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# Romania A TOP COUNTRY



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## *Romania and Guinness World Records Book*

If we have a 21<sup>st</sup> century communication (satellites, virtual environment, etc.), we should also have a Guinness World Records Book. This book has a history for more than half a century. The idea of publishing such a book came to Irish Sir Hugh Beaver in 1951. Today, a new edition of the Book of Records is published annually, with up-to-date records. It contains an internationally recognized collection of world records, including both human performances and extreme phenomena of the natural world. The book itself is a world record: the most well-sold book series that holds authorship rights. After the Bible, the Book of Records is today, the most famous book in the world. Although the Book of Records has a history of almost 60 years, the presence of Romania in its pages is much more recent. Romania first entered the Book of Records in 1986 and since then it has collected nearly 40 records. One fifth of these Romanian records have been established in the last year. But, however, not all of the records are included in the famous book, but only those certified by the World Record Academy. You can see below the list of the main Romanian records internationally certified:

1. Romanian sportsmen who managed to be recorded in the famous encyclopedia;
2. Iolanda Balaș - remained unbeaten in high jump competition for 10 years, during which she had 142 consecutive wins;
3. Mihaela Melinte - the longest throw of the hammer;
4. Lia Manoliu - Olympic longevity;
5. Ghiță Mureșan - the tallest NBA player;
6. Helmuth Duckadam - defended four consecutive penalties in the Football European Champions Cup - the final of 1986;
7. Constantina Dita - the oldest Olympic marathon champion in history. At the Summer Olympics in 2008 she won the marathon contest at the age of 38. Her coach, Valeriu Tomescu, was only 32 years old and holds the record for the youngest coach of a marathon Olympic champion;
8. Nadia Comăneci - the most many 10 grades obtained at a single edition of the Olympic Games. These is about 7 marks out of 10 obtained in 1976 in Montreal. Before 1976, no one had scored 10 at an Olympic event. Moreover, July 18<sup>th</sup> (July 18<sup>th</sup>, 1976 is the day when Nadia got the

first 10 in the history of the Olympic Games at the age of 14) has been declared *The World Records Day*.

9. The longest love poem: "Luceafărul" (the Morning Star) by Mihai Eminescu with its 98 stanzas.

10. The most participants in a traditional mountain dance: 13.828 Oltenians from Slatina have formed the largest mountain dance on the occasion of the National Union Day and also a local "days of the city" holiday.

11. The longest letter to Santa Claus was written by the students in Brasov, in December 2008 on a roll of paper measuring 413.8 meters long and 37 meters wide. 2110 pupils aged between 8 and 14 years have written their requests to Santa Claus on paper.

12. Most of the Santa Claus donors: 3,939 men who gave sweets for 30 minutes participated in Bucharest on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008.

13. The youngest successful performer: Cleopatra Stratan got this title in 2008 due to her unique achievements: the youngest artist to record an album; the youngest performer in a live concert (she was 3 years old when she held a 2-hour concert); the best-paid young artist; the youngest performer who has received three MTV awards; the youngest performer who has recorded a national hit (the hit has reached the first place in national charts).

14. The Biggest Embrace: held in 2009 in Alba-Iulia, and 9,758 people attended. President Traian Basescu also attended the event.

15. The biggest commemorative funeral cake: it was made in 2008 weighing 5 tons and having over 50 square meters. The funeral cake was prepared in a military unit in Brasov, and 10 military chefs worked to make it for 24 hours. The funeral cake was made to commemorate all saints and then it was shared to people who came to St. Andrew's relics.

16. The Biggest Goulash: it was prepared in 2007 by eight Bihorian chefs and served to the inhabitants of Salonta. The goulash weighed 7.3 tons.

17. The World's Greatest Sour Cream and Fruit Cake: It was prepared in December 2008, in Bucharest and weighed 281 kg. It was served to Bucharest residents on behalf of the Capital City Hall and to a dairy products producer.

18. The longest smoked sausage in the world: it was made in December 2008 and measured 392 meters. The sausage was shared to Bucharest residents who assisted at the approval of the record.

