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CHURCH ATTENDANCE, RELIGIOUS STATISTICS AND PATRIARCHIES IN UKRAINE: THE CASE OF ORTHODOX KHERSON

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Based on empirical research, the article provides a comparative assessment of the number of adherents of the most mass Orthodox denominations - the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC-MP) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP) as of 2018 on the regional level (city of Kherson). The authors conclude that the verbal declarations of Ukrainians regarding their confessional affiliation received in different surveys and the real confessional affiliation of actual parishioners (regular churchgoers) differ significantly. It is suggested that this contradiction may also appear due to the lack of sufficient competence of the verbal adherents about the organizational structure of the Cristian Orthodox world in Ukraine, and by the effect of socially approved answers in polls caused by extreme politicization of religious life in Ukraine. Additionally, it was found that the proportion of registered parishes according to the UOC-MP and UOC-KP databases follows the same pattern as the ratio of their parishioners.

Ключові слова: Christian (Eastern) Orthodoxy, Patriarchate, Ukraine, parish, church attendance, believer.

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Setting the problem in its general form and its connection with important scientific or practical tasks. Since 2018, there has been a discussion about how many believers support the two main Christian (Eastern) Orthodox denominations in Ukraine. This issue was fuelled by an upcoming event of receiving Tomos by Ukraine from the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The main debate was based on several data, including statistical parameters, data from official registers, the results of sociological studies, expert opinions, confessions' assessments, and even data from law enforcement agencies. Despite the variety of data sources, the number of parishioners of the two main Orthodox denominations in Ukraine remains undefined.

Analysis of recent researches and publications in which the solution to this problem was initiated and which author relies; the allocation of previously unsolved parts of the general problem the article is devoted to. After the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, the situation in the sphere of Cristian Orthodoxy became even more acute. In 2024, the Ukrainian Parliament (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine) adopted the Law «On the Protection of the Constitutional Order in the Sphere of Activities of Religious Organisations» [15], which provides for the termination of the activities of religious organisations affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church on the territory of Ukraine. The examination of the State Service of Ukraine for Ethnopolitics and Freedom of Conscience recognised the Ukrainian Orthodox Church as «continuing to be in a relationship of subordination to the Russian Orthodox Church» [16]. At the same time, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in 2022 declared complete independence and autonomy from the Russian Church [17]. In the religious life of Ukraine, the brutal ongoing war and the ambiguous interpretation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church led to parish transfers, that is, changes in the jurisdiction of Orthodox parishes, even more so than after the adoption of the Tomos.



Formulating the purpose of article. This essay illustrates our attempt to reveal the relevant number of parishioners of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (hereinafter UOC-MP (called in media Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate)) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate (hereinafter UOC-KP) on a regional level. Also, the text demonstrates the correspondence between the officially registered number of parishes (religious communities) and the number of their believers based on our field calculation in the city of Kherson. It is hard to rely on the existing data sets as they are quite contradictory and distort reality. In search of a more realistic picture, we decided to use a multidisciplinary mixed methods approach, which included sociological, legal, visual, ethnographic and statistical methods. Following this approach, to estimate the number of parishes, we used official databases: lists of parishes in the city of Kherson of the main Orthodox denominations and data from the Kherson Regional State Administration, as well as we counted the number of all visitors who entered churches in Kherson city during the regular Sunday holy service.

The study showed that the level of attendance by citizens of Orthodox churches is 1% of the whole Kherson population. Among the Christian Orthodox believers in Kherson city, 71% were parishioners of the UOC-MP temples, and 29% were UOC-KP supporters. Besides, the oral declarations of Ukrainian citizens regarding their confessional affiliation and their actual confessional affiliation are fundamentally different.

Presentation of the main research material with full justification of received scientific results.

Existing problem. From the solely sociological research results by 2018, there was no correlation between the number of parishes of the two main Orthodox denominations: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC-MP) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP), and the number of their followers in Ukraine. In 2018, 12,348 parishes belonged to UOC-MP, whilst 5,167 were under UOC-KP [12], making the proportion approximately 70% of the former to 30% of the latter. However, when we start counting parishioners of the main Orthodox denominations the results show a reversed proportion when UOC-KP followers outweigh the UOC-MP ones dramatically.

