

Mission Posts and Country Facts
Inter-European Division
Second Quarter 2023

Romania

1. Romania has 1,075 churches and 245 companies. With 62,071 members, in a population of 19,182,000, that's one member for every 309 people in the country.
2. The Adventist message was proclaimed for the first time in the territory of Romania in 1869, when Michael Belina Czechowski, a former Polish Catholic priest, then an unofficial Adventist missionary to Europe, settled first in Transylvania and then in Pitești, Walachia, where he formed small groups of believers. His work in Transylvania was short and did not produce lasting results, but he remained in Pitești until 1875, conducting baptisms and strengthening the small company established there.
3. In 1904, J. F. Hinter (Ginter), was sent to Bucharest from Russia. He organized the first company in the city, with 16 members. Later, however, as a result of strong opposition from the official church (Romanian Orthodox), Pastor Ginter was expelled. His place was taken by Romanian pastors who could not be expelled by the authorities and who had a significant impact on the further development and spread of Adventism in Romania.
4. In Transylvania, the progress of the work reflected the ethnic diversity of the territory. The preaching of the Adventist message was done in German, Hungarian, and in Romanian.
5. Romania is a secular state and has no state religion, but a majority of the population identify themselves as Christians. As of the 2011 census, 81.0 percent identified as belonging to the Romanian Orthodox Church; 6.2 percent were Protestant, 4.3 Roman Catholic, and 0.8 percent Greek Catholic. 195,569 people belonged to other Christian denominations or had another religion, which included 64,337 Muslims and 3,519 Jewish. 39,660 people had no religion or are atheist.
6. Romania is a country in southeastern Europe and borders the Black Sea and five countries: Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova, Serbia, and Ukraine.
7. The name "Romania" originates from the local name for those coming from Rome.
8. Romania's capital city Bucharest is the biggest city in the country with about 2.4 million inhabitants living in the metropolitan area. It is the sixth-largest city in the European Union.
9. The official language is Romanian and almost 99 percent of the population can read and write.
10. The currency is the Romanian Leu, which equals 100 bani.
11. Romania's national anthem is "Deșteaptă-te, române!" (Wake up, Romanian!). It was written in 1848 but only adopted in 1990.
12. The country's national symbol is the golden eagle, and the national colors are blue, yellow, and red.
13. The parliament buildings in Bucharest are the largest in the world.
14. Hungarians are the largest minority group in Romania, and they mainly live in eastern Transylvania.
15. Soccer and tennis are the most popular sports in Romania.

16. Romanian is a Romance language, which is similar to French, Spanish, and Italian. The Romanian alphabet has 31 letters, including five letters only found in Romanian: ă, â, î, ț, and ș.
17. In 1976, in Montreal, Canada, Nadia Elena Comăneci, a 14-year-old Romanian gymnast, was the first in the world to get a perfect score — 10 — at the Olympics.
18. The oldest document written in the Romanian language is from 1521.
19. Timisoara is the first city in the world to be illuminated with electricity.
20. English and French are taught in most schools.
21. Romania is one the world's main producers of plums. Romania is also among the largest maize (corn) producers in the European Union.