19. The longest condom chain: was made on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007 by 1,683 participants who tied together 25,773 condoms by building a chain that measured 3,269.46 meters. Through this action, the organizers wanted to alert the young Romanians to the threat of HIV / AIDS. The chain was started at 12 o'clock by Loredana Groza.

20. Most people dancing simultaneously on the same track: it took place in 2007 in Targoviște and was made by 2600 people who danced simultaneously for 6 minutes on the track "Follow the leader" (The Soca Boys). Most of the dancers were students of the schools in Târgoviște.

21. The most successful male coach in the world: Octavian Belu, the former coach of the national gymnastics team in Romania, was appointed in 2007. Octavian Belu has 16 Olympic gold medals and a total of 279 medals at the World Championships, the European Championships and the Olympic Games.

22. The most successful female coach in the world: Mariana Bitang, the former coach of the national gymnastics team in Romania, has been nominated in 2008, holding a record of 19 Olympic medals and 152 medals won at the World and European Gymnastics Championships.

23. The most consecutive defended penalties: record held by Steaua's former goalkeeper, Helmuth Duckadam. In 1986, in the final of the European Champions Cup against Barcelona, Duckadam defended all four penalties and Steaua won the trophy.

24. The longest basketball game in the world: was held between August 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007 and played by Sibians for 80 hours. The match started on Thursday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> at 11:00, and ended Sunday, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 19:00. No players were allowed to leave the field, they could take a 15-minute break every 180 minutes played. During the match, 10,043 points were scored.

25. The youngest person jumping from 4,000 meters with a parachute in tandem: the jump took place in 2006 and was made by a young Sibian girl who was only 9 years old.

26. The largest painted glass icon: a record held by Aurelia Bobocel since 2004 who painted a heated glass icon representing the "Last Supper". The painting is 2 meters long and 1.08 meters high, and the glass is 5 centimeters thick.

27. The highest egg in the world: the world's highest egg was made in 2009. The egg is 7,25 meters tall, a diameter of 4,6 meters and a weight of 1,800 kilos and was sanctified at Suceava by a community of priests.

28. The House of Parliament has three records: the largest, the most expensive and the heaviest administrative building in the world. The palace, designed by the architect Anca Petrescu, with an area of 330,000 square meters, is the largest administrative building for civilian use in the world. It is built of 700 metric tons of steel and bronze, one million cubic meters of marble, 3.5 metric tons of glass, and 900,000 cubic meters of wood. The palace was entirely built of expensive and good quality Romanian materials. It is also the most expensive administrative building in the world, estimated in 2006 at about \$ 4 billion.

29. The longest train of a bridal dress: the record is 1,579 meters and was set in 2009 at the E-Mariage Fest. The dress weighs nearly 300 kilos.

30. The most paper clips glued to the face: a record set in 2007 by Aurel Raileanu (40 years old) from Bucharest. He succeeded, due to his magnetic skills, to hold on his face 61 paper clips for 5 seconds.

31. The pregnant and heart-operated woman's parachute jump from the highest height: the woman jumped from 1,100 meters and the record was approved in 2007.

32. The longest garland of plaited onions: the garland was 4.518 meters long and was made by the villagers from the village of Pericei, Salaj County. 400 villagers worked on it for 5 days and plaited about 45,000 onions with a total weight of 40 tons.

33. The most robot portraits made on the phone: The record was gained in 2004 by Gogu Neagoe for making 128 caricatures, portraits made only on the basis of a live short phone conversation with the subject. On the Romania National Day, December 1<sup>st</sup> 2007, he entered the Book of Records once again after creating a 2,000-meter film on which more than 1,300,000 caricatures of personalities from Romania or abroad were drawn. Gogu Neagoe has been member of the Professionals Caricature Association in Romania since 2006 and since 2008 he has been a member of the UNESCO International Association of Fine Arts in Germany. He has participated in many national and international festivals of painting and cartoons, and his works were in private collections in Romania and abroad.

34. The largest graffiti in the world: the drawing is 550 meters and was made in 2007 by 570 people, including Romanian stars.