According to a sociological survey by the Razumkov Centre, 28.7% of Ukrainians considered themselves UOC-KP followers in 2018, while 12.8% related to the UOC-MP [13]. This makes the proportion between them 70% of the former to 30% of the latter. The very ratio of believers who identified themselves with two main Orthodox denominations emerged from the study of the urban population of three Regional South-Ukrainian Centres: Mykolaiv, Odesa and Kherson, conducted by the Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University. Based on this research, 28.7% of Ukrainians called themselves adherents of the UOC-KP in 2018, whilst 11.9% appeared to be UOC-MP members [5].

Similar distributions were presented in earlier studies. For example, research undertaken by the Sociological Group «Rating» shows that 31% of UOC-KP followers and 17 % of UOC-MP were among the adult population of Ukraine in 2017 [24]. This means 6,5 out of 10 Ukrainian Orthodox attended church under the Kyiv Patriarchate. According to the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, a year earlier, relevance looked quite identical, 45.7% of people in Ukraine declared themselves as UOC-KP adherents while 13.3% were regularly visiting the UOC-MP [4]. Followers of the former branch were large in all regions except East Ukraine.

From the above data, the number of the two main Orthodox parishes in Ukraine does not correspond with the number of their adherents. On the one hand, there were more registered UOC-MP churches than UOC-KP ones. On the other hand, the number of UOC-KP followers prevails when we are talking about religious identities.

Another problem is the ambiguity of the very concept of «paraphia» and «pryhid», which are the traditional names for a Christian religious community and translate into English as «parish» [18]. The notion «paraphia» is mostly applied in official documents and church records and is a formal and administrative way of referring to the «parish». The latter «pryhid» is used by a community of believers and is a less formal way of saying «parish», which appears in everyday speech. According to the Law of Ukraine «On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organisations», «a religious community is a local religious organisation of believing citizens of the same cult, creed, direction, trend or opinion, who have voluntarily united for the purpose of jointly satisfying religious needs» [22]. In this sense, a parish is a group of people. Parishes are also called the territory where the faithful of that parish live. In some countries, the parish is still a grassroots administrative-territorial unit. For example, in the United Kingdom word «parish» is used with regard to the lowest form of local government, which is community-based and people-powered [23].

In some countries parish is a grassroots administrative-territorial unit. For example, in England, the United Kingdom, a parish is defined as the smallest unit of local government and at the same time an area cared for by one priest with its own church [19]. Parish councils were formed in England in 1894 under the Local Government Act to manage local communities and oversee civic duties in rural areas [20]. Before 1894, the word «parish» in England meant an ecclesiastical unit, namely an area under the supervision of one church or one priest, who was responsible for providing religious services and the spiritual care of the people within the area [21]. However, in this study, the notion «parish» is adopted only for its ecclesiastical context, referring to the sector within the city served by one church, as in Ukraine, this term is used exclusively in a religious context.

Methodology. According to WIN/Gallup International research in 2015, Ukraine was among the countries with high religiosity in Europe. During the poll, respondents were replying 'yes' or 'no' to the question whether they consider themselves religious or not. Almost three-quarters (73%) of Ukrainians answered positively. This precedent was disseminated in the media and social networks. Once again, the question of who can be considered a

believer and how many of them there are in Ukraine was raised by Ukrainian researchers. Quantifying the number of believers is an extremely difficult task, while an absolute assessment is practically impossible.

It is not clear who can be considered a believer and who cannot. The range of meanings extends from a person's declarative statement to the recording of the facts of his/her participation in religious practices. There is an equally wide range of values in terms of the number of believers in general and adherents of individual faiths in particular. In the expert community, the problem of determining the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the audience of religious structures has long been acute. The key issue in the methodology for evaluating activity is a qualitative characteristic (parameter). This parameter is basically a question of who should actually be considered a believer.

