

## SECTION XXV. SOCIOLOGY AND STATISTICS

DOI 10.36074/logos-19.03.2021.v2.42

### CURRENT STATE OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE NETWORK OF RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN UKRAINE

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Since the time when Ukraine gained independence, the process of development of religious organizations (ROs) has been characterized by rapid dynamic growth. It was particularly noticeable at the beginning of Ukraine's formation as an independent state and during the social and economic crises of recent decades, where ROs played a significant role in maintaining and protecting Ukrainian society. For decades, church organizations and religious figures have taken leading positions of trust in society.

According to the Law of Ukraine "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations" of April 23, 1991, Ukraine adheres to the principle of separation of state and church, which is characterized by non-interference in each other's affairs, but provides for a partnership model of church (religious organizations) with the state, which is regulated by a range of laws.

Legislative consolidation and practical provision of opportunities for the realization of freedom of worldview and religion contributed to the emergence of true worldview pluralism in Ukraine, allowed millions of citizens to openly profess one religion or another and express beliefs that were previously condemned by the dominant ideology. Accordingly, there was a significant increase in the interest of a large part of the population to the worldview and spiritual needs of their lives, which contributed to the rapid development of religious organizations, the transformation of Ukraine into a multi-religious state [4].

Direct evidence of the importance of religious activities are high ratings of trust by citizens. According to a poll conducted by the Razumkov Center in October-November 2020, 62% of respondents trust the church. For comparison, at the end of 2020, the rating of confidence in the President of Ukraine was 33.9%, the Government of Ukraine - 18.1%, and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine - 17.3%. This state of affairs clearly shows the importance and impact of ROs on society and the development of the state [1].

Regarding the dynamics of quantitative changes in the confessional environment, it has been unchanged over the last two decades, and testifies to the predominant number of representatives of Christian denominations in Ukraine. Thus, according to a sociological study by the Razumkov Center for 2019, the religious affiliation of Ukrainian citizens was distributed as follows: Orthodox - 64.9%, Greek Catholic - 7.6%, Roman Catholics - 0.5%, Protestants - 2%, Judaism - 0.3%, Islam - 0.7%, and Buddhism - 0.1% [1].

Simultaneously, in the general component of the development of religious networks, there is a tendency to the increase in the number of the organizations

related to other religious movements and ethno-confessional formations. According to the Department of Religions and Nationalities of the Ministry of Culture (report on the network of churches and religious organizations in Ukraine) from January 1, 2019, the followers of Judaism registered 287 religious organizations; there are 265 communities of Islam followers, while Buddhism in Ukraine is represented by 63 organizations [2].

The religious sphere of Ukraine is a complex system of interaction and mutual influence of canonically and organizationally structured church institutions. This system is an integral part of public life, sensitive to the establishment of democratic values, worldviews and national ideas, moral and ethical principles in the public consciousness, as well as their positions in the interpretation of national and church history. These processes are manifested in the growth of social activity of believers, the deepening of internal church integration and mobilization, increasing the influence on domestic and foreign policy of the religious factor [3].

It should be noted that Ukraine has a developed network of ROs. Thus, as of January 1, 2019, the religious network in Ukraine is represented by 55 religious denominations, within which there are 35,162 religious organizations, 3,698 missions, 83 fraternities, 204 higher theological institutions, and 13,211 secondary and Sunday schools. Religious organizations are cared for by 32,619 clergy; 341 periodicals are published; 22 radio stations and 167 electronic resources are broadcast. Using the statistics of the Department for Religions and Nationalities of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, we will graphically present the trends of *the religious network in Ukraine and its main components (clergy, religious communities; educational institutions; religious media)* for 2019. Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 below show the number of religious communities (institutions), clergy, educational institutions, and media [2].

