



## Romania Culture

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## People

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Romania's culture is the product of its geographical position and of its distinct historical evolution. It is fundamentally defined as the meeting point of three regions: Central Europe, Eastern Europe, and the Balkans, but cannot be truly included in any of them. The Romanian identity formed on a substratum of mixed Roman and Dacian elements, with numerous other influences. During late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, the major influences came from the Slavic peoples who migrated and settled in nearby Bulgaria, Serbia, Ukraine and eventually Poland and Russia; from medieval Greeks and the Byzantine Empire; from a long domination by the Ottoman Empire; from the Hungarians; and from the Germans living in Transylvania. Modern Romanian culture emerged and developed over roughly the last 250 years under a strong influence from Western culture, particularly French and German culture. Besides representing the largest part of the remaining descendants of the Eastern Romans,

Romania's history has been full of rebounds: the culturally productive epochs were those of stability, when the people proved quite an impressive resourcefulness in making up for less propitious periods and were able to rejoin the mainstream of European culture. This stands true for the years after the Phanariote-Ottoman period, at the beginning of the 19th century, when Romanians had a favourable historical context and chose the Western way of life, mainly French model, which they pursued steadily and at a very fast pace. From the end of the 18th century, the sons of the upper classes started having their education in Paris, and French became (and was until the communist years) a genuine second language of culture for Romanians. The modeling role of France especially in the fields of political ideas, administration and law, as well as in literature was paralleled, from the mid-19th century down to World War I, by German culture. That was true especially in Moldavia, whose many intellectuals studied in Berlin. In Transylvania and the Banat, the Habsburg rule and the presence of the ethnic German population (the Transylvanian Saxons and the Banat Swabians), in the local communities, triggered constant relationships with the German world not only at a cultural level but in daily life as well. The influence of the German space was felt especially in the humanities (philosophy, logics, philology, history) and technical sciences.

## Personal Space/Interactions

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Romanians are friendly and open and foreigners are usually made very welcome. Chatting with visitors is very common for Romanians and they will find a way to communicate with you even if they cannot speak your language.

Older people particularly appreciate old-fashioned politeness. It is respectful to use Mrs. or Mr. when using the name of a person that you just meet.

Handshaking is the most common form of greeting. When a Romanian man is introduced to a woman, he will probably kiss her hand, strictly avoiding her eyes.

If one refuses what a host offers to eat or drink, this will often be taken as a polite refusal by guest who really means to say "yes." If you want to refuse the offer find a polite excuse and say it firmly or ask for a replacement.

It is common to linger once the meal (lunch or dinner) is over.

When visiting someone at home bring a small gift. Most common gifts include flowers or chocolate (for women only), a bottle of wine or liquor. The number of flowers that one offers must always be odd. Other well-appreciate gifts include Western cosmetics (i.e. eau de toilette or after-shave) and clothing.

All gifts should be wrapped, but many Romanians might not unwrap their gifts in your presence.

In Romania as in many Latin countries life is lived at a more relaxed pace. Normal European courtesies should be followed on social occasions. Although casual dress is fine in most occasions, wearing a suit and tie, or the women's equivalent, is important at business meetings. Appointments are necessary and punctuality is expected.

It is not considered impolite to ask a person's age, politics, income or religion, so don't take such questions amiss.

## Food

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Romanian cuisine is diverse. It blends different dishes from several traditions with which it has come into contact, but it also maintains its own character. It has been greatly influenced by Balkan cuisine while it also includes influences from the cuisines of other neighbours, such as Germans, Serbians, and Hungarians. Quite different types of dishes are sometimes included under a generic term ; for example, the category *ciorbă* includes a wide range of soups with a characteristic sour taste. These may be meat and vegetable soups, tripe and calf foot soups (*shkembe chorba* or *iskembe*), or fish soups, all of which are soured by lemon juice, sauerkraut juice, vinegar, or traditionally *borș* (fermented wheat bran). The category *țuică* is a generic name for a strong alcoholic spirit in Romania, while in other countries every flavour has a different name.