35. The World's Largest Painting: Recorded in the 2008 edition of the Book of Records by the young painters at Nicolae Tonitza Highschool

in Bucharest. The painting is 3.6 kilometers and has been painted by 800 students. The theme chosen by the students was a flower garden.

36. The biggest beer mug: 2009 record for a mug made in Timisoara. The mug has a capacity of 11,000 liters, a weight of 2,5 tons, 6 meters high and it was made of stainless steel.

37. The President who responded the quickest to a request from a citizen: In April 2008, President Traian Basescu responded in less than two hours to a request for awarding the "Star of Romania" medal to Professor Liviu Librescu, killed in the Virginia University attack Tech (USA).

38. The Governor who was ruled the longest a central bank: Mugur Isarescu achieved this record in 2009. At the age of 60, Isarescu has coordinated Romania's economic policies for the past 19 years (then). He is 69 years old now (born in 1949) and owns the same position.

39. The oldest mother in the world. On January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2005 she brought Eliza Maria Bogdana Iliescu into the world and entered the "Book of Records" as the oldest mother. Adriana Iliescu (born May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1938, Craiova) is a former university professor of Romanian literature and author of children's stories.

40. The series can continue, because in the meantime there have been other champions ...

#### **USA Press: „Is Romania Europe's Prettiest Country? It might be!”**

„Romania can be considered the most beautiful country in Europe”, claimed the famous American publication "The Huffington Post" in 2017. The touristic potential of our country was praised in an article published by journalist Patti Morrow, blogger, photographer and travel journalist, who was impressed by Transfagarasan, the cosmopolitan architecture in Bucharest, the fortified churches of Transylvania and by the Bran and Peles castles. In the article entitled „Is Romania Europe's Prettiest Country? It Just Might Be”, Patti Morrow praised several tourist sightseeing of Romania. "Markets of enchanting cities dating back to medieval times, mild hills as far as you can see, castles covered in Count Dracula's mystery, wonderful views of the rocky peaks of the mountains, and a network that seems infinite of fortresses and churches" is the description in the US publication. "And let's not forget about Transfagarasan - no doubt the most spectacular road in the world. The natural beauty of Romania and its cultural diversity could surprise you.

*Bordered by the Black Sea in Southeastern of Europe, the Danube and the Carpathian Mountains are among the attractions of this country*", added the American journalist at the beginning of the article. Patti Morrow grouped Romania's tourist attractions into three main categories: "*Cities, Strongholds and Villages*", "*Castles, Fortresses and Fortified Churches*" and "*Other Attractions*". After visiting Romania, Patti Morrow says our country - and especially Transylvania - is the place where "*some of the best-preserved medieval cities in Europe*" are located. First, the American journalist visited Bucharest and she declared impressed by the House of Parliament, the maze of the streets paved with cubic stone and the special architecture of the old center of the capital, formerly known as "*Little Paris*". She also appreciated the antique shops, cafes and art galleries in Bucharest. Regarding Sibiu, Patti Morrow writes about the history of the city. The journalist reminds us that the town was founded in the 12th century by German Saxons and signals that the city, whose center has preserved its medieval splendor, "*it is probably one of the most beautiful in Romania or perhaps even in Europe*". Medieval architecture, well-preserved towers, narrow streets, 17th-century buildings, the famous "*Bridge of Lies*" and the two squares dominated by churches - "*Great Square*" and "*Little Square*" are mentioned. Patti Morrow also reiterates the International Theatre Festival organized in Sibiu each year in June. On her trip through Transylvania, Patti Morrow praised the Saschiz fortified church on the UNESCO World Heritage List and allocated a larger area to Sighisoara, which she claims to be "*one of the most beautiful and best preserved medieval cities in Europe*". The journalist appreciated the local architecture, the 16th century buildings, thanks to which Sighisoara can be compared with the "*magical ambience of the old cities of Prague and Vienna*". She wrote that Sighisoara is the place where Vlad Dracul was born, the source of inspiration for the literary character, Dracula. In Sibiel, Patti Morrow experienced country life, accommodating in Eugenia's grandmother's pension, where she learned to prepare cheese and polenta and appreciated the local cuisine, especially cranberry and apple pie.