Portugal

1. Portugal has 94 churches and 21 companies. With 10,274 members, in a population of 10,299,000, that's one member for every 1,002 people in the country.
2. Stephen N. Haskell (1833–1922) was the first Seventh-day Adventist minister to visit Portugal. Haskell traveled around the world during 1889 and 1890 in order to inquire about favorable conditions for the establishment of Adventist missions and he arrived in Portugal in July 1889. Haskell was impressed with the city of Lisbon, in particular the degree of religious liberty guaranteed in Portugal by the constitutional monarchy.
3. The first Seventh-day Adventist workers in Portugal arrived in Lisbon on September 26, 1904: Clarence Emerson Rentfro (27 years old), Mary Haskell Rentfro (30 years old), and their baby, Charles Allen Rentfro. Mary was a trained nurse, and it is estimated that during their time in Portugal she helped to deliver more than 1,000 babies.
4. In May 1906, Mrs. Lucy Portugal (1845–1927), an Anglican, accepted the Seventh-day Sabbath and became the first Portuguese Seventh-day Adventist believer. She was one of the first baptisms, in September 1906, when an ordained minister from Brazil arrived in Portugal.
5. According to the most recent 2011 Census, 81 percent of Portuguese are Roman Catholic. There are also small Protestant, Latter-day Saints, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Eastern Orthodox Church, Jehovah's Witnesses, Bahá'í, Buddhist, Jewish, and Spiritist communities. Around 15 percent declared themselves to be non-religious, or gave no answer about their religion.
6. The staple foods in Portugal include fish, vegetables, and fruits. One of the national dishes is *bacalhau* (dried cod), which is usually served with potatoes and green vegetables, and sometimes beans.
7. A small breakfast is eaten around 8 a.m., a large lunch at about 1 p.m., and dinner is served between 8 and 9 p.m.
8. The capital of Portugal is the city of Lisbon, located on the coast in the southern half of the country, with a population of around 2.7 million.
9. Lisbon was struck by a massive earthquake and subsequent fire on All Saints Day, November 1, 1755; 275,000 people were killed, and 85 percent of the buildings were destroyed.
10. Portuguese is spoken by over 236 million people worldwide. It is the eighth most spoken language in the world and is the official language in nine countries, including Portugal, Angola, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Principe, and Sao Tome.
11. The Bertrand Bookstore in Lisbon was opened in 1732, making it 283 years old and the oldest bookstore in the world.
12. The longest bridge in all of Europe is the six-lane Vasco da Gama bridge crossing the Tagus River to the north of Lisbon. It was opened in 1998 and is 10.7 miles (almost 18 km) long.
13. An underwater canyon off the Portuguese coastline creates some of the world's biggest waves. In 2011, Hawaiian surfer Garrett McNamara rode an 80-foot (24 m) wave off the coast of Nazaré in Portugal, creating a new world record.
14. The Portuguese flag was adopted in 1911. Green symbolizes hope in the future, while red represents bloodshed during the country's battles. The shield represents the nation's victories in battles with the Moors (Muslims from North Africa) in the Middle Ages.

15. Portugal is the largest producer of cork in the world: almost 100,000 tons of cork each year. This cork is then made into, among other things, bottle stoppers and thermal insulation for houses. The main importers of Portuguese cork are Germany, the U.K., and the U.S.
16. Portuguese weather is mainly hot, and it is famous for having the highest number of sunshine hours in Europe; some parts have nearly 300 sunny days a year.
17. Led by the Count of Oeiras (the future Marquis of Pombal), Portugal took the first steps towards abolishing slavery in 1761, more than half a century before the other colonial powers like Spain, France, and England, and a century before the United States.
18. In 1543, the Portuguese António Mota, Francisco Zeimoto, and António Peixoto arrived at the island of Tanegashima, and became the first Europeans to reach Japan.

Germany

1. Germany has 541 churches and 43 companies. With 34,283 members, in a population of 83,143,000, that is one member for every 2,428 people in the country.
2. The church in Germany opened the Bad Aibling Sanitarium in 1920 “offering a variety of water treatments, especially mud baths.” During World War II, it was used as a hospital, and after the war it was turned into a refugee camp until 1952.
3. A number of Sabbatarian groups existed in Germany before Seventh-day Adventists arrived in the country. In the second half of the nineteenth century a Baptist named Stangnowsky, in what was then East Prussia, led a group of people to keep the seventh-day Sabbath after he had become convinced that Saturday was the biblical Sabbath. Most of this group later joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
4. The first Seventh-day Adventist baptism in Germany took place on January 8, 1876, when James Erzberger, the first Adventist minister in Europe, baptized eight people at Solingen. Soon after, he organized the first Adventist church in Germany, with 25 members.
5. In the 2011 census, Christianity was the largest religion in Germany; 66.8 percent identified as Christian; 31 percent were Protestant, 31.2 percent were Roman Catholic, and 1.3 percent were Orthodox. Islam is the second-largest religion in the country. A study in 2018 estimated that 38 percent of the population are not members of any religious organization or denomination.
6. Germany is located in central Europe and borders nine countries — Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, and Switzerland,
7. Germany’s population is 83.02 million, which is the third largest in Europe. It has an area of 222,069 square miles (357,386 km²), making it the seventh-largest country in Europe.
8. The capital of Germany is Berlin, with a population of 3.645 million, and is in the northeast part of the country.
9. In 1949 (four years after the war had ended) Germany was divided into the Federal Republic of Germany, in the west, and the Communist German Democratic Republic, in the east. East Germany was cut off from the rest of Europe, symbolized by the wall, put up in 1961, that ran through the city of Berlin, dividing the city between East and West. After nearly 30 years, the political climate had changed, and East Germany announced the opening of its borders on 9 November 1989. The demolition of the Wall officially began on 13 June 1990; this paved the way for German reunification, which formally took place on 3 October 1990.
10. German has a unique letter that is not used in any other language, the ß, called “Eszett” which is pronounced like a double “s.”
11. German has a lot of words that don’t exist in other languages. For example, “fremdschämen” means the embarrassment felt on someone else’s behalf, and “fernweh” translates to the feeling of longing for an adventure
12. The German language shares 60 percent of its vocabulary with English.
13. Sixty-five percent of the highways in Germany have no speed limit and are called the Autobahn.
14. Germany has 6,200 museums, 820 theaters, 130 professional orchestras, and 8,800 libraries.

