



WELCOME PACK 2014

Facts and Statistics about Romania

Official Name: Romania

Location: (Southeastern) Central Europe; shares borders with Hungary to the northwest, Serbia to the southwest, Bulgaria to the south, the Black Sea to the southeast, Ukraine to the east and to the north and the Republic of Moldova to the east. Romania is the second largest country in the area, after Poland.

Time Zone: UTC/GMT +2 hours

Area: 238,391 sq. km

Flag of Romania: Three vertical stripes: red, yellow and blue.

Population: 19,942,000 (March 2014)

Largest cities: Bucharest (1,883,400), Iasi (322,000), Cluj Napoca (309,000), Timisoara (303,000), Constanta (298,000), Craiova (295,000), Galati (286,000), Brasov (275,000), Ploiesti (224,000), Braila (205,000), Oradea (196,400).

Romania's population lives in 320 cities and towns and 12,956 villages.

Religions: Christian Orthodox 81%, Roman Catholic 4.3%, Reformed 3%, Greek-Catholic 0.7%, Unitarian 0.3%, Jewish, other.

Official Language: Romanian

Currency: Leu (RON) (plural *Lei*)

Climate: Temperate, four distinct seasons, similar to northeastern USA

Capital: Bucharest (*București*) is located at the same latitude with the cities of Portland - Oregon; Montreal - Canada; Venice - Italy; and Bordeaux - France.

Form of State: Romania is a semi-presidential democracy based on a bicameral Parliament: the **Chamber of Representatives** (*Camera Deputaților*) and the **Senate** (*Senat*).

All members of the legislature are directly elected from Romania's 41 counties.

Under the semi-presidential system, the president is responsible for foreign and defense policy and controls appointments of prosecutors and the judiciary.

Legal system: Based on European models and Constitution of 1991.

Romania is a member state of **the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**.

Did You Know?

History

- The name "Romania" comes from the Latin word "Romanus" which means "citizen of the Roman Empire." The empire expanded into what is now Romania in 106 AD, under the rule of Emperor Trajan (98 to 117 AD) when the Roman Empire reached its greatest territorial extent through his conquests in the east. It took the Romans seven years and two long wars to conquer Dacia (today Romania). The Romanian occupation lasted until the end of the third century.

Geography

- With an area of 92,043 square miles (238,391 square kilometer), Romania is the [largest country](#) in Southeastern Europe. It is roughly the same size as the United Kingdom.

Science and Technology

- Romanian Inventor Traian Vuia was **the first European to build and fly a fully self-propelled, fixed-wing 'automobile airplane'** (March 18, 1906).
- The first substance proved to have a normalizing effect on [blood sugar](#) levels - *pancreatine* (the predecessor of **insulin**) **was discovered by Romanian physiologist, professor of medicine: Nicolae Paulescu!**
- **The jet engine used by modern airplanes** was invented by Bucharest-born inventor Henri Coanda. Romanian inventor and aerodynamics pioneer, Henri Coanda designed and built in 1910 the world's first jet powered aircraft, known as the Coandă - 1910, which he demonstrated publicly at the second International Aeronautic Salon in Paris. Romania's main international airport, Bucharest Otopeni - Henri Coanda, is named after the great inventor.



Getting around Bucharest

ARRIVING & GETTING AROUND

ARRIVING AT OTOPENI

Bucharest's only commercial airport is **Otopeni (officially Henri Coanda)**, 17km north of the city on the DN1. <http://www.bucharestairports.ro/>

To order a **taxi**, look for the **touchscreens in the arrivals hall**. They are fully automated and very easy to use (and offer multiple-language options), and you can choose a taxi from just about the full range of Bucharest taxi companies: all have their tariffs clearly displayed. Once the taxi company has informed you (via a ticket which comes out of the machine) how long the taxi will take to arrive, and what ID number the taxi has, you simply go outside to wait for it. Make sure you get into the correct taxi: check the company name and ID number is the same as on the ticket. Ignore the *Rapid* taxis which wait on the lower level.

You can also get to town by taking bus **783**, which stops underneath the arrivals hall, in front of internal arrivals and leaves for the city centre (stopping at Piata Victoriei, Piata Romana and Piata Universitatii) every 30 minutes during the day, and then every 40 minutes throughout the night. The full timetable of the 783 bus is online at www.ratb.ro.