### **The Danube - Black Sea Channel** *Among the most important waterways in the world*

On May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1984, the Danube-Black Sea Channel was officially inaugurated, a channel that runs the sweet and sacred waters of the river, in a much shorter 400-kilometer way, to the salt waters of the Gaetic Sea (ancient name of the Black Sea). This extensive hydrotechnical work is considered to be the world's third greatest waterway created by man, following the well-known Suez and Panama waterways. Forgotten, like many other objectives created by the "communist generation", because of the promotion of a clear policy of uprooting the new generation of people and the country, this "dustless road" wanted to be created long before, throughout our troubled history. In the old Carasul Valley (possibly a former branch of the Danube River that was clogged over the millenniums), even the Turks were trying a water way transport on shore-washed ships, which turned out to be cheaper and handy. Plans to build this channel existed since the nineteenth century, after Dobrogea was added to Romania in 1878, when the idea of creating a fourth branch of the Danube, this time artificially, to shorten the road to the Black Sea, has begun. The technical conditions of the time made such an accomplishment extremely difficult and expensive, so King Carol I refused to be involved in such a project. In 1928, the engineer and professor Aurel Barghazan was to make a study indicating as a possible way for the great work even the actual path of the channel. Later, King Carol II included in his plans for the future, the idea of digging this channel, but the world economic crisis that came and then the beginning of the Second World War made the beginning of the works still postponed. In 1949, the construction of the channel was actually started, many of those involved in the project being political prisoners in communist prisons. These works were stopped between 1953 and 1955 due to lack of funds and interest from the Soviet leadership. Only the "*Carasu Irrigation Complex*" was made, far from what was the initial tender, namely a waterway channel. In 1973 the works were resumed but after a new tender. After 11 years of sustained efforts, the channel was inaugurated on Saturday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1984 by Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu. The work itself is "pharaonic". Thus, within these complex hydrotechnical activities, 294 million m<sup>3</sup> of rock were excavated in the main channel and another 87 million m<sup>3</sup> in the northern branch, also called the Poarta Alba-Midia Navodari Channel. The amount of escaveted matters was with 25 million cubic meters more than the Suez Channel and

140 million m<sup>3</sup> than the Panama Channel, and 5 million m<sup>3</sup> of concrete was used for the works. The main channel has a length of 64.4 km, a depth of 7 m, a base width of 70 m and an area of 90-120 m, and has a maximum annual transport capacity of 80-100 million tons, and for the northern branch of 15-25 million tons of cargo. The maximum allowable shipping is 5.5 m, allowing access to river ships and small naval vessels. At each end of the channel there is a two-way system that allows traffic in both directions. The channel construction required an investment of about \$ 2 billion at the time. The initial estimates predicted returning the investment in 50 years. Today, due to its passage into oblivion and the impossibility of exploiting it for its own industry in the area, which proved real potential, the channel exploitation brings annual revenues of about 3 million euros, which implies a duration of recovery of the investment of over 600 years.

Here we also have the Poarta Alba-Midia Navodari Channel, which is the northern branch of the Danube-Black Sea Channel. It was opened on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 1987. It has a length of 31.2 km and it is located between Midia Harbor, km 0 of the channel, and the confluence with the Danube-Black Sea Channel at its 36 km, right next to Poarta Alba (White Gate). At the 3<sup>rd</sup> km there is a bifurcation (5.5 km long) that connects with Luminita Harbor. Both Luminita and Ovidiu Harbors are integral parts of the channel. There is a project to achieve a lock between the Poarta Alba - Midia Năvodari Channel and Siutghiol Lake. It is estimated that, by constructing this lock in the Mamaia-village area, the traffic of vessels specialized in people's transport and recreation will increase by 30% - 50% per year. The *Danube-Black Sea Channel* is part of the important European waterways between the Black Sea and the North Sea through the "relationship" of the *Rhine-Main-Danube Channel*. If this route was used, the goods from Australia and the Far East, destined for Central Europe, would shorten their journey by 400 kilometers. The role of the channel for Romania is a military, strategic and economic one. With the resumption of the works at the "*Bucharest - Danube*" channel (70% already built), the completion of a very important water route will be achieved, both for the transport of goods, as well as for tourism. The inhabitants of the capital will be able to travel by water from Bucharest to the seaside, and the goods coming from the Constanta Harbor will be able to reach much more advantageous conditions in the capital. With the four micro-power plants to be built along the channel route, it will also give us 50 MW of electricity, and the channel water can also be a source of irrigation for about 150,000 hectares of arable land that will become true gardens and