15. When visiting Berlin, John F. Kennedy famously said, “Ich bin ein Berliner”; he thought he was saying “I am a Berliner,” but it actually means “I am a jelly donut.”
16. The tradition of having a Christmas tree began in Germany.
17. The world’s narrowest street is located in the German city of Reutlingen; at its narrowest point it is only one foot (31 cm) wide.
18. Germans are famous in all forms of art, but particularly classical music. Germany’s famous composers include Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Schumann, and Wagner.
19. It is estimated that there are 25,000 castles in Germany. Probably the most famous castle in Germany, Wartburg Castle in Eisenach, is where Martin Luther produced the first-ever translation of the New Testament in German. The most popular castle with tourists is Neuschwanstein Castle in the Bavarian Alps. The fantastic “fairy-tale castle” (the model for Sleeping Beauty’s castle at Disneyland) was built on top of a hill by the eccentric Bavarian king, Ludwig II, also known as the “Mad King.” A stretch of 37 miles (60 km) in the Middle Rhine Valley contains 40 well-preserved castles in a row.
20. Sauerkraut, sausages, and brezeln (pretzels) are the most famous German foods.
21. The highest mountain in Germany is the “Zugspitze” (“windy peak”) at 9,721 feet (2,963 meters).

Italy

1. Italy has 107 churches and 20 companies. With 9,334 members, in a population of 59,596,000, that is one member for every 6,385 people in the country.
2. Italy was the first country in Europe in which SDA doctrines were preached. Michael Belina Czechowski, a former Polish priest, having failed to persuade the Seventh-day Adventists to send him to Europe, convinced another denomination to sponsor him, and he arrived in Italy in 1864.
3. Catherine Revel and J. D. Geymet were the first in Italy to accept the Sabbath.
4. The Istituto Avventista Villa Aurora Scuola Media e Liceo Scientifico Seminario di Teologia, popularly known as Villa Aurora, is a coeducational boarding school on the junior college level, located in a large villa dating from the sixteenth century, on the outskirts of Florence.
5. In 2017, 74.4 percent of Italians identified as Roman Catholic Christians. Italy is the largest Catholic nation in Europe and has the world's fifth-largest Catholic population. Minority Christian faiths in Italy included around 1.5 million Orthodox Christians, half a million Pentecostals and Evangelicals, 251,192 Jehovah's Witnesses, 30,000 Waldensians, 25,000 Seventh-day Adventists, 26,925 Latter-day Saints, 20,000 Baptists, 7,000 Lutherans, and 4,000 Methodists (affiliated with the Waldensian Church).
6. Italy's capital, Rome, was founded in 753 BC. The Roman Empire began in 27 BC and ruled Europe and parts of North Africa until 395 AD. After the fall of the Empire, Italy divided into separate states until 1861, when it was unified into the Kingdom of Italy.
7. The Italian wolf is Italy's national animal. According to legend, Romulus and Remus—who founded Rome ("The Eternal City") in 753 BC — were raised by a she-wolf.
8. Italy borders four countries: Austria, France, Slovenia, and Switzerland. In addition, it surrounds two of the world's smallest countries — San Marino in Northern Italy, the oldest republic in the world, and Vatican City in Rome, the smallest country in the world.
9. Italy is easy to recognize on a world map, as the country is shaped like a high-heeled boot.
10. Italy's flag is called "Il Tricolore." Green represents hope, white stands for faith, and red is the color of charity. Tricolore Day in Italy is January 7, and it is celebrated on Reggio Emilia, at the very spot where the flag was first adopted in 1797.
11. Toss a coin into the Trevi fountain and you will return to Rome—that's the legend. Tourists toss around €3,000 a day into the fountain. This adds up to about €1,000,000 every year, which is all donated to charity.
12. Mont Blanc, called Monte Bianco in Italy, is Italy's highest peak, as well as the highest mountain in the Alps. Shared by France, it rises 15,774 feet (808 m).
13. An Italian named Santorio Santori invented the thermometer in 1612. It was the first instrument to show an exact temperature on a calibrated scale.
14. The first batteries were invented in Italy in 1800 by Alessandro Volta — the man after whom "volts" are named.
15. Italians also invented eyeglasses in the 13th century, used mainly by monks. Ancient Romans used magnifying glasses, but the Italian eyeglasses were the first to be worn.