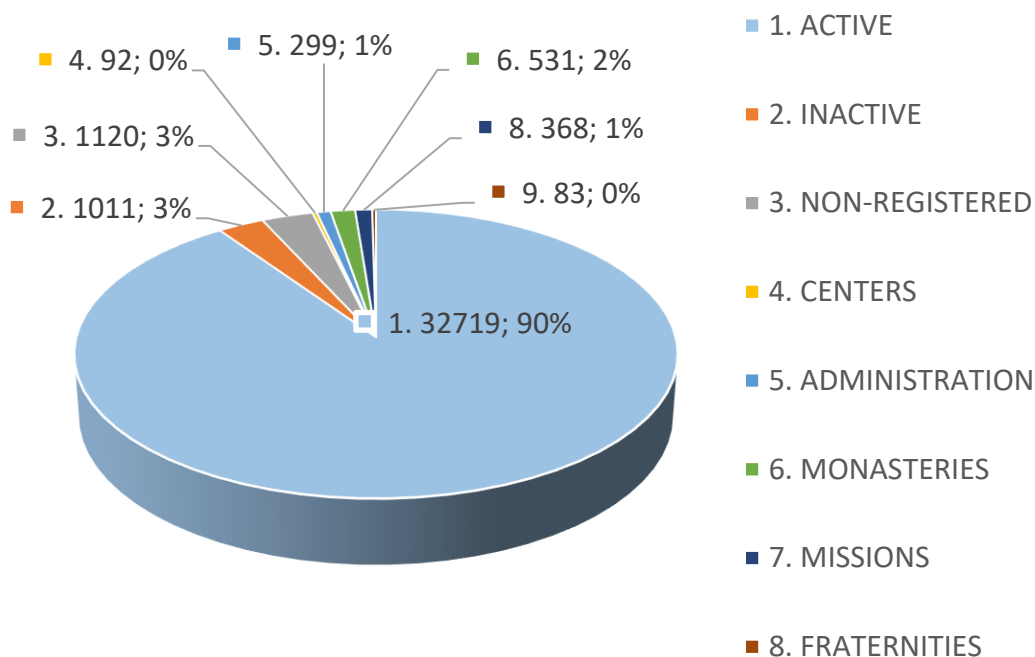


Fig. 1. Religious communities

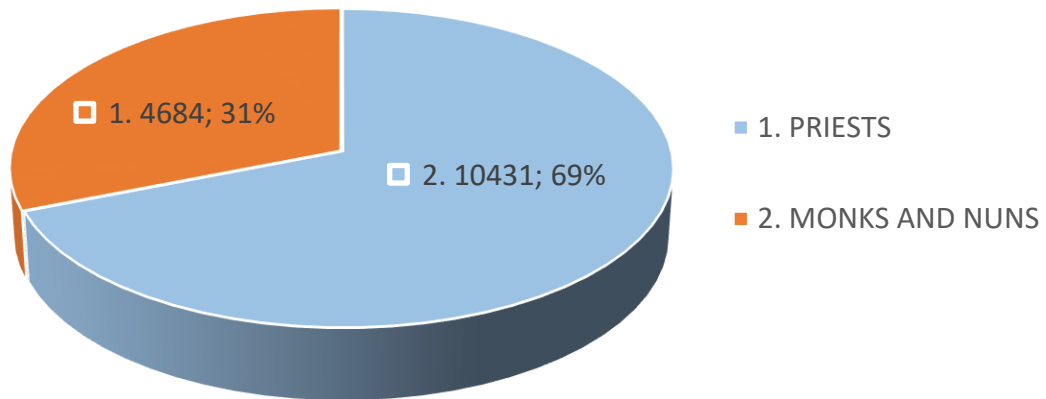


Fig. 2. Clergy

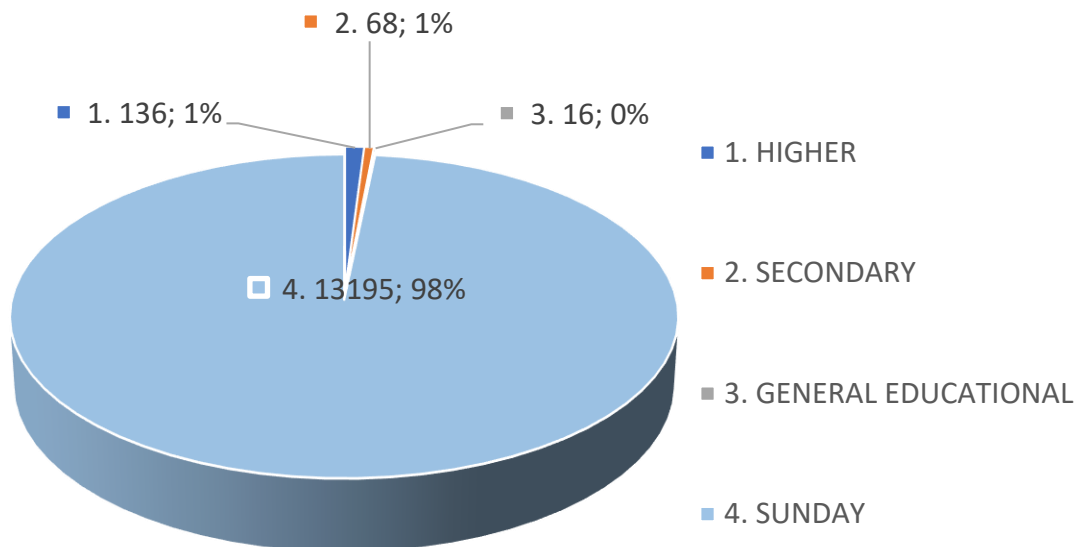


Fig. 3. Educational institutions

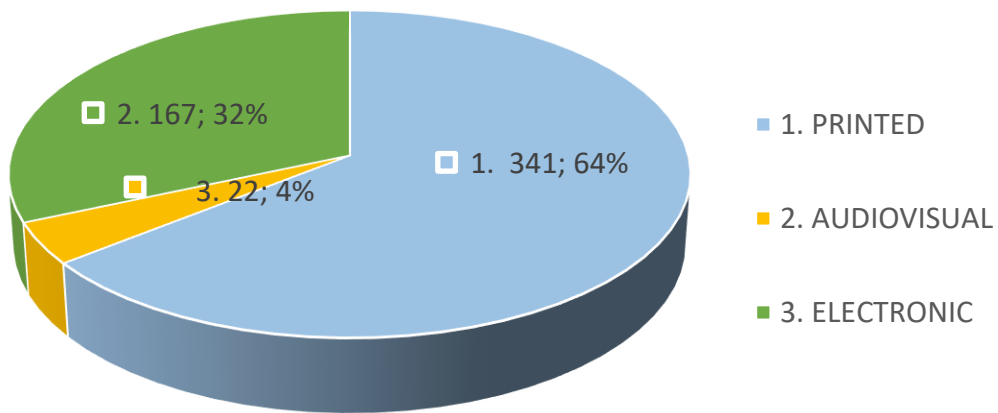


Fig. 4. Mass media

As it can be seen, religious organizations have various forms of presence in society, but one of the main ones is the social aspect