Romanian recipes bear the same influences as the rest of Romanian culture. The Turks have brought meatballs (*perișoare* in a meatball soup), from the Greeks there is *musaca*, from the Bulgarians there are a wide variety of vegetable dishes like *ghiveci* and *zacuscă*, from the Austrians there is the *șnițel* and the list could continue.

One of the most common dishes is *mămăliga*, a cornmeal mush served on its own or as an accompaniment. Pork is the preferred meat, but beef, lamb, and fish are also popular.

Before Christmas, on December 20 (Ignat's Day or Ignatul in Romanian), a pig is traditionally slaughtered by every rural family. A wide variety of foods for Christmas are prepared from the slaughtered pig, including *cârnați* (or *cârnați*) – spicy sausages, *caltaboși* (or *cartaboși*) – sausages made with liver and other offal, *tobă* and *piftie* – dishes using pig's feet, head and ears suspended in aspic, and also *tocătură* or *tochitură* – pan-fried pork served with *mămăligă* and wine ("so that the pork can swim"). The Christmas meal is sweetened with the traditional *cozonac* (sweet bread with nuts) or *rahat* (Turkish delight) for dessert. At Easter, lamb is served: the main dishes are roast lamb and *drob de miel* – a Romanian lamb haggis made of minced organs (heart, liver, lungs) wrapped and roasted in a caul. The traditional Easter cake is *pască* – a pie made of yeast dough with a sweet cottage cheese filling at the center.

Romanian pancakes, called *clătită*, are thin (like French *crêpes*) and can be prepared with savory or sweet fillings: ground meat, white cheese, or jam. Different recipes are prepared depending on the season or the occasion.

Wine is the preferred drink, and Romanian wines have a tradition of over three millennia. Romania is currently the world's 9th largest wine producer, and recently the export market has started to grow.[citation needed] Romania produces a wide selection of domestic varieties (*Fetească*, *Grasă*, *Tamâioasă*) as well as varieties from across the world (Italian Riesling, Merlot, Sauvignon blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Muscat Ottonel). Beer is also highly regarded, generally blonde pilsener beer, made with German influences. There are also Romanian breweries with a long tradition.

Romania is the world's second largest plum producer (after United States) and as much as 75% of Romania's plum production is processed into the famous țuică (a plum brandy obtained through one or more distillation steps).

## Architecture

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### Pre-Modern styles

During the Middle Ages in Romania there were two types of construction that developed in parallel and different in point of both materials and technique. The first is the popular architecture, whose most spectacular achievements were the wooden churches, especially those in the villages of Maramureș, Banat and Apuseni Mountains, where the tradition is still carried out today. In Maramureș, in Surdești village, the 54 m high church tower built during 1721–1724 is among the highest of this kind in Europe. The second comprises mainly of monasteries, as well as princely seats or boyar mansions. Unfortunately time, wars, earthquakes and fires destroyed the old lay edifices.

In mediaeval architecture, influences of Western trends can be traced, to a greater or lesser extent, in all the three lands inhabited by Romanians. Such influences are stronger in Transylvania, and weaker in Moldavia, in forms absorbed by local and Byzantine tradition. In Wallachia, Western elements in architecture were even fewer; there, from the 14th century architecture was based on the local adaptation of the Byzantine model (the Princely Church in Curtea de Arges and the Cozia Monastery).

There are monuments significant for the Transylvanian Gothic style preserved to this day, in spite of all alterations, such as the Black Church in Brașov (14th–15th c.) and a number of other cathedrals, as well as the Bran Castle in Brașov County (14th c.), the Hunyades Castle in Hunedoara (15th c.).

Transylvania also developed fortified towns extensively during the Middle Ages; their urban growth respected principles of functionality (the usual pattern is a central market place with a church, narrow streets with sides linked here and there by archways): the cities of Sighișoara, Sibiu and Brașov are remarkable examples in that sense. Building greatly developed in Moldavia, too. A great number of fortresses were built or rebuilt during the reign of Moldavia's greatest prince, Stephen the Great (1457–1504). Suceava, Neamț, Hotin, Soroca and others were raised and successfully withstood the sieges laid in the course of time by Sultan Mehmet II, the conqueror of Constantinople, by the kings of Poland and Hungary.

