

## THE IMPACT OF EMPEROR JOSEPH II'S REFORMS ON THE ROMANIANS FROM THE THREE SEATS

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**Abstract:** The last decade of the 18th century takes place under the auspices of the decisions of Emperor Joseph II. During the Joseph's reforms, aimed at improving the mechanism of local administration, the Szekler seats were abolished in 1784, the Principality of Transylvania being divided into counties. In essence, the reforming action of Joseph II greatly contributed to the dissolution of the system of political nations, thus offering the possibility of affirming the non-noble social strata.

The effects of Joseph II's reform persisted in every area of public and private life. The most tangible benefits for Transylvanian Romanians were the boost given to education and the official recognition granted to the Orthodox Church. The edict of tolerance had a decisive significance for the evolution of confessional relations in Transylvania. To the humanitarian-Christian meaning, utilitarian motivations of an economic nature were added, especially the intention to stop the emigration of Orthodox Romanians subject to confessional and administrative persecution, regarding the need to remove the restrictive confessional obstacles that prevented the building of a unitary administration. During the reign of Joseph II, the entire modern school network of the eastern half of the Austrian Empire was built, which was maintained until 1918. Only the network of primary schools, part of the normal schools that trained teachers and Episcopal seminaries remained under the care of the churches. In Transylvania, those who benefited fully from the positive effects of the reform of the school system were precisely the Romanians who received the most approvals for opening new schools.

**Keywords:** Emperor Joseph II, Transylvania, Orthodox Church, Szekler seats, reforms

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