

General Information on Romania



Official Name:

Romania

Location:

(Southeastern) Central Europe

Time Zone:

Seven hours ahead of U.S. Eastern Standard Time (GMT + 2)

Area:

91,725 sq. miles (237,502 sq. km)

Climate:

Temperate, four distinct seasons: pleasant temperatures during Spring and Fall, hot Summers, cold Winters

Form of Government:

Parliamentary Republic with two legislative bodies: Senate (Senat) and Chamber of Representatives (Camera Deputatilor)

Capital:

Bucharest (Bucuresti) - Population: 2.1 million

Population:

21.60 million(2004 census)

22 million(year 2010 forecast)

There are 263 towns in Romania out of which 25 have a population of more than 100,000 while 8 cities count more than 300,000 inhabitants. 45 % of Romanians live in rural areas: 2,868 communes and 13,285 villages. The administrative divisions are called "judete" (counties). There are 41 counties in Romania. The capital city, Bucharest, has the status of a county.

Ethnic Groups:

Romanian 89%, Hungarian 7.5%, Gipsy 1.9%, German, Other 1.6%

Main religions in Romania

Eastern Orthodox 87%, Roman Catholic 5% and Protestant 5%.

Language

Romanian, a Latin based language which is a continuation of the Latin spoken in ancient times in Dacia and Moesia — the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire. A 31-letter Latin alphabet is in use. Ethnic minorities (Hungarian and German) use their own languages in school and civil administration. Literacy rate in Romania is 98%. Most Romanians living in towns and cities are able to communicate in English, French or German. In smaller villages only younger people and children speak one or more foreign languages.

Economy

For many centuries Romania's economy was based on agriculture. In the 1930s Romania was one of the main European producers of wheat, corn and meats and it used to be called "the bread basket of Europe." In the 1950s the communist leader of Romania, Gheorghie Gheorghiu Dej, began developing heavy industry.

There has been a shift towards heavy industries since the 1970s but the agriculture is still economically important and employs about one-third of the workforce.

Romania produces coal, natural gas, iron ore and petroleum but most raw material for the country's large industrial capacity potential are imported. Prominent industries include chemical (petrochemical, paints and varnishes), metal processing, machine manufacturing, industrial and transport equipment, textiles, manufactured consumer goods, lumbering and furniture.

39.2% of Romania's territory is arable land, 28% forests, 21% pastures, hayfields and orchards and 2.5% vineyards. Corn, wheat, vegetable oil seeds, vegetables, apples and grapes for wine are the main crops and sheep and pigs the main livestock. Forestry and fisheries are being developed under long-term programs. Since 1990, successive governments have concentrated on turning Romania into a market economy.

Public Holidays

January 1 and 2:	New Year
Monday following Easter:	March, April or early May (date varies)
May 1:	Labor Day
December 1:	National Day
December 25-26:	Christmas