



## SHOPPING IN ROMANIA





**Who can you turn to if you have a problem with a product you bought in another European country?**

**Who can inform you of your rights and what you are entitled to as an European consumer?**

**If you have a complaint against a company or you are in a dispute with a trader, who can assist you and help solve your case?**

ECC Romania is here to help with such questions and any other problems you may have concerning your activities as a consumer in Europe. The aim being that you should feel as confident when shopping in another country as you do at home.

The ECC Romania is co-financed by the European Commission and the Romanian Government through the National Authority for Consumers' Protection. The ECC Romania is logistically supported by the Romanian Association for Consumer Protection (APC Romania).

Have a nice stay in Romania!

ECC Romania

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## GENERAL INFORMATION      PRICING

Romania's currency is Leu (plural "Lei") (pronunciation: *lay*).

**Banknote denominations:** 1, 5, 10, 50, 100 and 500 lei

**Coins:** 1, 5, 10 and 50 bani pieces. (pronunciation: *bahnee*)  
1leu = 100 bani

**ATM (*Bancomat*)**

ATM machines are available at main banks and at airports and shopping centres. Do not expect to find ATMs in remote areas or villages.



Each vendor is compelled to indicate the price for the products sold in his shop, in a clearly, legible and easy to identify manner.

The price can be indicated on a tag near the product or in a catalog/list for more products.

The price must be indicated in lei (the national Romanian currency) and must include the VAT. The vendor can also indicate the price in a foreign currency, along the price in lei, in a clear and easy to understand manner.

For pre-packaged products the vendor must indicate the selling price and the unit price, ensuring you are able to compare similar products, but sold in different quantities.

For products sold in bulk, like fresh fruits or vegetables, the vendor must indicate only the unit price. In this case the selling price is determined after the product is weighted or measured. The vendor is obliged to issue receipts for most of products.



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## PAYMENTS

### **Credit cards**

Major credit cards including American Express, Mastercard and Visa are accepted in large hotels, car rental companies and stores in the main cities. However, credit cards are unlikely to prove useful in small towns or away from tourist areas.

### **Travelers' Checks**

Preferably in US dollars or Euros, Travelers' Checks can be cashed in large banks, some hotels and selected exchange offices but most of them charge considerable commissions.

Do not count on cashing such checks outside Bucharest and a few other major cities. For travel around the country it is a good idea to carry cash. Small stores and restaurants might accept EUR but the exchange rate offered will not be the best. Street handicraft vendors prefer Romanian currency.

### **Withdrawal of cash**

You can withdraw cash from your account with you Debit or Credit card from every ATM that shows you card symbol.

## CURRENCY EXCHANGE

You can find many offices who offer you currency exchange services, usually for currencies which are more commonly used like Euro, US Dollars or UK Pounds. Other currencies can be exchanged in banks.

Due to some problems in the later years, special rules have been adopted for currency exchange offices. The most important rules are as follows:

- the exchange rates must be indicated outside the exchange office and inside;
- the currency exchange rates must be indicated on separate boards than the exchange rates for traveler's cheques or vouchers;
- if the office applies any taxes, these must be indicated distinctly, in red;
- the font size for exchange rates is clearly set out in the regulation and must be respected;
- before the exchange is made, the trader must inform you both verbally and in written on the currency exchange rates, through a transaction acceptance form signed by both parties. The form must contain information on: trader's name and address, date, consumer's name, serial number of consumer's identity card or passport, the exchanged amount, the amount the consumer must receive, the taxes, the signatures of the consumer and the trader. The form must be made both in Romanian and in English.



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## VAT

The basic VAT rate in Romania is 19%. It is called TVA Taxa pe Valoare Adaugata and it is charged on most Romanian goods and services in our country.

A lower rate, 9%, applies to books, medicines, and certain other goods and services.

The prices in shops are always including this tax, except are the shops that are selling engross.

If you are a citizen of a non EU member state you can ask for a refund of this tax in certain stores.

## OPENING HOURS

Widespread opening hours:

**Hypermarkets'** general opening hours are:  
Mon-Sat: 09:00 - 20:00  
Sun: 09:00 - 18:00

**Shops'** general opening hours are:  
Mon-Fri: 09:00 - 19:00  
Sat: 09:00 - 16:00 (large shops)  
09:00 - 12:00 (small shops)  
Sun: closed

**Banks'** general opening hours are:  
Mon-Fri: 09:00 - 17:00  
Sat-Sun: closed

**Post offices'** opening hours are:  
Mon-Fri: 07:30 - 18:00  
Sat: 08:00 - 12:00  
Sun: closed

You can still find some nonstop shops which are selling some food and beverages and also most petrol stations in big cities are opened nonstop. You can find there newspapers, food, beverages but they can be in general more expensive.