It was during his time that the Moldavian style, of great originality and stylistic unity, developed, by blending Gothic elements with the Byzantine structure specific to the churches. Among such constructions, the monumental church of the Neamț Monastery served, for more than a century, as a model for Moldavian churches and monasteries. The style was continued in the 16th c., during the rule of Stephen the Great's son, Petru Rareș (1527–1538, 1541–1546). The main innovation was the porch and the outwall paintings (the churches of Voroneț, Sucevița, Moldovița monasteries). These churches of Northern Moldavia have become famous worldwide, due to the beauty of their painted elegant shapes that can be seen from afar.

The 17th century, the zenith of the pre-modern Romanian civilization, brought about a more significant development of outstanding lay constructions (elegant boyard mansions or sumptuous princely palaces in Moldavia and Wallachia, Renaissance-style lordly castles in Transylvania), as well as the expansion of great monasteries. The latter were endowed with schools, art workshops, printing presses, and they were significant cultural centres. To this period belongs the church of the Trei Ierarhi Monastery in Iași, raised in 1635–1639, a unique monument due to its lavish decoration with carved geometric motifs, coloured in lapis lazuli and golden foil, all over the facades. The architectural style developed in Wallachia, especially under the reigns of Matei Basarab (1632–1654) and Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688–1714), is of a remarkable stylistic unity. The Brancovan style is characterized by integration of Baroque and Oriental features into the local tradition. Some examples are the Hurezi Monastery in Oltenia or the princely palace of Mogoșoaia, both of which are lavishly decorated, with beautiful stone carvings, stucco work and paintings.

The 18th century (the Phanariot rule) brought to Wallachia and Moldavia elements of Oriental influence in urban civil architecture, where the number of religious constructions decreased relatively. In Transylvania, the Baroque dominated both religious (the Roman Catholic churches in Timisoara and Oradea) and lay architecture (Banffy Palace in Cluj and Brukenthal Palace in Sibiu).

### Modern Styles

In the first half of the 19th century, urban life grew considerably and there was a Western-type modernization policy, due to which the architecture of the Romanian lands became a combination of

Romantic and Neo-Classical elements. In the second half of the century a national tendency developed, to use to a great extent elements and forms of the traditional local architecture. Ion Mincu (1852–1912) was founder of both trends and of the Romanian school of architecture. His works, the Lahovary House or the Central Girls School in Bucharest, are among the most prominent achievements of this movement. It is due to an opposite trend that they designed houses and administrative buildings in the spirit of French eclecticism (the Justice Palace, the Central Post Office) or by adapting classicism (the buildings that now hosts the House of the Men of Science, or the Cantacuzino Palace in Bucharest).

That was the time when the Romanian Athenaeum, one of the capitals most famous buildings, was erected in the same style (1886–1888). All those French-looking buildings raised around 1900 were a reason to nickname Bucharest Little Paris. Other important architects, like Petre Antonescu (1873–1965), Horia Creanga (1893–1943) and Duiliu Marcu (1885–1966) stood out by their commitment to simple and functional forms.

In the first decades of the 20th century, Romanian towns and cities still had a contrasting aspect, exhibiting a sharp difference between the downtown sumptuous buildings and the almost rural outskirts, while the villages remained, architecturally speaking, mainly unchanged. Nevertheless, the first signs of town planning appeared in some urban districts (the first two- or three-storied blocks of flats or one-family houses on two levels).

Industrialization brought some engineering feats such as the King Carol I Bridge (later renamed Anghel Saligny Bridge). Built between 1890 and 1895 in over the Danube, when it was completed it then became the longest bridge in Europe and the third in the world.

