

2014

Approximate cost of living in Romania



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Living costs in Romania and especially in Brasov is known to be among the world's lowest cost places to live. However, If you live outside of central Bucharest, adjust to a more Romanian lifestyle and do not depend too heavily on food types and products from your home country to keep costs down as imported commodities are almost always more expensive than back home. You may be surprised how inexpensive Romania can be for most things.

Housing Rental prices



Some of Europe's cheapest land can be found in Romania & in some areas, per square meter can be less than the cost of paper! Nicer, more developed areas though fetch a much higher premium with countryside buildable land costing anything from 15-30e/meter. Inner city land can cost many times higher, running into London prices for premium areas.

Simple low budget furnished studios in Brasov centre for example would cost as little as 175e/ month at the time of writing (March 2014), whilst in Bucharest, this would be 300e for a comparably nice apartment.

Mid range would cost 250e & 400e respectively in the 2 cities, while premium 1 bed apartments would cost 400e & 650e respectively. You can add around 70-100e for each additional bedroom. Houses in Brasov rarely rent for less than 450e unfurnished & can run to 1200e for a very nice place, while in Bucharest, you these figures would be more like 650e for something plain & ordinary to 2000e for a large family home in a nice area of Pipera.



Outside the cities, prices can easily halve, if you don't mind driving in, but the roads, well, the less said about the roads the better. Additional commuting costs may be compensated by the savings on the rent, especially with modern cars having such good consumption figures.

Utilities such as gas, water and especially electricity are inexpensive but slowly rising all the time. Gas has doubled in price in the past few years. Look for a home that has good insulation properties & avoid loft apartments if utility cost is an issue for you. Expect to pay around 50e per month for a one bedroom apartment & 120e in winter, for gas, water & electricity. If staying in a block, add 25e to 50e to that figure for building admin, which is the responsibility of the tenant.

Food at home & dining out



Local supermarkets are relatively inexpensive if you stick to Romanian such as seasonal vegetables, pork meat, chicken, seafood, bread and rice. Fruit markets are still cheap also. If you visit some supermarkets shortly before closing time in the evening, you can purchase remaining perishable products at discounts.

There are plenty of restaurants in all cities where you can have a full meal for between 5e & 25e. A pizza in a Pizzeria will cost around 4e, pasta is around 5, chicken or pork full meal around 6e, soup around 3e & desert around 4e. Wine by the glass costs up to 2e. Beer is around 1 to 2e for 330ml.





In a more trendy or up market but still everyday restaurant, add 30-50% to these prices. For premium dining, triple the prices, but that said, they are of an extremely high standard & a comparable restaurant in the UK, Germany, Spain or France would cost at least 5 times that price, like for like food & service quality. Beer is around 1 to 2e for 330ml. Avoid McDonalds, KFC & the like unless you have money to burn. Value for money wise, they are way off the mark. It is much easier to eat freshly cooked food in a restaurant for less than a fast food meal. An all in McDonald's meal will set you back 5 or 6e while KFC is dearer still. On that budget you could eat on any shopping street in a nice restaurant.

During lunch hours, many restaurants offer inexpensive set menus of buffets at around 5e. Gas stations such as OMV sell good quality baguette sandwiches for around 4e. .

Everyday goods and services

Clothing departments of Supermarkets such as Metro, Carrefour, Selgros have discount clothing, mostly unbranded from china so be wary of quality, but fashion wise, it's pretty up to date. Regular stores are not so cheap in comparison with salaries such as Kenvelo, C&A, H&M. Paradoxically, the sales in the UK for example of the world's leading brands are far better than in Romania, despite the fact that some of these brands originate here.

Romanian hair dressers are famous for their great service and excellent prices. A typical men's hair cut might cost 8e & a ladies haircut, 3 times that. However, there are also places where you can get a quick haircut for around 4e.

Shoes are another cheap commodity in Romania, with prices around 30% cheaper than the UK. Men's basic shoes start at around 35e, running got 80e for fine leather, to 200e for more exclusive designs. Women's shoes are similarly priced but the most popular ones seem to start at around 50e.

Transportation

Commuters in the capital can purchase commuter passes for unlimited travel between locations offering very low cost transport. It is hard to justify owning a car from a cost standpoint. Public transport is of course restrictive but taxis cost a mere 1.5e per km in most cities, unless you are unfortunate enough to get a disreputable one, or the airport taxi company known as flytaxi, who charge triple the normal rate. Private driver hire is also a good option when exploring with friends or getting taken to the airport. Brasov to Bucharest airport for example can cost as little as 70e, although 80e is more common.



Electronics

Electronic goods, such as TVs, stereo sets, cameras and computers are relatively expensive compared to salaries, at places such as Altex but are sometimes a little cheaper at stores like Domo.

Working in Romania

Opportunities for working in Romania are relatively few, but increasingly there has been a wave of foreign investors and entrepreneurs who moved to Romania in order to start their businesses here. Unless you have your own business or work for an international corporation, wages can be modest, so beware of this aspect before coming here. Make sure you dry run any business case first, because the market & tastes 7 willingness to spend if very different to what you may be used to in other countries. Just because selling hot potatoes by the roadside works in Ireland does not mean it would take off here. Be especially aware of investing in partnerships of 'sure-thing' plans.



The biggest cities are usually the most attractive ones to job hunters. If you are looking for a job, Bucharest offers most of the possibilities. Foreign languages skills are always appreciated. There are an increasing number of private schools who opt for hiring native speakers of English, French, German, Spanish and other languages of international circulation. Nannying is another common job opportunity, especially for women, which provides a good insight into the Romanian family life. The Romanian medical schools are much appreciated, and there are many Arab students coming here to study, who later on settle down and become **doctors**. After the capital, Iași, Constanța and Timișoara are the cities where most foreigners live and work in. Brasov is the most prized city but job opportunities are proportionately less in line with the smaller population.

The other cities and towns in the country, although they do not offer so many jobs to pick from, are an ideal place to start a **private business**. Moreover, many expats, mainly Italians, British, Germans and Arabs decided to move to the countryside, both to live a quiet life closer to the nature and to invest in agriculture.

Studying in Romania



The main cities in Romania are also the biggest university centers. Over 30 public and private universities in Bucharest, Iași, Brasov, Craiova, Cluj-Napoca, Timișoara and other big cities in Romania receive thousands of foreign students every year. The main reasons for which Romania is such an attractive country for the foreign students is the quality of the education (which is better than in their home countries), the internationally recognised diplomas and qualifications, the affordable costs and, last but not least, the Romanian unique nightlife. Most of the students come from the neighbouring countries, Moldova, Serbia, Bulgaria or Ukraine, but there are also a big number of students coming from Tunisia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel and Nigeria. They are interested mainly in studying medicine, economic and technical sciences, but also philology, law or political sciences.