

Bridge of Prayer

January-February 2012 - Romania Focus

Dear MWB Prayer Partner, Thank you for your prayers! God hears our petitions on behalf of the nations. This month, we invite you to pray regularly for the needs of Romania. If you would like us to email you this prayer calendar in full colour, please email us nzadmin@mwbi.org or get yours from our web site www.mwb.org.nz. – MWB New Zealand Office

Romania Info

Size: 237,500 square kilometres (cp NZ: 267,710 sq km)

Population: 21.5 million (estimated only)

Main ethnic groups: Romanian 90%, Hungarian 6%, Roma (gypsy) 2.5%, German 0.3% (all estimates).

Main language spoken: Romanian.

Largest city: Bucharest the capital (about 2 million people).

Mission Without Borders base: Sibiu, in Sibiu County, in the centre of Romania. Sibiu's population is estimated at 155,000.



Flag of Romania
(blue/yellow/red)

Economy: Tough economic measures took place in 2010-11: Government job redundancies; salary cuts; a GST hike to 24%; cuts in child benefits and big cost cuts in the health sector. Unemployment is rising. The price of petrol and diesel rose a staggering 34% in the last two years and has drastically affected the Mission's work as we travel large distances on poor roads in Romania to carry out our ministry. Staple food items such as bread, cooking oil, sugar, milk, have increased in price, which affects everyone, especially the poor.

Things produced: Agriculture: wheat, corn, barley, sugar beets, sunflower seed, potatoes, grapes; eggs, sheep. Industry: electric machinery and equipment, textiles and footwear, light machinery and auto assembly, mining, timber, construction materials, metallurgy, chemicals, food processing, petroleum refining.

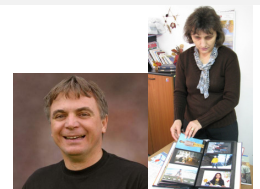
Main religions: (all are estimates): Eastern Orthodox (including all sub-denominations) 86.8%, Protestant (various denominations including Reformed and Pentecostal) 7.5%, Roman Catholic 4.7%, other (mostly Muslim) and unspecified 0.9%, none 0.1% (2002 census).

Political situation: Romania is a Republic. President Traian Basescu (since 20 December 2004), re-elected with only a tiny majority in 2009. Prime Minister Emil Boc (since 22 December 2008). Many ordinary people feel that democracy and free-market economics are worse not better for their country (and especially those not in positions of power) than under the former Ceausescu regime.

Social conditions: One reports suggests 80% of Romanians have now come to regret the death of Ceausescu and the fall of Communism. Economic reforms are being attempted, to comply with obligations to the EU (for funding government borrowing), but the global economic crisis has brought widespread unemployment, poverty for many, and seemingly a wider gap between those doing better and those not.

Romania:

- 1 Please pray for Jimmy Macavei director of MWB Romania in Sibiu, and his wife Ana (*both pictured at right – Ana with her treasured album of Bible Correspondence Course (BCC) children's photos*). Jimmy has run the office for some years, having been a pastor before that, and Ana works in the office and looks after the Bible Correspondence Courses. Pray that they and their staff may be inspired and led by the Holy Spirit in their work and planning, and work in one heart and mind.
- 2 Please pray for the families enrolled in the Mission's F2F sponsorship programme, that they may find faith in Jesus (where they are not already Christians) and that they may enjoy God's blessing of health and provision where they already are.
- 3 Please pray for the Operation Winter Rescue help (food, bedding, warm clothes, firewood) being taken to families and the elderly suffering from food shortages and the cold (snow and down to minus 20+ degrees). Please pray for our staff and the church volunteers helping them, and also for their safety and protection as the normally dangerous roads are often treacherous in snow and ice.
- 4 Pray for the Mission's outreach, with local churches, among the Roma (gypsy) people, and their children, who are hard-working, but struggle in various ways.
- 5 Please pray that the Bibles being distributed as part of our Jubilee Bibles project will begin to produce fruit in the lives of the readers.
- 6 Please pray for our CRI child sponsorships staff – a big change is the move from outreaches to children in State Children's Homes (orphanages are being down-sized or closed) to outreaches to children in their own communities.