Industrialization and fast urban growth, forced especially in the last two decades of the communist epoch, introduced in architecture long-series typified projects and pre-fab technology in the construction of 8–10 storied blocks of flats, which resulted in huge living quarters, leveling up the Romanian townscape. Unfortunately, nationalism, characterizing the last Ceausescu stage of Romanian communism, did not reflect in Romanian architecture. Traditional urban central areas and rural towns were destroyed, and replaced by conglomerates of blocks of flats, while the same ruler imposed the erection of monumental public buildings of a dull eclectic solemnity. Proof of this intrusion of politics in the life of the city stands the huge palace built on Ceausescu's order in Bucharest, now the Parliament House, whose construction necessitated the demolition of several quarters downtown. As in so many other domains, the post-revolutionary Romanian world will be bound to find again in architecture the way that best answers its needs for functionality and outlook.

## Transportation

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### Domestic Transportation

#### Bus

Most cities offer efficient and very inexpensive bus, trolleybus or tram transportation. There are several bus companies that offer fast and inexpensive connections between Romania's main cities. Inter-City bus stations are usually next to the train station and most buses have a stop in the centre of the city. Bus or taxi might be the only choice when choosing to explore some remote areas.

#### Car rental

Car is the best way to visit Romania as this allows visitors to admire the unique scenery and take advantage of the innumerable photo opportunities that they will encounter even during short drives. A hired car will save you a lot of time when visiting some remote attractions as the Painted Monasteries in Bucovina and the traditional villages in Maramures. Most major international auto rental companies and several local companies offer cars in the major cities and airports. Renters must be over 21 and have a valid driver's licence and an internationally valid credit card. Romania's major roads are safe and well maintained. As they pass through main cities and towns gas stations, food stores and hotels are easy to find. Road congestion is not an issue in Romania except in Bucharest. The Romanian Automobile Association (ACR or "Automobil Clubul Roman") offers 24 hour roadside assistance. Call: (01) 222 22 22 or (01) 222 15 52.

#### Domestic flights

There are several scheduled domestic flights connecting cities within Romania which are operated by CarpatAir and Tarom. CarpatAir has hubs in Timisoara and Cluj.

Tarom operates domestic flights between Bucharest and several cities in Romania. For more information on domestic flight schedules, please visit:  
 CarpatAir  
 Tarom

### **Train**

Romania has a well-developed railway network that covers virtually the whole country. Trains are the most popular means of getting around Romania. They are amazingly inexpensive and generally on time. Three different services are offered. The cheapest and slowest are Local Trains (Personal). The next fastest and more expensive are Express Trains (Accelerat and Rapid) that require a seat reservation along with the ticket. The fastest and the most expensive are Inter-City Trains (Inter City). The last two types of trains have dining cars and sleepers (overnight or long distance trains only). For train enthusiasts there are nine steam trains, dating from the 1920s and '30s, some of which have been restored to provide a luxury travel experience. Organizations as well as Individuals can rent steam trains. For information on train schedules and fares please visit [www.infofer.ro](http://www.infofer.ro).

### **Taxi**

Taxis are available in every city and larger towns in Romania. They can be summoned by telephone or hailed on the street. Authorized taxis can be recognized by the TAXI sign on the roof. All Taxis should be equipped with metres. Calling a taxi company is always a good idea. Drivers approaching you at the airport or at the train station in Bucharest are likely to inflate their rates; please avoid them. For longer trips outside the city limits it is possible to agree on the fee before getting in. In most cases using a taxi for such trips is affordable and very convenient.

## **Education System**

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Globe Aware volunteers may be particularly interested in learning about the Romanian education system given how likely they are to come into contact with school aged children. According to the Law on Education adopted in 1995, the Romanian Educational System is regulated by the Ministry of Education and Research (Romanian: Ministerul Educației și Cercetării, MEC). Each level has its own form of organization and is subject to different legislation. Kindergarten is optional between 3 and 6 years old. Schooling starts at age 7 (sometimes 6), and is compulsory until the 10th grade (which usually corresponds to the age of 17 or 16). Primary and secondary education are divided in 12 or 13 grades. Higher education is aligned onto the European higher education area.