16. Pizza is mentioned in historical sources as early as 10 AD, but modern pizza began to be made in Naples in the 1700s. Pasta dates back to 4 BC in Italy, and there are pre-Roman wall paintings that show what looks like early pasta-making equipment.
17. The Italian explorers Christopher Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci discovered the Americas, while Marco Polo explored the East.
18. In the south of Italy, you will find Italy's three active volcanoes: Vesuvius near Naples, Etna on Sicily, and Stromboli off the Coast of Italy.
19. Venice, or Venezia in Italian, in Northern Italian, is often referred to as "Lagoon City" or "The City of Masks." The city is built on 120 islands and is famous for its canals, bridges, and gondolas, as well as its colorful carnival, which occurs every year just before Lent.
20. Italian is a Romance language whose roots are in the Latin language; it shares 89 percent of its vocabulary with French, and 82 percent with Spanish.

Spain

1. Spain has 109 churches and 50 companies. With 17,383 members, in a population of 47,506,000, that's one member for every 2,733 people in the country.
2. Frank Bond and his brother, Walter, from California, volunteered to pioneer the church's work in Spain, and in the summer of 1903 settled in Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia. They knew a little Spanish but soon discovered that the people there spoke Catalan. Undeterred, they went to work. In October, they moved to the nearby town of Sabadell, where they opened a school. In June 1904, the first three people were baptized.
3. In the 1960s, Angel Codejón, president of the Spanish church, began work in the area of religious liberty. As a result, the church began to receive official permission for all churches to function and hold services. With the new Spanish constitution, the church was given total liberty in October 1978. Young men no longer had to fear being imprisoned for being faithful to their religion while in the army.
4. Sagunto Adventist College (Centro Universitario Adventista de Sagunto) was established in 1965 in the Spanish province of Valencia, on the east coast of the country. Sagunto offers degrees in theology, as well as Spanish-language courses, a professional music center, and an art academy.
5. A 2020 study by the Spanish Centre for Sociological Research showed that about 61 percent of Spaniards identify as Catholics, 3 percent other faiths, and about 35 percent identify with no religion. Spain has generally been unwelcoming of Protestantism, and only 1 percent of Spaniards identify as Protestant: most of those come from an immigrant background.
6. Spain is formally known as the Kingdom of Spain and is a Parliamentary monarchy.
7. Madrid is the capital of Spain and is located in the center of the country. Its metropolitan area has a population of about 6.7 million.
8. Spain occupies most of the Iberian Peninsula, stretching south from the Pyrenees mountains to the Strait of Gibraltar, which separates Spain from Africa. It has an area of 195,363 square miles (505,988 km²).
9. Spain's official languages are Castilian Spanish, Basque, Catalan, and Galician.
10. With over 570 million people speaking Spanish, the language is second only to Mandarin Chinese. Spain, most Latin American countries, and Equatorial Guinea have Spanish as one of their official languages. A total of 21 nations speak Spanish daily.
11. The Phoenicians, who came in the eighth century BC, called the peninsula "Span," or "the hidden land."
12. Many Spaniards' ethnic background is a mixture of the early inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula, the Celts, and later conquerors from Europe and Africa. Recent immigrants from North Africa and Latin America have added to the mix.
13. Setting sail from Seville in 1519, an expedition to find a route to East Asia through the Americas and across the Pacific was led by Ferdinand Magellan. Although Magellan was Portuguese, it was Spanish navigator Juan Sebastian Elcano who finished the job in 1522.
14. The Spanish national anthem, "Marcha Real" (Royal March), was written in 1761 and is one of the world's oldest national anthems. Although it originally had lyrics, they are not used any longer, making it one of the few national anthems that isn't sung.

15. There are other claimants, but some say that *Don Quixote*, written in 1605, was the world's first "modern" novel. Written by the Spanish author Miguel de Cervantes, it tells the story of a man who has read so many tales of knights, romance, and chivalry that he loses (or pretends to have lost) his mind and becomes a knight-errant in order to revive chivalry and serve his nation. It is one of the most translated books in the world.
16. El Restaurante Botín, in Madrid, opened in 1725, and is the oldest restaurant in the world.
17. In Spain, the life expectancy is on average 82 years (79 for men, 85 for women).
18. Instead of a tooth fairy, the Spanish have a tooth mouse, called Ratoncito Pérez (Pérez the Little Mouse). Although he first appeared in oral tradition folktales, author Luis Coloma turned him into a tooth dealer in 1894 in a story written for the eight-year-old King Alfonso XIII.
19. Around 44 percent of the world's olive oil is produced by Spain
20. Construction began in 1882 on Antoni Gaudí's famous cathedral, the Sagrada Familia (Sacred Family) in Barcelona and has been under construction for more than 130 years. It is expected to be completed in 2026, and is probably the world's most visited construction site, attracting 2.8 million visitors every year.
21. Doñana National Park, where the Guadalquivir River flows into the Atlantic, is one of Spain's protected areas. It is a region of marshes, streams, and sand dunes and its diversity of wildlife is unique in Europe, including the European badger, Egyptian mongoose, and endangered species such as the Spanish imperial eagle and the Iberian lynx.

