Metropolitan General Urban Plan (PUGZM).

Accordingly, projects located in metropolitan or inter-municipal development areas will require the simultaneous review of local and metropolitan or zonal documentation applicable within a broader, organised and regulated framework, through the approval of inter-municipal documentation such as the PUGZM.

1.4. Change in the validity period of planning documentation

Unlike previous regulations, under which documentation had to have a validity period set at the time of approval — generating a lack of coherence in the urban planning regime — the Code provides that no limited validity period will be set for new documentation; it will remain valid until the approval of a new document of equal or higher rank that amends it.

1.5. National Construction Register and National Building Register

In order to monitor the national building stock, the Code establishes the National Construction Register, as a national IT system for recording existing and new permanent constructions. Within this system, the National Building Register has also been regulated.



The purpose of introducing these registers is to monitor the quality, condition, and performance of buildings within a digital framework, and this will have a general impact on operation, interventions, expert assessments, and transactions.

1.6. Introduction of technical and urban planning definitions with contractual relevance

The Code details urban planning and technical concepts with an impact on real estate practice, such as floor area ratio (CUT), land occupancy ratio (POT), buildable area, height regime, authorization design, technical design, and as-built documentation, and these definitions will have an impact on contractual relationships involving real estate (e.g., preliminary agreements, sale contracts, design contracts, construction contracts, and financing agreements).

1.7. Restructuring of the urban planning certificate

The Code reaffirms the urban planning certificate as a mandatory informational document and classifies it into several categories, including for information purposes, cadastral operations, and construction/demolition.

In this context, the mandatory requirement to obtain an urban planning certificate is extended to more cadastral operations (e.g., subdivisions, mergers, rights of way), under penalty of nullity, and beneficiaries will need to request the correct type of certificate for each operation (verifying the purpose, content, and validity of each certificate).

1.8. Integrated approval and single authorization

The Code introduces integrated approval, including integrated approvals at central, county, or local level, as well as the single authorization issued by the single-authorization committee.

As a result, the approval timeline may become more predictable and, implicitly, shorter — but only if the documentation is complete and consistent.

1.9. Public participation in the process of drafting urban planning documentation

The Code treats public participation as an element affecting the validity of territorial planning and urbanism documentation and imposes stricter and clearer requirements for public information and consultation.

Consequently, verifying the public consultation procedure becomes a critical part of project analysis for all documentation — General Urban Plans (PUG), the General Urban Plan for Metropolitan Areas (PUGZM), Zonal Urban Plans (PUZ), and Detailed Urban Plans (PUD).

1.10. Detailed rules on acceptance and handover of buildings

The Code details the acceptance procedure upon completion of works and the conditions for handing a building over for use; acceptance becomes a major legal and commercial milestone, with direct effects on risk transfer, price payment, warranties, and building operation.

1.11. Works subject to a building permit, notification or simplified formalities

The Code maintains the building permit requirement as the general rule but allows certain categories of works to be carried out on the basis of a notification submitted to the public authority or under simplified formalities.

In this respect, simplified procedures are permitted for small-scale constructions in rural areas (e.g., under 150 sq. m.).

1.12. Regularisation of unauthorised buildings

The Code introduces a regularisation permit for buildings erected without a building permit or in breach of one. Regularisation is, however, conditional upon compliance with the applicable urban planning regulations and the technical verification of the buildings.

In addition, the regularisation permit is generally limited to single-family dwellings with a height regime of ground floor or ground floor plus one storey (G/G+1) and a maximum surface area of 150 sq.m., which are not historical monuments and are located outside the protection zones of historical monuments or protected built-up areas, as well as to residential or household annexes.

For other categories of buildings, a regularisation permit may be requested only within one year of the Code entering into force, provided that the works comply with the urban planning regulations applicable on the date of issuance of the regularisation permit, the fundamental requirements regarding quality in construction, the relevant fiscal obligations and the applicable contravention measures.

After this deadline, the relevant unauthorised buildings may be subject to demolition.

2. Practical Recommendations for Ongoing Projects

For projects already under way, the main area of risk lies in the transition between the current framework and the regime implemented by the new Code.

Beneficiaries must avoid assuming that urbanism documentation or approvals currently in progress will automatically continue under the same procedural framework.

For these situations, we recommend:



- Preparing a transition matrix for each project, identifying documents already issued, pending documents, and their validity terms.
- Reviewing existing urban planning documentation, urban planning certificates, approvals, or building permits that fall within the scope of the transitional provisions.
- Maintaining a chronological record of all submissions, requests for additional information, responses and communications from the authorities.
- Reassessing the contractual timeline of projects and of contracts already concluded or in the process of being concluded, particularly where there are long-stop dates, conditions precedent, or financing dependent on permitting are involved.

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