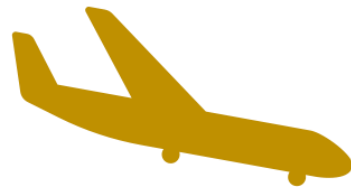




Reaching Romania

Feeding Body & Soul

Mission Trip Manual



REACHING ROMANIA: OUR MISSION

Our goal for every Reaching Romania mission trip is to share the transforming love of Jesus with Romania's underserved people and children.

Our Team Leaders

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Under the leadership of one or both of our Team Leaders, a mission team representing Reaching Romania, the international arm of The Union Mission Ministries, will travel to Romania. Our specific purpose is to come alongside native Romanians to help in one or more of the following projects:

- Feeding Body and Soul: Conducting benevolence outreaches that provide basic essentials, share the Gospel, and minister to Romanians in need
- Presenting Wellness Clinics
- Supporting Pastors and Bible Conferences
- Training Childcare and/or Social Workers
- Other special projects (to be defined in advance of the trip)

If you are interested in joining Reaching Romania on a mission trip, you can find more information at www.reachromania.com/romanian-mission-trips. To join an upcoming mission team, you will need to complete an application and submit it by the listed deadline. Since each trip may vary in size, scope, and specifics, acceptance is not guaranteed.

TRIP DURATION

Reaching Romania mission trips are normally 10–12 days long and often include two Sundays out of the United States. Travel from the USA to Romania will be via commercial airlines. Itineraries and flight details will come in separate email communications.

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION IN ROMANIA

Politics and poverty

Soviet occupation following World War II led to the formation of a Communist “people’s republic” in 1947 and the abdication of the king. The decades-long rule of President Nicolae Ceausescu became increasingly harsh and draconian through the 1980s. He was overthrown and executed in late 1989. Former Communists dominated the government until 1996 when they were swept from power.

Years of economic restructuring attempted to overcome years of economic turmoil and built-in corruption. To this day, while wages and standards of living have increased, they are still extremely low compared to other Western countries—and poverty is commonplace. However, since joining the European Union in 2007, gathering financial aid from abroad, and enacting new policies, Romania is much more stable and open to NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and nonprofit organizations that contribute to their social sectors.

Religion

In matters of faith, approximately 65% of Romanians consider themselves Romanian Orthodox. Catholics and Protestants combined constitute less than 20% of the population. In some areas, Baptist and Greek Catholics evangelizing in areas dominated by Orthodox churches claim to have suffered some harassment and even violence. These incidences are not common and have not been connected in any way to the church hierarchy. There are reports, however, from some Protestant denominations that low-level government officials were agents of harassment and interfered with proselytizing and worship.

ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

You, your teammates, and those to whom you minister all want to have a good experience with Reaching Romania. Remember that it is primarily your attitudes and actions that will positively or negatively influence others for Christ (even when you are not aware of it). To a large extent, they also will determine the kind of experience you personally have. To make your time more fruitful for the Kingdom, please evaluate your attitudes and behaviors carefully and consider how others may interpret them.

In particular, focus on these key points:

Servant's Heart — Remember that Christ Himself left Heaven to be a servant to others. Let Philippians 2 be your guide and seek to **put the needs of others above your own**. You should arrive on the field with a servant's heart, eager to do whatever needs to be done. Reaching Romania leadership will do all they can to make your experience positive, but things may not go the way you expect. It is necessary to be **flexible** and when this is your experience, and to remember that God is still sovereign even when things don't go as planned.

Cultural Sensitivity — When you are in another country, you will experience another culture. Thus, you need to remember that others will evaluate the appropriateness of your behavior by the standards of **their** culture, not yours. This makes it critical to be aware of what is and what is not appropriate in their country. **The Reaching Romania Manual II – Pre-Field Training will include helpful information about Romanian culture.** Please read it thoroughly. Also carefully follow the advice you receive from experienced missionaries and native Romanians, even when it differs from your own perception of the culture. They undoubtedly understand Romania and Romanians better than you do.

Team Unity — While you are on your Reaching Romania mission trip you will most likely be a part of a team—and teams function best when they function together. For this reason, dating and pairing off in exclusive relationships are not appropriate behavior during the mission trip. Whether you are single or married, acquainted with fellow team members or complete strangers, please make a conscious effort to get acquainted with all of your team members. The group dynamics of each team play a large part in the experience of the group and the effectiveness and impact of our mission.