Another bus, the **780**, runs from the airport to Gara de Nord from 05:15 to 23:00 roughly every 30 minutes. You need to purchase an Activ Card before boarding (get it from the little booth which you'll find on your right-hand side as you exit). A return journey into the city costs 7 lei (no singles are available, but there is no time limit on using the return). You also need to pay 3.70 lei for the card itself, but it can be recharged as often as you like at any ticket kiosk in Bucharest, and used on all Bucharest buses, trolleybuses and trams. The cards cannot be bought on board.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Bucharest is served by an extensive public transport network, made up of bus, trolleybus, tram and metro. All forms of public transport in Bucharest are very cheap.

Bucharest Metro (www.metrorex.ro)

Tickets for the Bucharest metro are cheap: they cost either 4 lei (valid for two trips; doua calatorii) or 15 lei (ten trips; zece calatorii) and can be bought from any metro station. You can also buy tickets valid for one day (abonament de o zi), costing 6 lei. The metro runs from around 05:00 to 23:00. The Bucharest metro map is online at: <http://www.metrorex.ro/Resurse/Harta/harta.png>

Trams, Buses & Trolleybuses (Ratb www.ratb.ro)

Even the most remote corners of Bucharest are served by bus, trolleybus or tram, and most main roads in the city centre benefit from three or four different transport routes. Most buses are overcrowded, however, and travelling on them can often be a less than pleasant experience. Buses, trolleybuses and trams run from very early in the morning (around 04:30) to around 23:00 (earlier at weekends), after which the night buses take over. The night bus network is extensive, and operates an hourly service throughout the night. All night buses depart from *Piata Unirii*.

Trains (www.cfr.ro)

Should you have to take a train, always try to get an *InterCity (IC)* or *InterRegio (IR)* as they are the fastest and usually have the most modern rolling stock. *Regio (R-)* trains are slow and use much older rolling stock. You will also see trains designated as *ICN*: these are *InterCity* trains which stop at more stations than usual, and are more like *InterRegios*. Prices on all types of train are relatively cheap, but are rising fast. An *InterCity* adult single from Bucharest to Brasov costs 90.50 lei. To buy train tickets visit the station, a CFR agency or buy online at bilete.cfrcalatori.ro. (Note that if buying online you need to do so at least 24 hours in advance). Tickets cannot be purchased on the train.

AGENTIA DE VOIAJ CFR/ CFR's advance booking offices.

Calea Grivitei 139, Metro Gara de Nord, tel. (+4) 021313 26 42, Open 08:00-16:00. Closed Sat, Sun.



TOURIST INFORMATION

The official tourist information point was set up in the University passage. The point consists of several touch screen devices and of a tourist information office proper which makes available brochures with information on the tourist essentials of the city. The system is yet to be perfected, since it does not include crucial sections and it is still available in Romanian only.

There is a new, privately-run tourist information centre on Calea Victoriei, which is phenomenally helpful and even better than the city's official tourist information office. It is open Sundays too. Calea Victoriei 68-70, tel. (+4) 021 211 33 66. Open 9:00 - 19:00, Sun 10:00 - 16:00.

<http://www.inyourpocket.com/romania/bucharest>

<http://www.roughguides.com/destinations/europe/romania/bucharest/>

<http://www.mybucharestguide.com/>

PHONE PROVIDERS

Telekom <https://www.telekom.ro/>

Orange <http://www.orange.ro/>

Vodafone <https://www.vodafone.ro>

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

The **emergency call 112**. You do not need to use the city code. You will be asked which service you require (Politia/Police, Ambulanta/Ambulance or Pompierii/ Firemen). Emergency call centre operators should speak English or French but they do not always do so. Make sure you know the name of the street you are calling from. If you get into trouble with the Police, demand to call your embassy.

The city's **main police station** is at Str. Lascar Cartagiu 22, tel. (+4) 021 212 56 84.

The best **Casualty Unit (Emergency Room)** in the city is at *Spitalul de Urgente*, Calea Floreasca 8, next to Dinamo Stadium.