Since the Romanian Revolution of 1989, the Romanian education system has been in a continuous process of reformation that has been both praised and criticised.

Aside from the official schooling system, and the recently-added private equivalents, there exists a semi-legal, informal, fully private tutoring system (meditații). Tutoring is mostly used during secondary as a preparation for the various examinations, which are notoriously difficult. Tutoring is widespread, and it can be considered a part of the Education System. It has subsisted and even prospered during the Communist regime.

In 2004, some 4.4 million of the population was enrolled in school. Out of these, 650,000 in kindergarten, 3.11 million (14% of population) in primary and secondary level, and 650,000 (3% of population) in tertiary level (universities).

### **Kindergarten**

Children can start as early as three years old and can stay until they are six or seven years old. Kindergarten is optional and typically lasts for 3 or 4 forms - "Small Group" (Grupa Mică) for children aged 3–4, "Middle Group" (Grupa Mijlocie), for children aged 4–5, "Big Group" (Grupa Mare) for children aged 5–6 and "School Preparation Class" for children aged 6–7. The last form is only offered by some kindergartens.

Services include initiation in foreign languages (typically English or German), introduction in computer studies, dancing, swimming etc. All kindergartens will provide at least one meal or one snack, some having their own kitchens and their own cooks, others opting for dedicated catering services.

### **Elementary Education**

Elementary school lasts eight years in Romania. Most elementary schools are public; MEC statistics show less than 2 percent of elementary school students attend private school. Unless parents choose a school earlier, the future student is automatically enrolled in the school nearest to his or her residence. Some schools that have a good reputation are flooded with demands from parents even two or three years in advance. A negative consequence of this is that in many schools classes are held in two or even three shifts, lasting from as early as 7 a.m. to as late as 8 p.m. Education is free in public schools (including some books and auxiliary materials), but not entirely (some textbooks, notebooks, pencils and uniforms might be required to be purchased).

Life in a city school is very different from life in a rural school. An urban school will have over 100 or 200 students per year, science labs and well-stocked computer labs, clubs based on different interests (from math, film and drama to Harry Potter), teaching assistants and psychologists, freetime speech therapy and academic programs for gifted students, whereas rural schools are usually tiny, with some, in villages, providing only 4 years education — the rest being offered at a nearby larger village, having only one teacher for all students (generally under 10 students in total) — a situation almost identical to the one existing at the turn of the 20th century. Transportation to and from school is almost never provided — and in extreme cases, in remote villages, students as young as six must walk up to 10 km to school if there is no bus or train. Only starting in 2003 was a very limited rural transportation service introduced (The Yellow School Van with a Little Bell — Microbuzul Școlar Galben cu Clopoțel). Public transport for all students is in theory free, but, because of a very awkward system, students end up paying half the price for a season ticket. Students also pay half price at all commuter trains operated by Căile Ferate Române.

All schools follow the tradition of school shifts (originally done for lack of space, but now the tradition). Thus, school starts for some groups (usually years I to IV and VIII) at 7:30 or 8:00 and ends at 12:00-14:30 while other groups (years V-VII) start at 11:00-13:30 and end at 17:00-19:30. Normally, a class lasts 50 minutes, followed by a 10 minute break (and sometimes one 20 minute break). From November until March, some schools reduce classes to 45 minutes and breaks to 5 minutes, for fear that 6:30 or 7:30 in the evening is too late and too dangerous an hour to leave school during the dark. School days are Monday to Friday.

### High Schools

At the end of the 8th year of school (at age 14 or 15) a nation-wide test is taken by all students. Starting with 2004, this examination is called Testarea Națională (The National Test) and can be taken only once, in June. The subjects are Romanian Language and Literature, Maths and either Geography or History, depending on candidate's choice (and additionally the language of the school for ethnic minority schools or classes and for bi-lingual schools). The passing mark is 5 for each of the three/four exams. If the student passes, he is allowed to enrol in a high school or he will have to join a School of Crafts and Trades for two years. The finishing grade (also known as the admission grade) is computed as an average, taking into account for 50% an average of all the Yearly General Averages starting with year 5 and for the rest of 50% the mark obtained at the National Test (1-10, 10 being the highest, not rounded, precision 0.01). Despite the exams not being published, the marks are public, lists being placed both in schools and on the Internet.