Different researchers give a very wide range of meanings. Some of them focus on a personal oral declaration of faith (self-identification), others on a set of special requirements for the religious practices of an individual. Some scholars, in order to define a believer, use an approach which combines not only sociological but also philosophical and theological concepts. Thus, Yulia Sinelina concludes that the respondent's self-identification is sufficient to classify him as a believer: «To identify people as non-Orthodox if they consider themselves Orthodox because not all of them correspond to church canons, it is unlawful» [1]. According to Ekaterina Khodzhaeva and Elena Shumilova, «Orthodox priests use the term «churchness» (*votserkovlenist*) to define membership in the «We-Group», which refers to a person's acceptance of the spiritual essence of Christianity, supported by a complex set of behavioural practices: participation in worship, regular experience communion and confession, as well as, in general, involvement in the life of the Orthodox community [2]. Sociologists Kimmo Kaariainen and Dmitry Furman have also proposed a category of «true» or «traditional believers», which should include those who: 1) identify themselves as believers; 2) believe in a God with whom one can enter into a personal relationship; 3) consider themselves Orthodox; and 4) attend church at least once a month and/or pray often. These requirements can be further tightened by adding regular communion, fasting, reading the New Testament, or lack of faith in astrology and the transmigration of souls [3].

In Ukraine, since 1994, the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine has been monitoring the number of adherents of the main religious denominations, including those who identify themselves with certain Orthodox patriarchates [11]. Regular confessional measurements are also regularly conducted by other sociological centres, particularly the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, the Razumkov Center, the Socis company, and the Rating sociological group. Most of the surveys conducted in Ukraine are based on the confessional self-identification of the respondents. These are very important studies that allow us to study changes in the perception of churches, the dynamics of identity, and the verbal behaviour of citizens. However, this methodology does not take into account the real behaviour of the respondents. In conditions of active socio-political transformations, the gap between real and verbal behaviour is a common phenomenon.

That is why some researchers tried to find a new way of counting the orthodox believers. An interesting field method for collecting information on the number of parishioners of Orthodox denominations was proposed by Olena Lakomova in her dissertation «Socio-geographical processes in the Staropromyslovyyi District in Kryvyi Rih» [7]. It is based on the count of obituaries («synodics») in churches. Synodic is a notebook with a list of names of the deceased and living relatives and friends recorded for prayer commemoration. The box with synodics is usually located in an accessible place. So, it is quite easy to either count them or measure the length of the stack to speed up the process. The number of synodics often represents the actual number of permanent parish members.

Political expert Dmytro Kasyanov proposes another method of measuring the number of believers with the help of voter turnout: «From 8 to 9 in the morning you will not see anyone at the polling stations in Western Ukraine. However, from 10 to 11 am, a surge of activity begins. This means that the service has ended and people have come to the polling stations. By the way, according to the turnout at the polling stations, we can calculate the percentage of people's religiosity» [26].

All of the described methods have their advantages and disadvantages. According to Nikolai Mitrokhin, in the study of religious life, «the emphasis should be shifted to finding out the specific details of a person's religious behaviour that do not allow the interviewee to understand the tasks of the researcher and therefore do not force him to answer 'correctly'». The questions in the questionnaires, according to N. Mitrokhin, should be aimed at clarifying specific details: «When was the last time you were in church?», «Was it an Orthodox church or another?», «How long did you stay there?», «Did you receive the Communion at the last service?», «What religious book did you read and when?», «What prayers do you know by heart?» etc. [8] Besides, the scholar notes that it is also important to record and systematise religious actions through observation: the fact of visiting temples, the demographic parameters of parishioners, the time spent in the temple, specific actions during the liturgy, etc. Elements of this technique were successfully used during field research in Russia [9].

To sum up, existing methods for estimating the number of believers can be divided into the following:

- sociological – this includes both self-identification and declaration of the degree of one's religiosity (churching/*votserkovlenist*), for example, knowledge of prayers, regular attendance at church and reading of holy texts;

- legal – this is the calculation of the number of believers by taxes (for example, in Germany), accounting for a fixed number of parishioners in parishes (such an attempt was made in Ukraine in 2019), analysis of registers of legal entities – religious communities; counting the number of clergy;
- visual – counting of participants during mass events (Easter, Christmas, religious processions, collective prayer), carried out, as a rule, by law enforcement agencies or journalists according to the Jacobs formula (by the number of people per 1 square meter) or other methods [25];
- ethnographic research - observation, fixation of rituals and practices (communion, kissing the cross, behaviour during worship, clothing, etc.).
- expert assessments – data collection from the words of the abbots of temples, leaders of religious communities, representatives of relevant departments of state authorities and local self-government.