Games

Portugal

Barra do Lenço

The winning number of points is decided in advance.

Two teams stand on either side of a room or an area of a playground, with a single player in the middle holding a handkerchief. Each player on each team is given a secret number, so there will be a number — 1, 2, 3, etc. — on each team. When that number is called, the player with that number from each team runs to the middle and tries to grab the handkerchief before the other team's player gets there. The team that gets the handkerchief gets a point, and then a new number is called.

To make it even more fun, the person in the middle can decide how the player must run (backward, hopping on one foot, like scissors, with their eyes closed, etc.).

The team to reach the chosen number of points first is the winner.

Recipes

Italy

Tri Color Pasta Salad

Servings: 4

Ingredients

- 12 oz (350 g) of farfalle (bow tie) pasta
- 1 lb (500 g) of fresh ripe cherry tomatoes
- 6 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- 10–12 leaves of fresh basil
- fine salt
- coarse salt

Directions:

Be sure to get an adult to help you with cutting things and boiling the pasta

Dressing:

1. Prepare the dressing at least 20 minutes ahead of time. Wash and dry the tomatoes, and then cut them in half. The larger ones can be cut into four pieces, but don't make the pieces too small. Season the tomatoes with plenty of extra virgin olive oil (about 3 tablespoons according to your taste) and a little fine salt.
2. Wash and dry the fresh basil leaves. Then tear them coarsely with your hands. Add the basil to the seasoned tomatoes. Stir and set aside. Let the dressing sit for about 20 minutes. Stir occasionally with a spoon. This way the tomatoes will bring out their juices and the basil will release its fresh scent.

Pasta:

3. Bring a pot of water to a boil and add the coarse salt. Remember that you need 4 cups (1 liter) of water with 3/4 tablespoon (10 g) of coarse salt per 3.50 oz (100 g) of dry pasta. Pour in the pasta and cook according to the instructions on the package. Farfalle (or bow tie) pasta usually has a 12-minute cooking time when cooked al dente.
4. Drain the pasta and place in a large salad bowl. Season with 2 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil, mix well and let cool. If you are in a hurry and cannot wait to let it cool, after draining it, run it under cold water to stop the cooking.
5. When the pasta has cooled, add the Italian dressing of red cherry tomatoes and fresh basil leaves.

Songs

Romania

Pacea Lui (I've Got Peace Like a River)

English

I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul.
I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul.

I've got love like an ocean, I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean in my soul.
I've got love like an ocean, I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean in my soul.

I've got joy like a fountain, I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain in my soul.
I've got joy like a fountain, I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain in my soul.

Romanian

Pacea Lui ca un fluviu, Pacea Lui ca un fluviu,
Pacea Lui azi îmi umple inima.
Pacea Lui ca un fluviu, Pacea Lui ca un fluviu,
Pacea Lui azi îmi umple inima.

Un ocean de iubire, Un ocean de iubire,
Un ocean azi îmi este inima.
Un ocean de iubire, Un ocean de iubire,
Un ocean azi îmi este inima.

Bucurii fără margini Bucurii fără margini
Bucurii îmi inundă inima.
Bucurii fără margini Bucurii fără margini
Bucurii îmi inundă inima.

Phonetic Pronunciation

PAH-chay loo-EE cah oon FLOO-vee-oh
PAH-chay loo-EE cah oon FLOO-vee-oh
PAH-chay loo-EE ah ZEE-mee oom-PLAY EE-nee-mah

Oon oh-CHAN day you-BEE-ray
Oon oh-CHAN day you-BEE-ray

Oon oh-CHAN ah ZEE-mee EST-ay EE-nee-mah

Boo-coo-REE FAH-rah MAR-ghee-nee

Boo-coo-REE FAH-rah MAR-ghee-nee

Boo-coo-REE EE-mee in-OON-dah EE-nee-mah

Listen to the Romanian pronunciation: bit.ly/peace-like-river-romanian.