ADMINISTRATION

Prior to Departure

All team members must have a **current passport**. Be sure to have your passport in hand well before your projected departure date as processing and mail delays can be all too commonplace. For information, see travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html.

Each trip has significant dates and deposit deadlines that you must meet to participate in the trip. These will be communicated via email.

All team members must provide a completed medical / release form and a copy of their passport to the team leader.

Items to keep with you at all times:

1. Your passport
2. Detailed itinerary of the trip
3. A record of your blood type and Rh factor
4. A list of any allergic reactions
5. A list of your health history noting any special health conditions or medical restrictions
6. Copy of any medication prescriptions
7. Your eyeglasses prescription

Be sure your family has the following items and information before you leave the country

1. Copy of your flight itinerary
2. A valid will
3. A Power of Attorney for children you are leaving at home with someone other than a guardian or parent. It should authorize permission for emergency medical care.
4. A Power of Attorney over your financial affairs
5. The key to a joint safe deposit box
6. A photocopy of your credit cards
7. A photocopy of your passport
8. Knowledge of your important papers

LUGGAGE & PACKING

International flights have **different size and weight limits** for luggage compared to domestic flights. The most common **maximum size** bag allowed is 62 linear inches (total inches measured around all sides). A checked bag is commonly 27" x 21" x 14". Most airline carriers will allow **overweight, oversize, or additional baggage for additional fees**. You will be responsible for these costs.

Most airlines allow passengers to bring on **both a carry-on and a personal item** like a backpack, laptop bag, purse, briefcase, shopping bag, etc. The general rule of thumb is that your personal item is smaller in dimension than your carry-on bag and that it will fit underneath the seat in front of you. Consult the airline for specific regulations.

Put a nametag on the handle of your luggage for easy identification on flights. Put your name, address and phone number also on the inside of your bag in case the identification on the outside is lost in transfer. Be sure your international baggage has a strap or belt around the outside to keep it closed. The air carriers and porters may handle your bag roughly, and zippers sometimes

fail. You may also want to mark your luggage somehow so that you can easily spot in airport luggage carousels.

For Reaching Romania mission trips, **we limit each person to 1 checked bag, 1 carry-on, and 1 personal item.**

Packing your carry-on luggage

You may become separated from your checked luggage for a number of days, so your carry-on bag should contain the following items:

- An empty backpack
- One complete change of clothing.
- Optional doctor-prescribed antibiotics and over-the-counter medications: Cipro (for intestinal infections), EMYCIN (for head, throat, or chest infections, Phenergan tablets and suppositories (for nausea), Imodium AD for diarrhea
- Any other medications you are presently taking.
- Antacid tablets
- Snacks, i.e. peanuts, crackers, dried fruit, etc.
- Small, unopened bottles of water
- Tissue packs, toilet paper, or baby wipes (in rare situations, these would be helpful)
- Feminine hygiene items
- Electrical converter
- First aid items
- Bar of soap
- Small towel and washcloth
- Eye-mask for sleeping on the plane
- Travel pillow (for use on plane)
- Flashlight and batteries
- Travel alarm clock and batteries
- Reasonable amount of reading material for the flight.

You should not have any regular razors, scissors, knives, nail clippers, or anything that could remotely be construed as a weapon in your carry-on or personal bag. These must be in checked luggage.

For more information related to security and travel protocols please consult the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) at www.tsa.gov/travel.

Packing Your Checked Baggage

Try to travel light. Pack easy-care clothes that are practical and adequate for more than one function. The weather in Romania is seasonal. Romania is on the same latitude as northern Minnesota or southern Canada.

Clothing

Whatever you wear is a testimony of your Christian witness.

For most ministry and outreach opportunities, as well as shopping trips and casual times, wear modest, comfortable clothes in clean, good condition. Khakis and polo shirts are common choices for men and women alike. Please bear modesty in mind at all times.

For pastoral and Bible conferences, our dress code is more conservative. Pastors should wear a tie and sport coat for all ministry services. All other men should wear something appropriate for a worship service. Ladies should wear a tasteful skirt and top or a dress to ministry meetings.

For shoes, focus on comfort more than fashion. You will be walking long distances. Avoid brand-new shoes and high heels during the mission trip.

Ministry supplies

From time to time, team leaders will ask trip participants to leave space in their luggage or carry a second check-in bag for gifts, VBS supplies, wellness supplies, etc.

Liquids

Please follow all TSA recommendations for the number of ounces of liquids you may bring. Put liquids and cream containers in plastic bags in your luggage since liquids have a tendency to expand at high altitudes.

