

**Population of Bukovina and Bessarabia
under imperial domination (1775/1812 - 1918)**
(Abstract)

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Keywords: Bukovina, Bessarabia, ethnic structure, religious denominations, Romanians, Ukrainians, Germans, Russians, Bulgarians, Gagauzs, colonization, Catholics, Jews, Lutherans, Lipovans.

During the modern era, Bukovina and Bessarabia came under imperial domination, and the inhabitants of these provinces were separated from their compatriots from Moldova. Until 1830s, both in Bukovina and Bessarabia took place significant immigration and colonization processes, which significantly changed the ethnic structure of the population. Later, in both provinces, the vastness of these migration processes had diminished and the number of population increased more by natural way. Colonization with foreign residents was much more significant in Bessarabia, particularly in Budjak, in comparison with Bukovina. In southern Bessarabia, wide areas were compactly colonized by Bulgarians, Gagauzs, Germans, Russians and Ukrainians. In Bukovina were established much less colonies of Germans, Hungarians, Lipovans or Slovaks, especially in central and southern part of the province. In northern part of Bukovina, alike in the north of the Hotin district in Bessarabia, due to the massive immigration of Ruthenians from Galicia and Podolia, gradually took place the Ukrainization of the territories and the ethnic and linguistic assimilation of the Romanian minority.

The radical shift of the ethnic structure and alienation of the population of these ancient Romanian (Moldovan) provinces are the most serious consequences of 144 years of Austrian domination in the Bucovina, respectively 106 years of Russian rule in Bessarabia. In Bucovina, the share of the Romanian population has decreased from about 60-65%, in 1775, to about 34%, in 1910, while in Bessarabia, the share of the Romanians (officially registered as Moldovans) reduced, from about 85% in 1812 to less than 50%, at the end of the 19th century. According to the last Austrian census from 1910, in Bukovina lived 794,945 inhabitants. After the vernacular, there were 38.4% Ukrainians, 34.4% Romanians, 21.2% Germans (including Jews), 4.5% Poles, and 1.3% Hungarians. According to the Russian census of 1897 in Bessarabia were registered 1,935,412 inhabitants, of which 47.6% were Romanians (Moldovans), 19.6%

– Ukrainians (Little Russians), 11.8% – Jews, 8% – Russians, 5.3% – Bulgarians, 3.1%
– Germans, 2.9% – Gagauzs, 0.6% – Poles

The denominational structure of the population of Bukovina and Bessarabia also significantly changed during the imperial domination. At the time of annexation, the population consisted almost exclusively of Orthodox; the most important religious minority was Judaism (about 3.5% in Bukovina and 4.5% in Bessarabia). In the 19th century, in both provinces, the share of the Orthodox inhabitants had gradually decreased, while that of Catholics, Judaists and Protestants had increased. In 1910 in Bukovina the share of denominations was: 68.4% Orthodox, 12.8% Judaists, 12.3% Roman-Catholics, 3.4% Greek-Catholics, 2.5% Lutherans, 0.4% Lipovans. In Bessarabia as of 1897 were registered 82.7% Orthodox, 11.8% Jewish, 2.8% Lutherans, 1.5% Lipovans, 1% Roman-Catholics. In both provinces, the ethnic and denominational structure of the population distinguishably differed in urban and rural areas.

On the eve of the outbreak of World War I, there was a big difference in national consciousness and identity of Romanians from Bukovina and Bessarabia. In Bukovina there existed elementary and partly middle school in maternal language of the students, national societies and political parties, magazines and newspapers published in several languages. In 1910, nearly 40% of Romanians from Bucovina, aged 10 and over, could read and write in maternal language. The situation of Romanians in Bessarabia was quite different. Tsarist authorities have banned the teaching in Romanian language and even excluded the maternal language of Moldovans from local government and churches. As a result, according to the census of 1897, only about 6.2% of Romanians of Bessarabia (registered as Moldovans) were literate, of which only very few could read and write in their native language.