Romania

Location

Romania is located at 46 00 N, 25 00 E in Southeastern Europe. It is nestled neatly between Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary, the Ukraine and Moldova. Thanks to the Black Sea, which makes up the eastern coast of the country and keeps Romania from being totally land locked.

Geography

Romania has a total area of 237,500 sq. km. This is roughly 91,800 Sq miles, approximately the size of Oregon. The 237,500 sq km is comprised of 230,340 sq km of land leaving the other 7,160 sq km as bodies of water.

Climate

The climate somewhat resembles that of our own. Romania is home to cold, cloudy winters with frequent snow and fog, as well as, warm sunny summers with frequent showers and thunderstorms.

History

In 1947, following WWII and the Soviet occupation, Romania became one of the communist “peoples Republics”. After decades of rule by the dictator, Nicolae Ceausescu, and periods of oppressive and draconian securitate police, Nicolae was imprisoned and then executed. Following his execution in 1989, the government body was ruled by a group of former communists until 1996. They were replaced by a coalition of center-right oriented party. It is now a social Democratic governed country.

Important Dates

On May 9, 1877, they declared independence from Turkey. Independence was recognized July 13, 1878 after the Treaty of Berlin. Romania became a kingdom on March 6, 1881 and switched to a republic on December 30, 1947.

Population

The population of Romania is 22,317,730. The population breakdown is the following:
0-14 years 17.4%
15-64 68.8%
65 + 13.8%

The growth rate is .21% and holding steady as well is the migration rate of -.6. Average life expectancy for the 22 million inhabitants of Romania is 70.39 years, thanks in part to the female population, which averages 74.39 years.

Currency

The Romanian form of currency is the “LEU” or the “LEI” (plural). It’s exchange rate is one U.S. dollar equals 33,497 Romanian Leu or .0000239 U.S. dollars equals one Leu.

Education

The school system in Romania is somewhat different than that of the United States. The school years begin at the age of seven. The primary education lasts only four years. It is followed by another four years of lower secondary education. The third tier of the system involves more of a vocational approach to specialize the students in their interests before they opt to go to higher education, which seems to be readily available. Ninety-seven percent of the population over the age of 15 is literate.

Language

Romanian is the official language of Romania, which stems from Latin. Hungarian and German are also popular languages in Romania.

Religion

Eighty-seven percent of the population is Eastern Orthodox. The rest of the population’s religious faiths are comprised of Protestant, Catholic, and a few others (including mostly Muslim).
Agricultural Products

Some of the agricultural products that are grown include wheat, corn, sugar beets, sunflower seeds, potatoes, eggs, sheep, hogs and some cattle. Forty percent of the labor force is dedicated to agriculture, 25% is industrial and 35% is services. Animal production is a hot spot in Romanian agriculture. There are more than 3.5 million cattle, 7.9 million pigs, and 11.1 million sheep. Just a little interesting information about Romanians’ agricultural abilities - with these numbers Romania could feed a population of two to three times its current size of 22,317,730.

Trade

Romania imports and exports electricity. Seven hundred and seventy-five million kwh are imported annually and 1.4 billion kwh are exported annually. In general, there are about $11.5 billion in export commodities, which include textiles and footwear (26%), metals and metal products (15%), machinery and equipment (11%), and minerals and fuels (6%). They are currently export partners with Italy, Germany, France, Turkey and the United States. Some of Romania’s import partners include Italy, Germany, Russia, and France. Imports total about $14.4 billion annually. Romania’s national debt is $11.6 billion.

Food

The food and drink of Romania is surprisingly similar to what the standard may have been in the U.S. in the 1980’s. No fast food restaurants appear in Romania; just good home cooking with fresh milk from the cows, produce from the gardens, and picnic lunches. Wouldn’t it be nice to experience that way of life every day?

Landmarks

The Carpathians mountain ranges are a great getaway for hikers and nature nuts. Romania is also well known for its old German villages and historically and architecturally significant wooden churches. Romania also bears claim to what is called the last great wildlife refuge in Europe. The Danube Delta is the most diverse and largest refuge in Europe. Animals in this refuge outnumber humans 1000 to 1. Because this refuge is so delicate and requires very extensive care and management, it has been designated as one of the United Nation’s natural monuments.

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