Electrical current

The current will be 220 AC. In order to use common American appliances (laptops, electric razors, hair dryers, etc.), you will need a transformer/converter and plug adapters. You may purchase these items in the luggage or travel department of most major department or electronics stores.

Customs for the return trip

Residents of the United States are required to declare the full retail price of all articles purchased abroad. A customs declaration form will be given to you on your return flight. Fill it out in full. You are allowed to import duty-free up to \$400 worth of merchandise based on the retail price.

AIRPORTS AND TRAVELING

Never leave your bags unattended. Hold all bags especially tightly in a crowd. Unattended bags not only draw attention to thieves, but also may alert airport security. If you leave a bag unattended in an airport, you may return to find it secured in a bomb-proof airport room.

Remember your manners while traveling. Be considerate and courteous to those around you. North Americans have a bad international reputation for being loud and obnoxious. It is especially important to be quieter when traveling as a group, as excitement levels are high. (Remember Philippians 2:3.)

Do NOT promise to call home when you arrive in Romania. Since phones often are not readily available, you may cause worry for those at home who are awaiting your call. Team leaders will have Romanian cell phones that can be used in emergencies. You may have your personal cell phone fitted for international use, but foreign data charges on smartphones can be exorbitant, so check your cellular carrier's rates on phone and data before you leave the USA.

A better plan is to communicate via electronic means like Facetime, Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp. These use WiFi connections and are much more cost-effective.

You can't always flush. In many areas, septic systems are not designed to handle toilet paper. If you see a waste receptacle next to the toilet, this is generally a clue that toilet paper should be thrown away, not flushed.

Cover your nose and mouth as you sleep. On long-distance flights, airline air conditioners have a tendency to dry the mucous membranes, resulting in nose bleeds. Bring a washcloth or face mask to cover up. You may look silly, but will feel much better when you land. You may also want to apply olive oil to your nasal passages with a Q-tip. Olive oil acts as an antiseptic and a moisturizer.

ONLINE SOURCES FOR TRAVELING ABROAD

The U.S. State Department offers a variety of resources, including travel warnings and advisories to keep abreast of regions to avoid, as well as passport and visa information. Check out their website at www.state.gov and click on "Services."

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is another valuable resource. The CDC offers information on the health standards and immunization requirements for various geographic regions. It also issues health advisories to consider before traveling to certain areas. Take a look at www.cdc.gov/travel

The U.S. Customs Service website contains valuable guidelines on such things as transferring prescription drugs across borders, mailing items to the United States from abroad, declarations and exemptions of items purchased abroad, and items that are prohibited entry to the United States. Access the site at www.customs.gov and click on "Traveler Information."

The World Health Organization offers details on several countries' official vaccine-related entry requirements, areas and types of malaria risk in individual countries, frequent updates on disease risks, and news of disease outbreaks important to international travelers. You can find the WHO website at www.who.int.

While these sites are great tools for pre-trip planning, always consult a family doctor before receiving any vaccination, and contact the nearest passport office, authorized post office, or

courthouse for specific details on acquiring a passport and any necessary visas. A little research can go a long way toward ensuring a safe and successful trip abroad.

MEDICAL GUIDANCE

You should not expect Romanian medical care to be as good as it is in the United States. Health facilities are often poorly equipped and understaffed.

These tips will help you stay healthy as you travel abroad:

1. Be sure the water you drink is safe. Drink bottled water or purified/boiled tap water. Avoid ice cubes made from tap water, as freezing does not kill the offending bacteria.
2. Avoid uncooked vegetables, salads, and fruits that cannot be peeled unless your Team Leader indicates it is safe to eat such foods.
3. Do not eat raw eggs, uncooked meat, or unprocessed cheese.
4. Carry a container of hand towelettes with you as washing facilities are not always available.
5. Take your customary medications and bring a renewal prescription with you in case of loss. Be sure to know the generic names of your prescribed drugs. Also, bring your prescription for eyeglasses. If you have any special medical needs, notify your host and Team Leader before you arrive in Romania.
6. Wear sunscreens and protective clothing as needed.
7. Pepto Bismol is one of the most effective remedies to prevent and relieve diarrhea. Two tablets (or tablespoons) is the usual recommended dosage. If vomiting accompanies diarrhea, do not eat or drink for one hour.
8. Notify your Team Leader and seek professional care if any of the following occur.
 - Diarrhea lasting more than 72 hours.
 - Bloody diarrhea
 - Persistent or severe abdominal cramps or pain
 - Severe chills and/or fevers
 - Painful urination or discharge
9. Jet lag: There are many tips to help prevent jet lag.
 - Avoid caffeine 48 hours prior to departure.
 - Drink lots of water on the plane and in the airport to stay hydrated.
 - Author-physician Charles Ehret offers two inexpensive, but helpful resources: *The Cure for Jet Lag* and *Overcoming Jet Lag*.