Our research aimed to determine the number of parishioners, at least comparative, who are adherents of religious denominations at the regional level and to determine the correspondence of the obtained values with religious statistics (number of parishes) and the results of sociological research. The territory of Kherson City was chosen as an empirical base. According to official data, the ratio of the number of parishes of the main Orthodox organisations here was the same as the average for Ukraine.

Congregating all the above-mentioned approaches, we came up with a multidisciplinary mixed methods approach, which included sociological, legal, visual, ethnographic and statistical methods.

Since January 2019, some parishes in Ukraine have begun to introduce the practice of documented membership in parishes. Parishioners began to issue numbered certificates of members of a parish. This was due to changes in the legislation of Ukraine related to the procedure for the transition of a community from one patriarchate to another. This precedent was very important for the research and was taken into account when assessing the number of parishioners.

During our research, we used two main «hard» indicators: the number of registered parishes and the number of identified parishioners by parish. To count the number of parishes, we used official databases: lists of parishes in the city of Kherson of the main Orthodox denominations (from the official websites of the UOC-KP and UOC-MP) [27], and data from the Kherson Regional State Administration [14]. However, these databases were not complete. As a result, a common updated database of Kherson Orthodox parishes was created.

An estimate of the number of parishioners was made by counting the number of all visitors who entered during the regular Sunday service. We excluded the days of major religious holidays, as well as days with bad weather conditions. All measurements were carried out in September-November 2018 during several waves. We did not separate those who spent the entire service in the church and those who entered the temple only for a while - the so-called «goers» (*zakhozhanie*) [10]. During the observation, all visitors were recorded - both adults and children. That is, the main task was to fix the number of parishioners of the two main Orthodox denominations for one conditional average Sunday.

Research findings. According to our consolidated database, there were 75 Orthodox parishes in Kherson at the time of the study: 45 belonged to UOC-MP, 25 to UOC-KP, 4 to the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, and 1 was a Russian True Orthodox Church. As it turned out, even before the measurements began, a significant number of parishes of both the UOC-MP and the UOC-KP and other Orthodox churches turned out to exist only as legal entities. Some of them were registered in the apartments of multi-storey residential buildings and were not externally marked in any way. More likely, there were house churches at some of the registered addresses. Possibly holly services were held there from time to time. However, they were not accessible to everyone.

Churches at hospitals, prisons (correctional colonies), military and police units, educational institutions (universities and colleges) and enterprises represented a significant part of the parishes. We called such parishes «departmental». These parishes have varying degrees of accessibility. Parishes at hospitals turned out to be quite accessible for visiting. They were often located in separate buildings built in the church tradition, had a regular work schedule, and specific clergymen were assigned to them. On the contrary, temples in prisons and military units were inaccessible to ordinary citizens. It was almost impossible to access their schedule or to get any information about their mass routine. Some parishes located in universities and enterprises cannot be considered full-fledged. Sometimes they can be represented in the form of a chapel, a prayer room, or even just a part of the room marked with an icon or gonfalons. Holy services are held there from time to time, only during certain holidays, and the church sacraments, such as baptismus or matrimonium, are not performed there. Most of the «departmental» parishes in Kherson, that is, 14, belong to the UOC-MP. There were also the UOC-KP «departmental» parishes with a total of 2. They also differ from regular parishes. A regular parish can be considered as a more or less permanent group of believers and priests, while in departmental parishes, such as hospitals, believers can change constantly.

Sometimes the difference between a regular and a «departmental» parish is only formal. For instance, the name indicates that this is a church «under the control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs», but it is an ordinary regular parish. 5 of the 14 «departmental parishes» of the UOC-MP and one of the two UOC-KP communities are full-fledged churches with regular liturgies and their flock, consisting mostly of parishioners who have nothing to do with the organisation the temple is related to.