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## SHOPPING IN THE SUPERMARKETS

The **advantage** of supermarkets comes from the fact you can find lots of product categories, going from food to electronics or clothing, meaning you will not have to spend your time going from one shop to another to buy what you need. Also, some of the prices can be lower.

On the other hand there are also **disadvantages**, which can be eliminated if you are careful. One of these disadvantages is that sometimes, due to the high number of products existing in supermarkets, the employees forget to change the tag prices, so there are situations when you may buy a product at another price than it was showed on the price tag. To avoid this, if you are unsure of a price, you can use the so called electronic price lectors available in some supermarkets or you can ask the counter employees to tell you if price is right or not.

Another disadvantage comes from the fact that, the supermarkets being self-service shops, many times you cannot find an

employee to help you with information on a product. You can eliminate this disadvantage, by gathering information prior to your purchase, from internet or different test magazines.

In many of the supermarkets you must weigh yourself the fruits and vegetables on special scales. You must put your product on the scale, press the button with the picture or number corresponding to the product you choose and then stick the price tag on the bag.

Usually, you must bag the groceries by yourself. Plastic bags are available for free at most counters. Starting January 2009, all consumers will have to pay a fee of at least 0.05 € for plastic bag, for ecological reasons.





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## OTHER TYPES OF SHOPS

### Pharmacies

Pharmacies sell mainly medicines. Some drugs do not require a prescription, such as light analgesics, whereas others do. A list of the medicines sold without prescription is available on the site of the National Medicines Agency [www.anm.ro](http://www.anm.ro).

Some pharmacies, especially the larger ones, sell also cosmetic products and also plant products like tea.

For plant health and cosmetic products, such as teas, plant extracts and ointments, food supplements etc., there are specialized shops, generically designated by the term “plafar”. These products are not considered medicines and are sold without a prescription.

### Markets

Markets can be found in many places from big cities to some of the villages. Usually the vendors here are small producers, but there can also be found traders which buy from the small producers and resell to consumers.

The products sold in markets range from fruits, vegetables and flowers to dairy-produce, fish and meat. Please note that the products from animal origins must be verified by the sanitary-veterinary authorities prior to the moment of commercialization.





## SIZES

Sizes for gloves, socks, and stockings are the same in Europe. Sock sizes correspond to the length of your foot.

### Men's Sizes - Jackets, Suits

METRIC	42	44	46	48	50	52
US/UK	32	34	36	38	40	42

### Shirts - Neck Size

METRIC	36	37	38	39	41	43
US/UK	14	14.5	15	15.5	16	17

Clothing sometimes uses approximate size measures, such as XS (Extra Small), S (Small), M (Medium), L (Large), and XL (Extra Large). These letters are especially common on T-shirts. Each letter may represent a range of two or three numbered sizes. But it is best to try on the clothing for fit, because there is little consistency among manufacturers.

### Ladies' Shoes

METRIC	36	37	38	39	40	41
US/UK	5	6	7	8	9	10

So it is best to try it but also rely on the fact that some stores are having a period of time in which you can return the product with the price tag still present on the product.

### Men's Shoes

METRIC	39	40	41	42	43	44
US/UK	6.5	7.5	8.5	9	10	11

### Children's Clothing/Children's Sizes - Ages

#### Ladies' Sizes - Dresses, Suits

METRIC	38	40	42	44	46	48
US/UK	10	12	14	16	18	20

#### 1-6

METRIC	80	92	98	104	110	116
US/UK	1	2	3	4	5	6





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## PRICE REDUCTIONS

Any price reduction must be indicated in a clearly, readable and non-equivocal manner for each product or group of identical products:

- by mentioning the new price next to the old price, which will be barred, or
- by mentioning “new price”, “old price” next to the corresponding values, or
- by mentioning the reduction percent and the new price next to the old price, which will be barred.

Some rules must be obeyed when announcing a price reduction. First, the reduction is made by rapport to a reference price. The reference price must have been applied for at least a month before the reduction. Second, for some situations the prices reductions cannot be made outside the legal periods (the sales).





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## SALES

There are two periods for sales. The periods are established by the trader inside the following time limits:

- 15 January 15 April for fall-winter goods
- 1 August 31 October for spring-summer goods.

