



ECONOMIC AND TRADE MISSION OF THE FRANCOPHONIE

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SUMMARY

03 CONTEXT

04 ECONOMIC AND TRADE MISSION IN ROMANIA

05 FRENCH-SPEAKING ECONOMIC AREA

06 SECTORS OF ACTIVITY

08 INDICATIVE PROGRAMME

09 CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

09 SCHEDULE

10 PARTNERS

11 CONTACTS

CONTEXT

The International Organisation of la Francophonie (OIF) is organising an economic and trade mission in Central and Eastern Europe, in Bucharest, Romania from 27 to 29 March 2024. This mission is part of the Economic Strategy for La Francophonie 2020-2025, which aims to increase trade and investment between its 88 member states and governments.

Over two and a half days, the mission will coordinate a high-level economic forum alongside B2B networking sessions, including support from experts, as well as visits to company sites and opportunities for networking and informal discussions.

The aim is to enable participants from Africa, Asia, North America, the Caribbean, Europe and the Indian Ocean to identify and consolidate trade and investment opportunities thanks to the meetings that will be prepared and held throughout the missions.

Registration is encouraged for as many companies as possible from the 88 member states and governments of La Francophonie. Over a hundred applicants will be selected for the mission.

Particular emphasis will be placed on companies involved in the following sectors:

- The agri-food sector;
- The digital sector, particularly cybersecurity and the video games industry;
- Green energy;
- The medical industry.

Romania has been a member of the European Union (EU) since 2007 and offers a stable, promising environment for French-speaking businesses. The country has a number of definite economic advantages:

- A central geopolitical position, ie. access to the Black Sea, proximity to the Middle East and EU member states at all external borders;
- A sizeable domestic market offering real growth opportunities;
- A historically strong industrial and manufacturing sector.

Romania is also characterised by the growth of its tertiary sector, which is developing around new technologies and information technologies: services currently account for 60% of GDP and employ 50% of the country's workforce.

The agricultural sector also offers great potential in Romania, thanks in particular to the availability of fertile land, only a third of which is currently cultivated.

In order to promote economic growth, the country is also stepping up the implementation of specific measures to attract foreign investment in its country through tax incentives. With this in mind, Romania is focusing a great deal on the development of business and investment relationships between its companies and their French-speaking peers.

We hope that this mission will offer opportunities for everyone involved to make meaningful connections and develop their business!

ECONOMIC AND TRADE MISSION IN ROMANIA

The International Organisation of la Francophonie (OIF) is organising an **economic and trade mission** to Central and Eastern Europe in cooperation with the Romanian authorities and their technical partners in Bucharest, Romania from 27 to 29 March 2024.

Her Excellency Louise MUSHIKIWABO, Secretary General of La Francophonie, will be leading a delegation of around 100 companies and economic players from some 30 French-speaking countries and governments in Africa, Asia, North America, the Caribbean, Europe and the Indian Ocean, operating in the following sectors in particular:

- The agri-food sector
- The digital sector, cybersecurity, the video games industry
- Green energy
- The medical industry



THE FRENCH-SPEAKING ECONOMIC AREA REPRESENTS:

- 88 states and governments on 5 continents
- 17.5% of the world population
- 16.5% of the world gross national product
- 20% of world trade in goods
- 14% of the world's mining and energy resources
- French is the 3rd major business language and the 4th language used on the Internet

SECTORS OF ACTIVITY

THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR



Romania has a huge agricultural potential, particularly in view of its geography. Agricultural production currently accounts for 4.5% of gross domestic product (GDP), and the food, drinks and tobacco industries represent around 4% of the GDP.

In 2022, Romania ranked first among EU Member States for sunflower production, second for grain maize production and fourth for wheat production under difficult weather conditions. Romania ranks fifth in the EU in terms of vine cultivation and has a highly developed wine industry.

The agricultural sector offers a high growth potential thanks in particular to the availability of arable land. Romanian agriculture centres mainly on the production of cereals, oilseeds, vegetables, fruit and livestock. It represents one of the most important branches of the country's economy. Agriculture plays an essential role in Romania, taking into account the size of the rural population and the number of jobs in this sector.

THE DIGITAL SECTOR – CYBERSECURITY – THE VIDEO GAMES INDUSTRY



The digital industry is one of the drivers of the wRomanian economy. Romania is the third largest digital economy and the second largest market in Central and Eastern Europe, worth €9 billion in 2022.

The sector is also one of the main contributors to the growth of the national economy: 1.3% of Romania's 4.8% GDP growth was accounted for by the digital industry in 2022.

The software development and services sector is the most entrepreneurial in Romania, thanks to the presence of a large number of specialists in information and communication technology, representing the third largest contingent in Central and Eastern Europe.

Romania has received €6 billion in European funding for the digital transformation of its economy and support for the public and private sectors through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP). Romania is implementing a national Cloud project, representing an investment of €500m.

More specifically, the video games industry has become a major source of innovation and development in the digital sector and continues to grow steadily, recording turnover of €332m in 2022.

In addition, Romania will be hosting the European Cybersecurity Competence Centre this year. The Centre aims to support innovation in cybersecurity and industrial policy, and to develop and coordinate EU cybersecurity projects.

GREEN ENERGY



Romania enjoys a high level of energy independence, and has the potential to become the largest gas producer in the EU, which will guarantee regional energy security.

The country also has great potential in terms of renewable energies, benefiting from an ideal amount of sunshine and geographical diversity enabling it to exploit hydroelectricity, biomass, solar energy, wind power and geothermal energy.

The energy mix is diversified in Romania, with renewable energy production accounting for a significant share (36.8% in 2022), largely driven by hydroelectric generation (22.2% in 2022). The country is in the process of phasing out coal (17% of the energy mix in 2022), gradually replacing it with natural gas and green energies.