Table 1.

Number and jurisdiction of Orthodox parishes in Kherson

The nature of the parishes of the	UOC-MP	UOC-KP	UAOC	RTOC
Kherson, total parishes	45	25	4	1
Of which: Regular functioning parishes / as a percentage of the number of parishes of the corresponding denomination	16/36%	12/48%	–	–
«Departmental» parishes	14/31%	2/8%	–	–
Inaccessible	15/33%	11/44%	4/100%	1/100%

Note: UOC-MP – Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate), UOC-KP – Ukrainian Orthodox Church Kyiv Patriarchate, UAOC – Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, RTOC – Russian True Orthodox (Istinno-Pravoslavnyaya) Church.

Hence, the ratio of the number of parishes of the UOC-MP and UOC-KP in Kherson was 64% to 36%. At the same time, we see that both denominations tended to increase their statistical indicators, such as the number of parishes, by registering «inaccessible» parishes.

The calculation of the number of unique visits to churches showed that about three thousand people come to the Sunday Orthodox service in Kherson, which is 1.01% of the total number of city residents. Field data also revealed that among the Orthodox adherents, 71% were visiting the UOC-MP churches, and 29% were attending the UOC-KP temples. This almost corresponds with the proportion of officially registered parishes of the UOC-KP and UOC-MP.

Table 2.

The average number of visitors to the Sunday service in the temples of Kherson city

Indicator type	UOC-MP	UOC-KP	Sum
Total unique visits	2135	860	2995
Share of all residents of the city of Kherson %	0,71	0,29	1,01

At the same time, the collected data showed a reversed proportion of the verbal declaration of affiliation by respondents during mass surveys. The ratio of the number of visitors to the Sunday services of the UOC-MP and UOC-KP in Kherson was 71% to 29%. We do not have data from mass surveys separately for Kherson, to which patriarchy believers attribute themselves. We can only compare with the general survey data for three cities in the southern region of Ukraine (Mykolaiv, Odesa, Kherson). Based on these data, we see an almost inverse relationship between the respondents' oral declaration of belonging and actual church attendance [5].

The most visited temple of Kherson was the Holy Spirit Cathedral of the UOC-MP with 511 visitors. Simultaneously, the Sritens'ky Cathedral of the UPC-KP was visited by 213 people. However, it makes more sense to compare the attendance of neighbouring temples of the UOC-MP and the UOC-KP, even though these two churches have different capacities, proximity to transport communications and places with a high density of people's houses. Such comparison reflects the preferences of Orthodox believers regarding the choice of patriarchy.

Table 3.

The average number of visitors to the Sunday service in neighbouring churches of different patriarchates

temples	UOC-MP	UOC-KP	The ratio of believers
St. Catherine and St. Oleksandra	284	146	66/34
Saint Fyodor Ushakov and Saint Petro Mohyla	23	30	43/57
The Holy Kasperivs'ka Icon of the Mother of God and the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos	122	49	71/29
Hieromartyr Procopius of Kherson and the Holy Monks Zosima and Savvaty	59	26	69/31
Signs of the Mother of God and Holy Trinity	217	331	40/60
Smolensk Icon of the Mother of God and Holy Prophet Elijah	9	2	82/18

The collected data shows that more people generally prefer visiting the UOC-MP churches on Sundays to the UOC-KP ones in places where the two mentioned institutions are located nearby. For instance, the UOC-MP St. Catherine's Cathedral and the UOC-KP St. Oleksandra's Church are located nearby on the same street Perehops'ka, at a distance of about 300 meters. The former's adherence outweighs the latter visitors, making the proportion of believers 66% to 34%. These churches have different attributes which could influence the visitors' choice St. Catherine's Cathedral is more spacious, and St. Olexandra's is closer to more populated streets.

The following example illustrates the same pattern. The UOC-MP temple of Holy Kasperivs'ka Icon of the Mother of God and the UOC-KP temple of Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which are located in a geographically separate micro district Korabel, on the island, are approximately the same in terms of capacity and are located near multi-storey buildings. The ratio of believers is 71% of the former's visitors to 29% of the latter's ones.