In order to enrol in a high school, the student must choose a list of high schools he or she desires to attend (there is no automatic enrolment this time), based on his mark and options by filling a nation-wide form. A national computer system does the repartition, by taking into account students in the order of their preferences and their "admission grade". Thus, somebody with an 9.85 average (this is a top 5% mark) will certainly enter the high school he or she desires, while somebody with 5.50 has almost no chance to attend a top ranked high school. However, based on this system, the last admission averages for some prestigious high schools are over 9.50 or 9.60.

### Higher Education

In Romania, after 1990, the universities were the first type of institutions that started the reforms for democratization of education. They achieved autonomy, an impossible goal during the socialist regime. Students had been a very active social category participating in the social protests in the years 1956, 1968 and 1989. After 1990, they formed a very radical offensive campaign aimed against communist politicians. The University Square movement began when, around the University of Bucharest, these students proclaimed a 'communist free zone', installed tents around the area and protested for over 40 days demanding that communist statesmen be dismissed from public functions. Additionally, they demanded the autonomy of mass-media. However, Romanian students' movements were a model for other neighboring countries. For instance, Bulgarian students made an alliance with union syndicates and protested through marathon demonstrations and strikes. The difference in that case was that their union syndicates were strong allies of students. Also, their movement was less radical but more powerful and realistic. In this case,

they succeeded to dismiss some communist leaders. In Ukraine, the social movements from the end of 2004 against electoral frauds had the same structure. Universities have full autonomy, in stark contrast from the pre-university segment. Each university is free to decide everything from their management to admissions and the organization of classes. Furthermore, many universities devolve this autonomy further down, to each department. Thus, there are huge differences between universities and even between individual departments inside a university.

### Overview

In 2004 the Romanian adult literacy rate was 97,3% (45th worldwide), while the combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary schools was 75% (52nd worldwide)[9] The results of the PISA assesment study in schools for the year 2000 placed Romania on the 34th rank out of 42 participant countries with a general weighted score of 432 representing 85% of the mean OECD score. According to the Academic Ranking of World Universities, up to 2006 no Romanian university was included in the first 500 top universities world wide. Using a methodology similar to that of the Academic Ranking of World Universities, Romanian scientists have found that the best placed Romanian university attained the half score of the last university in the world top 500.

## Languages

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Romanian or Daco-Romanian is a Romance language spoken by around 24 to 28 million people, primarily in Romania and Moldova. It has official status in Romania, Moldova, and the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina in Serbia. In Moldova, the language is officially called Moldovan for political reasons.

Romanian speakers are scattered across many other countries, notably Italy, Spain, Russia, Ukraine, Israel, Portugal, United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, France, and Germany.

### Foreign Influences

#### Dacian language

The Dacian language was an Indo-European language spoken by the ancient Dacians. It may have been the first language to influence the Latin spoken in Dacia, but little is known about it. About 300 words found only in Romanian or with a cognate in the Albanian language may be inherited from Dacian, many of them being related to pastoral life (for example: *balaur* "dragon", *brânză* "cheese", *mal* "shore"). Some linguists have asserted that Albanians are Dacians who were not romanized and migrated southward.

A different view is that these non-Latin words (many with Albanian cognates) are not necessarily Dacian, but rather were brought into the territory that is modern Romania by Romance-speaking shepherds migrating north from Albania, Serbia, and northern Greece who became the Romanian people. However, the Eastern Romance substratum appears to have been a satem language, while the Paleo-Balkan languages spoken in northern Greece (Ancient Macedonian) and Albania (Illyrian) were most likely centum languages. The general opinion is that Dacian was a satem language, as was Thracian, which, however, was indeed spoken in the south.