In order to fulfil the commitments made in its 2020 National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP), the Romanian government plans to invest €22.6 billion in energy between 2021 and 2030, in particular to increase its green energy capacity (+35% between 2020 and 2030), by doubling its wind power capacity and quadrupling its solar capacity.

Electricity production from renewable energy resources totalled 23 billion kWh, or 41% of total electricity production, in 2022.

In the first seven months of 2023, there has been an increase in the contribution of green energy to overall electricity generation, supported by growth of more than 45% in hydroelectric power generation, which has led to an increase in the share of renewable energy in overall electricity production to 53%.

THE MEDICAL INDUSTRY



The pharmaceutical industry has great potential for development, thanks to the high demand for access to healthcare among the Romanian population. Per capita healthcare expenditure is expected to grow by more than 40% between now and 2028.

Access to healthcare is being driven by the development of hospital infrastructure, with almost €2 billion from the National Recovery and Resilience Plan being dedicated to the construction of new buildings and the acquisition of medical equipment.

The Recovery Plan is also supporting the digital transformation of the sector by investing €400m in the IT infrastructure of public health establishments, telemedicine solutions and mobile patient monitoring systems.

The private healthcare sector is also booming in Romania, with record levels of spending of €3.4 billion in 2021. This year, 128 companies have been active in this sector, employing over 10,000 people in total.



INDICATIVE PROGRAMME

Wednesday 27th March

- **Official opening** by the President of Romania and the Secretary General of la Francophonie
- **Main conference** in the presence of the Romanian Prime Minister and the Administrator of the OIF
- **1st round of business meetings** between companies (B2B)
- Networking **cocktail reception**

Thursday 28th March

- **“Investing in Romania”** session
- Simultaneous **thematic workshops**
- **2nd round of business meetings** between companies (B2B)
- Networking **cocktail reception**

Friday 29th March

- **Targeted visits** to local companies
- **End of the mission** and departure of international participants

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION



PARTICIPANTS

La Francophonie's economic and trade mission is open to any business or organisation involved in supporting the international development of businesses from an OIF member, associate member or observer country operating in one of the following economic sectors : agri-food, digital (cybersecurity, video games industry), green energy and the medical industry.

BUSINESSES

Entrepreneurs, investors,
business service providers.

ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS

National trade and investment promotion
agencies, chambers of commerce
and industry, employers' organisations,
French speaking economic networks,
professional groups, bankers.

Applications from international businesses must be submitted before 22nd December 2023 on the platform provided for the mission: <https://missions-economiques.roumanie.francophonie.org>. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

The OIF will select participants with the support of independent experts, taking into account the quality of the applications as well as geographical representation and gender equality criteria.



EXPENSES

The OIF and the Romanian authorities will cover the following expenses:

- Conference services, site visits and local transport;
- International transport for a defined number of companies from Least Developed Countries (LDC), for one person per company.
- Accommodation for all international participants, for one person per company or institution.

International participants are responsible for their own visa costs.



SCHEDULE

NOVEMBER 2023	Submission of applications by businesses
DECEMBER 2023	Selection of international participants
JANUARY 2024	Submission of visa applications for Romania
FEBRUARY 2024	1 st on-line B2B session on the platform
MARCH 2024	2 nd on-line B2B session on the platform
27-29 MARCH 2024	Deployment of the economic mission in Bucharest

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The International Organisation of the Francophonie (OIF) is an institution based on the sharing of the French language and common values. It brings together 88 States and governments.

The report on the French language in the world, published in 2022, fixed the number of French speakers worldwide at over 321 million. Operating on five continents, OIF engages in initiatives, policies and cooperation in the following priority areas: the French language and cultural and linguistic diversity; peace, democracy and human rights; education and training; sustainable development and solidarity. In all of its actions, OIF pays special attention to young people and to women, as well as to access to information and communication technologies.

The Secretary General leads the political action of the Francophonie, of which she is the spokesperson and official representative at an international level. Louise Mushikiwabo was appointed to this position at the 17th Summit of the Francophonie, in October 2018, in Erevan (Armenia). Mrs Mushikiwabo took up her functions in January 2019.

54 MEMBER STATES AND GOVERNMENTS

Albania • Principality of Andorra • Armenia • Belgium • Benin • Bulgaria • Burkina Faso • Burundi • Cap Verde • Cambodia • Cameroon • Canada • Canada-New-Brunswick • Canada-Québec • Central African Republic • Comoros • Congo • Democratic Republic of Congo • Ivory Coast • Djibouti • Dominica • Egypt • France • Gabon • Greece • Guinea • Guinea-Bissau • Equatorial Guinea • Haiti • Laos • Lebanon • Luxembourg • North Macedonia • Madagascar • Mali • Morocco • Mauritius • Mauritania • Moldova • Monaco • Niger • Romania • Rwanda • Saint-Lucia • São Tomé and Príncipe • Senegal • Seychelles • Switzerland • Chad • Togo • Tunisia • Vanuatu • Vietnam • Wallonia Brussels Federation

7 ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Cyprus • United Arab Emirates • France–New Caledonia • Ghana • Kosovo • Qatar • Serbia

27 OBSERVERS

Argentina • Austria • Bosnia-Herzegovina • Canada/Ontario • South Korea • Costa Rica • Croatia • Dominican Republic • Estonia • Gambia • Georgia • Hungary • Ireland • Latvia • Lithuania • Louisiana • Malta • Mexico • Montenegro • Mozambique • Poland • Slovakia • Slovenia • Czech Republic • Thailand • Ukraine • Uruguay

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