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State-church relations in Romania as an example of a model of friendly separation

Abstract

The aim of this article is to provide a detailed analysis of the fundamental principles of the state-church relationship model in the Republic of Romania, which can be classified as a specific model of friendly separation. This model is based on a balance between the formal separation of state and religious institutions and the possibility of state support for religious activities in selected areas, such as education, culture and social welfare. A significant element of the Romanian model is the acknowledgment of the historical and cultural role of the Romania Orthodox Church, which holds a prominent position in shaping the national identity and public life of Romanians. The Church plays a crucial role in maintaining social bonds and transmitting the nation's heritage. Article also highlights unique features of the Romanian model, such as the three-tier legal classification system for religious communities, which differentiates the legal status of registered denominations, religious associations, and religious groups. This system, combined with the historical significance of Orthodoxy, gives the Romanian model distinctive characteristics that set it apart from other countries implementing a model of friendly separation, such as Poland. The analysis demonstrates how local historical, cultural and social conditions influence the development of Romania's specific version of the friendly separation model. The argumentation presented in the article emphasizes that although the autonomy of both spheres is formally maintained, cooperation between the state and recognized religious communities (particularly the Romanian Orthodox Church) is essential for the fulfillment of many public tasks, especially in areas requiring the fostering of national unity.

Keywords: state-church-relations – Romania – friendly separation model