The sales are restricted to non food seasonal products, like clothing, shoes etc.

It is advisable to check the quality of products, because sometimes on sales, the goods put on market are of a lower quality.

## PRODUCT EXCHANGE

If a product is not faulty, the seller has no legal obligation to exchange it. Some sellers allow the consumers to exchange a product, even if it is not faulty, in a limited period of time from the delivery (24-48h). In this case it is advisable to ask for a written confirmation of the seller's agreement to exchange the product, e.g. on the receipt, a flyer.





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## YOUR RIGHTS

### Legal warranty

If the good you bought presents a lack of conformity (it doesn't function properly, it hasn't the characteristics you asked for or you expected, seeing the advertising made for that good), then you have the right to have that good brought to conformity.

This is done by the seller, in a first step, either by repairing or by replacing the good affected by the lack of conformity. The reparatory measure should be free of charge and will be taken in a reasonable time period, established by common agreement. The existence of the lack of conformity must be announced to the seller no later than two months from the moment it was observed.

If you do not benefited from the repair or the replacement, or the reparatory measure was not taken in a reasonable time period or it caused you a significant inconvenient, then you can ask for the reimbursement

of the price you paid or for the reduction of that price.

### Time limit

The legal warranty applies for any good purchased from a Romanian trader, for a period of two years starting the delivery moment.





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## YOUR RIGHTS

### **Burden of proof**

Any lack of conformity which becomes apparent in the first six months from the delivery, it is presumed to have existed at the moment of delivery. In this case you do not have to prove the good have been defective at the moment of delivery.

If the lack of conformity becomes apparent after this six months period, you must prove it has existed at the moment of delivery.

### **Commercial guarantee**

Besides and not excluding the legal warranty, the seller or the producer can offer you a so called "commercial guarantee".

The commercial guarantee must state that the consumer has legal rights under applicable national legislation governing the sale of consumer goods and make clear that those rights are not affected by the guarantee.

The commercial guarantee must be set out in plain intelligible language and must contain at least the product identification elements, the guarantee period, the trader's obligations maintenance, repair, replacement the name and address of the trader and the service unit.

On request by the consumer, the guarantee shall be made available in writing or in another durable medium available and accessible to him.





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## CUSTOMS DUTY

Purchases made for personal use during a trip within the EU do not require any custom declaration when arriving in Romania.

No additional taxes will be charged on goods bought with taxes included in other EU countries, provided these goods are for your personal use.

For certain types of goods, if your purchases are equivalent or less than the quantities shown below, in general, they will be regarded as goods for personal use.

If you exceed these quantities, you may have to prove the goods are for personal use; otherwise you will have to pay the custom duties.

### **Tobacco:**

Cigarettes	800 pieces
Cigarillos	400 pieces
Cigars	200 pieces
Tobacco	1 kg

### **Alcohol:**

Spirits	10 l
Intermediate products	20 l
Wine	90 l
Beer	110 l





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## ADDRESSES

If you need free of charge assistance to solve your cross border dispute you can contact:

### **European Consumer Centre Romania ECC Romania**

Bvdul. N. Balcescu 32-34, Floor 4, 16,  
Sector 1  
Bucharest  
Tel. 021 3157149  
Fax. 021 3110242  
Email: [office@eccromania.ro](mailto:office@eccromania.ro)  
Web: [www.eccromania.ro](http://www.eccromania.ro)

We are opened from Monday to Friday  
from 9 am to 5 pm.

When you return you can go to your local  
ECC. Here are the contact data for some of  
the ECC:

### **AUSTRIA EUROPÄISCHES VERBRAUCHERZENTRUM**

Mariahilfer Straße 81  
1060 Wien  
+ 43/1 588 77 0

### **BELGIUM EUROPEES CENTRUM VOOR DE CONSUMENT**

Hollandstraat 13 / rue de Hollande 13  
1060 Brussel/Bruxelles  
+32/2 542 33 46 / +32/2 542 33 89

### **BULGARIA EUROPEAN CONSUMER CENTRE BULGARIA**

Bacho Kiro street No14 Bg-1000 Sofia  
+359/ 298 676 72

### **CYPRUS Ευρωπαϊκό Κέντρο Καταναλωτή Κύπρου**

6, Andreas Araouzos  
1421 Nicosia  
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### **CZECH REPUBLIC EVROPSKÉ SPOTŘEBITELSKÉ CENTRUM**

Na Františku 32  
110 15 Prague 1  
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[www.eccromania.ro](http://www.eccromania.ro)