#### Balkan linguistic union

While most of Romanian grammar and morphology are based on Latin, there are some features that are shared only with other languages of the Balkans and not found in other Romance languages. The languages of the Balkan linguistic union belong to individual branches of the Indo-European language family: Bulgarian and Albanian, and in some cases Greek and Serbian. The shared features include a suffixed definite article, the syncretism of genitive and dative case, the formation of the future and perfect tenses, and the lack of infinitives.

#### Slavic languages

The Slavic influences on Romanian are especially noticeable and can be observed at all linguistic levels: lexis, phonetics, morphology and syntax. This situation is due to the migration of Slavic tribes who traversed the territory of present-day Romania during the early evolution of the language. This process of the introduction of Slavic in Dacia was similar to the appearance of various Germanic dialects in the Western Roman Empire, where Gallic Latin and Northern Italian dialects became strongly germanized. However, due to lower Romance-speaking populace in the East, Slavic remained spoken for much longer and did not die



out immediately. This partly explains why spoken Romanian is not intelligible to speakers of Western Romance languages unless they attempt to learn it.

### Other influences

Even before the 19th century, Romanian came in contact with several other languages. Some notable examples include:

*Greek*: folos < ófelos "use", buzunar < buzunára "pocket", proaspăt < prósfatos "fresh", cutie < cution "box"

*Hungarian*: oraş < város "town", a cheltui < költeni "to spend", a făgădui < fogadni "to promise", a mântui < menteni "to save"

*Turkish*: cafea < kahve "coffee", papuc < papuç "slipper", ciorbă < çorba "wholemeal soup, sour soup"

*German*: cartof < Kartoffel "potato", bere < Bier "beer", şurub < Schraube "screw", turn < Turm "tower", ramă < Rahmen "frame", muştiuc < Mundstück "mouth piece", bormaşină < Bohrmaschine "drilling machine", iarmaroc < Jahrmarkt "fair", cremşnit < Cremeschnitt "cream slice", şvaiter < Schweizer "Swiss cheese"

### French, Italian and other international words

Since the 19th century, many modern words were borrowed from the other Romance languages, especially from French and Italian (for example: birou "desk, office", avion "airplane", exploata "exploit"). It was estimated that about 38% of the number of words in Romanian are of French and/or Italian origin (in many cases both languages); and adding this to the words that were inherited from Latin, about 75%-85% of Romanian words can be traced to Latin. The use of these Romanianized French and Italian loanwords has tended to increase at the expense of Slavic loanwords, many of which have become rare or fallen out of use. As second or third languages, French and Italian themselves are better known in Romania than in Romania's neighbors. Along with the switch to the Latin alphabet in Moldova, the re-latinization of the vocabulary has tended to reinforce the Latin character of the language.

In the process of lexical modernization, many of the words already existing as Latin direct heritage, as a part of its core or popular vocabulary, have been doubled by words borrowed from other Romance languages, thus forming a further and more modern and literary lexical layer. Typically, the popular word is a noun and the borrowed word an adjective.

## Employment and the Economy

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Romania is an upper-middle income European Union member economy of Central-Eastern Europe. It has been referred as a "Tiger" due to its high growth rates and rapid development. Romanian economic growth is among EU's fastest.[9] Romania has the 11th largest economy in European Union by total nominal GDP and the 8th largest based on purchasing power parity and is one of the fastest growing markets in recent history with consistent annual GDP growth rates above 6% (+8.4% for 2008). Romania is a member of the European Union (7th largest country), its most important trading partner. Its capital, Bucharest, is one of the largest financial centres in the region, with a metropolitan area of more than 2.6 million people. Romania has experienced growth in foreign investment with a cumulative FDI totaling more than \$70 billion since 1989.

Some economic predictions indicate that Romanian GDP will double by 2011, and one scholar has even suggested that Romania will overtake Italy in GDP per capita by 2020. Preliminary estimates for 2008 show a real GDP growth of 7.2%, while the forecasts for 2009–10 indicate an average of 6–6.5% per year. Future prospects are tied to the country's increasingly important integration with the European Union member states. The country is expected to join the Eurozone in 2014.