However, in some areas within the city, we can see other patterns. Thus, the UOC-MP Church of St. Fyodor Ushakov and the UOC-KP temple named after St. Petro Mohyla demonstrate the opposite pattern. The parishioners of the latter exceed the visitors of the former, making a proportion of 53% to 43%. These churches are located opposite each other on the same street Luterans'ka, at a distance of about 20 meters. Here we can also see the potential influence of the factor of convenience. The church of St. Fyodor Ushakov is less spacious, and the church of St. Peter the Grave is located in a former residential building.

The same figure emerges from the data collected in churches in the Shumens'ky district within Kherson city. More people prefer to go to the UOC-KP Church of the Holy Trinity rather than to the UOC-MP Church of the Sign of the Mother of God, making the proportion between the former and the latter 40% to 60%, even though the UOC-MP temple is located in the centre of the mentioned city area and is more spacious compared to the UOC-KP one.

he general distribution with the UOC-MP adherences prevailing the UOC-KP believers stays the same in remote settlements within the Kherson City Council. For example, the number of visitors to the UOC-MP church of Hieromartyr Procopius of Kherson considerably exceeds the quantity of UOC-KP temple of the Holy Monks Zosima and Savvaty adherents, making the ratio of visitors 69% to 31%. These churches are both located in separate Tekstyl'ny village, which belongs to Kherson City Hromada (community), and they are quite similar in size and capacity. The same pattern can be seen in a remote Inzhenerne village within Kherson City Hromada, where the UOC-MP church of the Smolens'k Icon of the Mother of God and the UOC-KP temple of the Holy Prophet Elijah are located. The former temple is located in a construction shed, while the latter is situated in the premises of a former store on the ground floor of a multi-storey building. The priest from the church of the Smolens'k Icon of the Mother of God has to deliver Sunday service not only in this temple but also in two other churches in neighbouring settlements. This means that the divine liturgy is always shorter than usual, and the time of its beginning can vary. Despite this inconvenience, 82% of orthodox citizens of Inzhenerne village prefer Sunday prayer in the UOC-MP church rather than in the UOC-KP one.

As we can see from the pattern mentioned above, temples, similar in character, capacity, and located in alike closed faraway Kherson City Council areas, have considerably different numbers of visitors. The UOC-MP adherents there prevail over the UOC-KP believers. This proves our idea that such «indicator temples» can be considered as the data sources for defining the proportion between the believers of the two main Orthodox confessions. This information can also be used for monitoring studies.

Additionally, during the field research, it was revealed that all the churches are well-marked as parishes of a particular patriarchate directly (with labels) and indirectly. Quite often, there was a presence of national symbols, folk Ukrainian decorative elements, and photographs of the heads of confession, Metropolitan of Kyiv and all Ukraine Onufriy (Berezovs'ky) in the temples of the UOC-MP and Patriarch of Kyiv and all Ukraine Filaret (Denysenko) in the temples of the UOC-KP. The temples' names also align with a confessional connotation. For instance, it is difficult to imagine the Church of St. Xenia of St. Petersburg or the Smolens'k Icon of the Mother of God in the Kyiv Patriarchate. During the study, there were also clearly visible patriotic information materials dedicated to the Donbas Anti-terrorist operation in some UOC-KP temples. Fundraising was carried out for the needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which emphasised the confessional affiliation of the parish.

Taking all this into account, we can state that there is enough information in churches to help people identify which of the two main orthodox patriarchates, the UOC-MP or the UOC-KP, they are in. Therefore, it is difficult to agree with the statements of some experts that Ukrainian Orthodox do not know which church they go to, because «seeing the sign «Ukrainian Orthodox Church» in Ukrainian at the entrance to the temple, not all believers identify it as the church of the Moscow Patriarchate». Perhaps there are such people among the «visitors», but for this, it is necessary to conduct a survey (exit poll) with the relevant questions.