7 Please pray for good government in Romania, that it would stand for righteousness and against corruption and criminal practices. Pray that MWB will continue to enjoy good relations with local authorities and government officials in carrying out its work.

1 Tim 2:1-2

Moldova:

8-10 Please pray for wisdom for John Groza and our MWB International Board as they grapple with big changes to the governments running of State Homes, and seek to move more to caring for children in their communities ("CRI in the Community" work with under-privileged children living in vulnerable situations in poor communities – there are many in this category).



John Groza, Moldova

Please pray for the students studying horticulture, pig-farming or car mechanics vocational courses at Ghidighici Farm, near Chisnau, that the young people will not only gain skills and a qualification for future life, but will experience God's saving love for themselves and a new direction and purpose for living.



Mechanics course, MWB Moldova

Bosnia and Herzegovina:

11-13 Please pray for Dalibor and his staff and their families in the Mostar office of MWB Bosnia. They face special challenges, reaching out with the Gospel and practical help to displaced and war-affected people, as well as Muslims and others from different faiths and ethnic groups.



Dalibor Kojic, Manager, Bosnia

Please pray for Mrs Mira Pandza (pictured in our *Overcomers* magazine, page 6) who works with many folk suffering the aftermath of war and needs God's strength to help carry other people's pain and suffering, as she counsels and journeys with them.

Ukraine:

14-16 Please pray for director Mykola Bogdanets and the staff of MWB Ukraine that they themselves continue to know God's hand on their lives and have robust health. Pray for them to exercise Godly wisdom and Godly boldness as they plan and seek to extend the Kingdom of God through their work. Please pray for them as they make plans for 2012 (Pictured: Mykola Bogdanets, Manager, Ukraine).



Please pray for all our staff and volunteers as they carry out the final **Operation Christmas Love** parcels in January, along with **Winter Rescue** deliveries of food, warm clothing and firewood to those suffering from the cold conditions right through the worst of winter.

Bulgaria

17-19 Please pray for Sarkis Ovanesyan MWB Bulgaria director, and his wife Marina and the staff in the office in Sofia.



Sarkis Ovanesyan, Manager, Bulgaria

Please pray for our staff and the other churches and missions that partner with our Bulgaria team. As evangelical Christians in land that is either secular or traditionally Orthodox, they face real opposition from some quarters but it is their good works being done among the poor, disabled and elderly that paves the way. Pray for the elderly that they reach through soup kitchens that they would find food not only for their bodies but also for their souls.

Albania:

20-22 Please lift up Monika Qerimi (pictured) and her MWB staff based in Tirana, in the west of Albania. Please ask God to inspire them in their work among the poor families and children, and in their work in partnership with local evangelical churches.



Monika Qerimi Manager, Albania

Please continue to pray for the government of this country. The political situation continues to be volatile, and a big distraction from what is really required to bring economic reform and progress for the Albanian people.

International and general needs

23-31 (Jan) **Children and families needing sponsors:** Thank you for your prayers: we thank God for a steady growth in the number of sponsors! Please pray that as we continue to ask for more folk to take on this vital role in our work, more will do so. (Pictured right: the Vasile family in our F2F programme in Romania).



President/NZ Chairman: Please pray for Harry Graham (UK); his international Board; and the two International Directors Peter van der Bijl (NL) and Harald Hem (Norway).

International staff member: Please pray for Grada based in our Holland office who looks after the shipping of needed clothing, furniture, blankets, food etc ("Gifts in Kind") including our NZ Operation Cover Up blankets and clothes, to our field countries (she has been battling a life-threatening illness and is under-going treatment).



Grada (GIK Coordinator)

New projects: Please pray for our Board and field country leaders for wisdom and provision as they begin to "roll out" new projects with street people, prisoners, and in Ukraine a small farm trial. [More information will be provided on these projects as it comes to hand]