Index of Economic Freedom ranking 68th reflects Romania's business, fiscal and trade freedom, though labor freedom, property rights, and freedom from corruption affect negatively. Ease of Doing Business Index ranking 48th reflects Romania's easiness in getting credit, starting a business, good investor protection, contract enforcement, low tariffs, though closing business, dealing with licenses, registering property, paying taxes and employing workers is much harder.

Romania also has a strategic port, which makes it more competitive than many of its neighbors to carry out such entrepreneurship activities. The Port of Constanta is the busiest on the Black Sea, surpassing others. In addition, Constanta's port infrastructure and skilled workforce, which is due to the success of Romania's education policy in producing skilled workers, is also fundamental in this aspect as they provide easier access to markets for both importing and exporting, and also provide the skill(s) needed to refine imports into exports.

Due to the dynamic boom economy in 2008, Romania now has 10 billionaires (in US dollars), compared to 2 in 2006. Romania is experiencing decline in mass emigration as the large difference in standards of living



are decreasing. The Romanian current account deficit in 2007 increased by 66% from 2006, reaching 16.9 billion euro.

## Religion

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Romanian spirituality is greatly influenced by its strong connections with the Eastern Christian world. Romanians have thus obtained a unique sense of identity and two clichés can simply express this: An island of Latinity in a Slavic sea and The only Orthodox Christian Latin people. There are only a few Romanian Catholics (of both the Roman and Greek rites) and a small number of Protestants, the vast majority of Romanians being Romanian Orthodox (over 90%). Despite the diminishing importance of the church in recent generations, it remains the most trusted institution in Romania. Church attendance is high in rural communities and among the elders in the cities. Also, despite accusations of collaborationism with the communist regime, which continue to plague the Romanian Church, outstanding personalities have kept their verticality and became widely respected like the priest Dumitru Stăniloae who is considered one of the greatest world theologians in the recent period.

Romanian Orthodox monasteries and churches exist throughout Romania but, traditionally, few are constructed on a monumental scale. A great number of wooden churches are still intact in the Carpathian Mountains villages, but by far the most impressive are the Wooden Churches of Maramureş which push wood building technique to its limits. Byzantine influences can be found in most Romanian church buildings but domestic styles have evolved in different periods of time and in different regions. In Northern Moldavia a particular style was used in the construction of the monasteries, of which the most important are the painted monasteries of Bucovina - UNESCO World Heritage Sites, such as those of Moldoviţa, Putna, Suceviţa, and Voroneţ. In Wallachia Curtea de Argeş Cathedral is built in a Byzantine style with Moorish influences, and a great number of churches show Greek influences, especially those built in the 18th century, such as Stavropoleos Church in central Bucharest. Romania also evolved the distinctive Brâncovenesc style: the monasteries of Snagov and of Sâmbăta de Sus in Transylvania are classical examples.

## Music

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Many Romanian rock bands of the 1970s and 1980s, such as IRIS (Romanian band) and Holograf, continue to be popular, particularly with the middle-aged, while since the 1990s there has been growth in the boy band and hip hop genres. The eclectic pop-rock band Taxi have been gaining international respect, as has Spitalul de Urgenţă's raucous updating of traditional Romanian music. Also jazz and blues, and, to an extent, eurodance/trance and heavy metal/punk are popular in some places especially in large cities. The alternative rock music is peaked by Omul cu Sobolani (The man with the rats) which, named after Freud's patient "the man with the rats" is one of the most uncompromising and not commercially oriented groups[citation needed]. Recently two Romanian dance bands O-zone and Morandi (band), reached top position in European music charts thus making contemporary Romanian music world-famous. A music style called manele with alleged Turkish influences is particularly popular in working-class districts of cities and in villages despite heavy protest from Romanian top musicians, cultural elites and anti-Balkan activists.

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