All of your immunizations should be up-to-date before you leave for Romania. Consult your personal care physician for advice on which boosters or shots you may want.

MEALS

All team meals, with the exception of meals during the trans-Atlantic travel periods, will be supplied as part of the trip. In general, the team will eat together in the hotels and restaurants. It is recommended that team members bring additional money to purchase snacks. You may also wish to bring packets of artificial sweetener since they are difficult to locate in Romania.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE

You are personally responsible for exchanging your own currency. The trip schedule will allow opportunities to visit bona fide exchange locations. Make sure you take advantage of them when you can, especially if you plan to go shopping. As a rule, you will not be able to exchange your personal currency for Romanian money using mission team funds.

Whenever possible, have your U.S. currency exchanged for local currency (LEI) at a bank, licensed exchange house, or your hotel for your safety. When exchanging money at a bank, be prepared to receive your currency in small denominations. Get and retain a receipt, which must be shown when paying hotel bills in local currency.

NEVER trade money on the street. Avoid people who approach you on the street to exchange money, as this is illegal black-marketing and entails a high risk of deception and possible arrest. Many of the disreputable exchange houses have ties to terrorist and drug organizations as a front for money laundering.

When shopping with Romanian currency, keep a calculator with you to help understand the dollar value of what you are buying. Your Team Leader will help you understand the current exchange rate.

EMERGENCIES

Crime prevention

Be aware that you face a potential risk of petty theft and pickpocketing. Men should avoid keeping wallets in their back pockets, and women should tuck purses under their arms to minimize the risk of pickpockets. You may want to carry valuables in a travel pouch around your neck instead. Carry only necessary amounts of cash, avoid the use of credit cards, and don't wear expensive-looking jewelry. Wear or carry only what you are prepared to lose.

Travel and/or eat in groups whenever possible. Avoid wandering, walking alone, dimly-lit remote areas, and closely milling crowds, especially at night.

Beware of busy streets and back alleys as you walk, especially in areas with high traffic congestion. Drivers in Romania generally do not yield the right-of-way to pedestrians, and many drivers pay no heed to traffic signals or marked pedestrian crosswalks.

Contact with the Team

The hotel probably will not have a reservation in your personal name. If someone must telephone you, be sure they have the information for the Team Leaders. All of the room reservations will be in the name of Chris Gilliam and/or James McPherson.

In a bona fide emergency, ask your loved ones to contact a Reaching Romania Team Leader in Romania. If this is unsuccessful, please ask them also to leave a message at the main office of Union Mission Ministries at (757) 427-1500.

Team Leaders

The Team Leaders are Chris Gilliam and/or James McPherson. They are also the Contingency Managers, as necessary, for emergencies.

Contingency Management

In the event that a member of the team is detained by Romanian authorities or another group, all team members should strictly adhere to the following procedures:

ONLY the Contingency Manager will communicate with authorities, the press, or any interested party in the United States. It is critical that there be only one voice for the team.

In the event of a contingency, only the Contingency Manager will remain in Romania to coordinate support / release efforts with the assistance of the U.S. Embassy. All other mission team members will evacuate to Budapest, Hungary, for safety.

The Contingency Manager's overall goal is to resolve the issue as quickly as possible and in such a manner it will not impact the ability or potential for ministry groups to operate in the region in the future.

SUPPORT & STAY INFORMED

Reaching Romania website: www.reachromania.com

The website features information about our organization, as well as an online giving page. Please note that reachingromania.com is a British charity's website. Please donate only through the link above or <https://donate.unionmissionministries.org/for/prorom>. You may choose to give one-time gifts or set up monthly donations, as you wish.

Reaching Romania email list: To be added to our email list of informative monthly updates, sign up [here](#).

Reaching Romania Prayer Team: To join our prayer team and receive text prayer requests, sign up [here](#).

Reaching Romania on Facebook: www.facebook.com/FeedingBodySoul

The Team Leaders or members may post occasional photos of their work during the mission trip. Follow us on Facebook to be sure you see these posts. The ministry does not currently post on any other social media platforms.

Thank you for your interest in Reaching Romania!