ESSENTIAL BUCHAREST

The first port of call for any visitor to Bucharest these days should probably be the Historic Centre, or **Old Town**. The **Peasant Museum** (Soseaua Kiseleff 3) and **Village Museum** (Soseaua Kiseleff 28 -30) should also not be missed, as well as the **Grigore Antipa National History Museum** (Soseaua Kiseleff 1).

While still the most famous building in the city and usually top of the agenda for most visitors, **Casa Poporului/Palatul Parlamentului** (Strada Izvor 2-4) tends to be a bit of a letdown for most. Art lovers should pencil in at least an afternoon at the **National Art Museum** (Calea Victoriei 49-53). Last but not least, half a day at the **Bellu Cemetery** (Calea Șerban Vodă nr.249) is a wonderful trip through Romanian literary, artistic, political and architectural history.

You can find more details about places to visit in Bucharest at:

<http://www.virtualromania.org/places/bucharest.vr/places.vr/>

SHOPPING

Money

Romania's currency is the leu (plural *lei*), divided into 100 bani. *Leu* notes come in denominations of 500, 200, 100, 50, 10, 5 and 1. There are also 50, 10, 5 and 1 *bani* coins. €1 is worth approximately 4.45 lei.

The best place to get your hands on *lei* is at an ATM. ATMs are around every corner. If you're looking for an indoor ATM, **ING** (B-dul Nicolae Bălcescu 20) has one. Exchange booths, open 24 hours, along B-dul Nicolae Bălcescu are good places to change money. Be sure to count your lei notes before handing over euro. Credit and debit cards (*MasterCard* and *Visa*) are accepted almost everywhere. For cash transfers, travellers cheques and banking services, try the following: **Banca Comercială Română** B-dul Regina Elisabeta (B-dul Regina Elisabeta 5; 8.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 12.30pm Sat); Calea Victoriei (Calea Victoriei 155; 8.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, to 12.30pm Sat) Most services run weekdays only.



Markets

Bucharest is home to a number of good markets, most of which stock a wide range of produce, at prices often (but not always) cheaper than the supermarkets. There are very good produce markets at **Piata Norilor** (a short walk from *Tineretului* metro station) and **Piata Obor** (a short walk from *Obor* metro station). Beyond the produce markets there are a couple of bazaar type places worth visiting, not least **Complex Comercial Rahova**, a place that stocks cheap everything. Take tram No. 32 from Piata Unirii to (almost) the end of the line to find it. Then there is **Targul Vitan-Barzesti**, which every Sunday morning becomes Bucharest's biggest and busiest flea market. It's mayhem. More or less everything you can imagine can be found here, all prices negotiable. Bus No. 123 from Piata Unirii will get you there.

Shopping Centres

AFI PALACE COTROCENI One of Bucharest's biggest malls, with loads of top brand names and the added attraction of an *IMAX* cinema, a large ice skating rink (open year round). B-dul Vasile Milea/B-dul Timisoara, Metro Politehnica, www.aficotroceni.ro. Open 10:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 23:30.

BANEASA SHOPPING CITY. The largest mall in Bucharest. With more than 220 shops it makes everywhere else look quite small. Just past the old Baneasa airport you can get here on buses 131 or 301 from Piata Romana. Şos. Bucureşti-Ploieşti 42D, www.baneasashoppingcity.ro. Open 10:00 - 22:00, Restaurants Open 10:00 - 23:00.

BUCURESTI MALL Recently extended in a major redevelopment, this place - when opened in 1999 - was the first mall in the city. Calea Vitan 55-59, www.bucurestimall.com.ro. Open 10:00 - 22:00.

PROMENADA MALL Opened in October 2013, this is currently Bucharest's most talked-about mall. Featuring the usual mix of top stores, restaurants there is also a rooftop recreation area. Calea Floreasca 246B, Metro Aurel Vlaicu, www.promenada.ro. Open 10:00 - 22:00.

UNIREA SHOPPING CENTRE A good shopping centre in the heart of the city. There are fashion stores on the first and second floors with electronics and kids' shops on floors three and four. An excellent *Mega Image* supermarket can be found in the basement. Piata Unirii 1, Metro Piata Unirii, www.unireashop.ro. Open 10:00 - 22:00.



Need further information?

**Asociația Patronatul Tinerilor Întreprinzători din România/
Young Entrepreneurs Association from Romania**

Str. Blanduziei nr.1, Sector 2, București

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www.ptir.ro

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