oases of greenery on the banks of the channel. Just as Venice or Amsterdam are cities that use their channels system for cheap and convenient transportation, we can also exploit this advantage that the Danube and the Black Sea offer us on free, and Bucharest could become a harbor on the Danube, being linked to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, but also to the major cities of Europe, such as Belgrade, Budapest, Bratislava, Vienne, Frankfurt and Rotterdam. This will allow us to flow through the very heart of Europe. We want to be truly "European" for a long time, and more "Europeans" than that we can't be.

### **The Monument of the Youth** *Among the highest 50 statues in the world!*

Coming from the Romanian seaside to the capital, in the tall grass that embraces the banks of the Danube-Black Sea Channel, a giant "wing" drew my attention. It was like a victorious Nike goddess which was lifting her prayers to heaven. It didn't have the same glow as before, but its greatness could not go unnoticed. In order to remember the work of the Romanians that made possible the existence of the Danube-Black Sea Channel, but also to symbolize freedom or flight to infinity, *the Monument of the Youth* - because this is its name - was inaugurated in the late 1980s, here in Straja, a town with a fated name. Unfortunately, today no one cares for it, and only its height and its massiveness have made it not being yet dismantled and stolen piece by piece by the thieves. The monument on the bank of the channel cost at that time as much as a bridge, according to the artist who conceived it. Embodying a highly stylized angel, the 50-meter high monument is among the top 50 monuments in the world by height.

It is on the 35<sup>th</sup> place in the top of the highest statues of the world, where the Buddha's statue from Myanmar (115 meters high) is on the first place. As popularity, the "angel" on the bank of the Romanian channel is ... below the sea level. It is a quasi-unknown monument. Although it shouldn't be! It rises to the sky at 9 kilometers far from the Murfatlar town (Basarabi), in the area of the former Straja village, destroyed by the Communists for the Danube-Black Sea Channel route. It is placed on a 10-meter concrete base with twelve columns deep fixed at 20 meters down and it is made of stainless steel. The statue, without the base, is 38 meters tall. Once, the base was decorated with massive bronze bas-reliefs, depicting episodes from the construction of the Channel. After the



Danube Channel - Black Sea - construction site



Danube Channel- Black Sea. The waterway.



Youth Monument from the Danube Channel- Black Sea - among the 50 tallest statues in the world, as it is now)



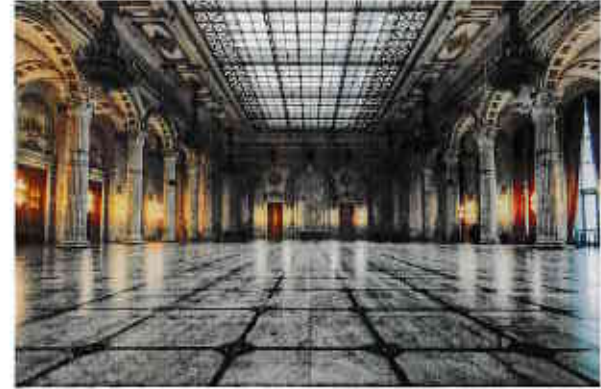
Youth Monument Complex from the Danube Channel - Black Sea - as it should have been at the end of the works (with performance arena and heliport)



Bucharest House of Parliament- the second building in the world after the Pentagon



Bucharest House of Parliament- the second building in the world after the Pentagon



Bucharest House of Parliament- interior of the second building in the world after the Pentagon



Bucharest House of Parliament- interior of the second building in the world after the Pentagon