Conclusions. The study allows us to estimate the level of attendance by citizens of Orthodox churches, which turned out to be at the level of 1%. Among the Christian Orthodox believers in Kherson city, 71% are parishioners of churches of the UOC-MP, and 29% are UOC-KP supporters. Given the fact that the majority of Ukrainian believers are Orthodox, the established level of church attendance is incomparably lower than the level of declared religious self-identity, which was 41% of the population in Ukraine in 2018, according to a sociological survey by the Razumkov Centre.

The study also allows us to conclude that the oral declarations of Ukrainian citizens regarding their confessional affiliation and their actual confessional affiliation are fundamentally different. Supporters of the two main Orthodox branches and their real parishioners are two different general populations that overlap only slightly. It can be assumed that among the reasons for this discrepancy may be: the insufficient competence of the population about the organizational structure of the Orthodox world in Ukraine and in the world in general (people learn about patriarchates from the questions of questionnaires), the effect of social desirability (attributing oneself to the Kyiv Patriarchate in a

survey situation is socially approved answer) and the extreme politicization of religious life in Ukraine, pushing respondents to a specific answer in a situation where the respondent decides in a survey situation.

At the same time, the religious statistics of the number of parishes quite well reflect the situation with the number of parishioners. Given this, it is difficult to agree with the researchers, who believe that «having data on the number of religious communities without specifying the size of these communities, it is impossible to make any assumptions about the total number of believers» [4]. Yes, indeed, this information is not available in official statistics, but in the case of our study, we see that the ratio of the total number of parishes generally coincides with the ratio of the number of visitors to Sunday services.

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ВІДВІДУВАНІСТЬ ХРАМІВ, РЕЛІГІЙНА СТАТИСТИКА ТА ПАТРІАРХАТИ В УКРАЇНІ: КЕЙС ПРАВОСЛАВНОГО ХЕРСОНА

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У статті на основі даних емпіричних досліджень здійснюється порівняльний аналіз кількості по регіонам прихильників наймасовіших православних конфесій в Україні (Української православної церкви Московського патріархату (УПЦ МП) та Української православної церкви Київського патріархату (УПЦ КП)) станом на 2018 рік (до отримання Україною Томоса від Вселенського патріарха). Надається визначення поняття «парафія», характеризуються відповідні цьому поняттю феномени. Описуються такі різновиди парафій, як так звані «відомчі» парафії, створені у лікарнях, військових частинах, виправних колоніях тощо, та парафії, зареєстровані у приватних домоволодіннях. Підкреслюється, що і «відомчі» парафії, і парафії у приватних будівлях часто не доступні жителям Херсона. Акцентується увага на дискусії щодо визначення кількісних і якісних характеристик аудиторії релігійних структур в цілому, а також на тому, кого, власне, можна вважати вірянном. Наводиться класифікація методів підрахунку відвідуваності храмів: соціологічні, юридичні, візуальні, етнографічні дослідження та метод експертних оцінок. Презентується розроблена авторами методика підрахунку відвідуваності церков шляхом підрахунку кількості всіх відвідувачів під час звичайної (несвяткової) недільної служби. Доводиться, що це дозволяє оцінити загальний рівень відвідуваності православних храмів та відвідуваність храмів УПЦ МП та УПЦ КП. Робиться висновок, що усні декларації українських громадян щодо своєї конфесійної приналежності, які фіксуються під час опитувань, та конфесійна приналежність реальних парафіян кардинально відрізняються одна від одної. Формулюється припущення, що така суперечність може бути зумовлена тим, що прихильники різних конфесій та реальні парафіяни – це дві різні генеральні сукупності, які перетинаються лише в незначній мірі. Зазначається, що це, окрім іншого, може свідчити про недостатню компетентність частини населення про організаційний устрій православ'я України, а також про ефект соціального схвалюваної відповіді та крайню політизацію релігійного життя в Україні, що підштовхує респондентів до конкретної відповіді в ситуації опитування. Підкреслюється, що релігійна статистика кількості зареєстрованих парафій добре відбиває ситуацію зі співвідношенням кількості парафіян різних конфесій.

Ключові слова: православ'я, патріархат, Україна, парафія, відвідуваність церков, вірянин.

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