of service. Most of RO projects are carried out both with their own financial support and with the support of various charitable foundations, and donors.

For comparison, it is also appropriate to provide data on the development of religious organizations over the past five years (2014-2019), in particular their main elements.

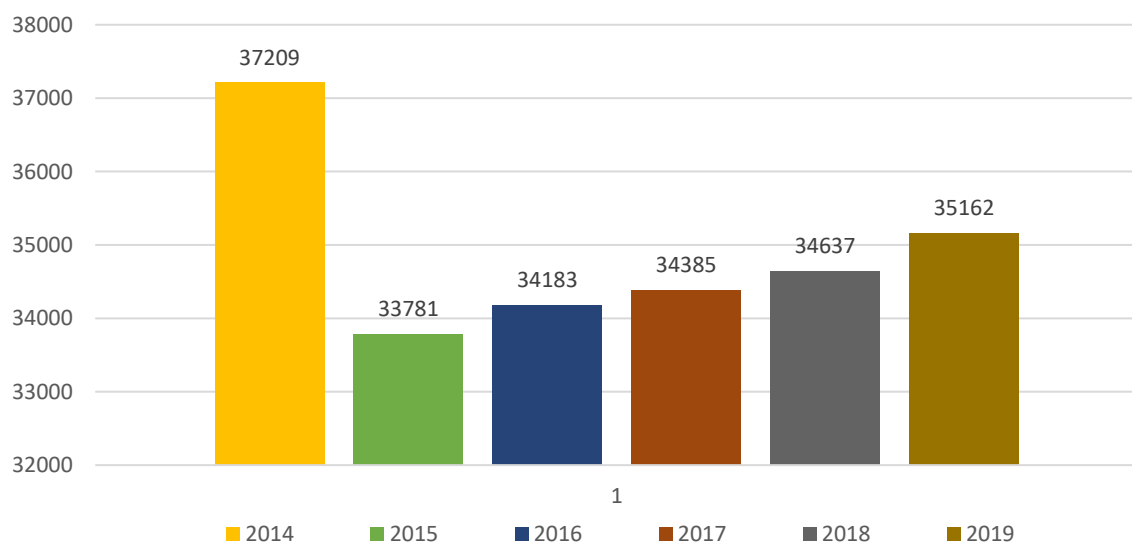


Fig. 5. Religious communities

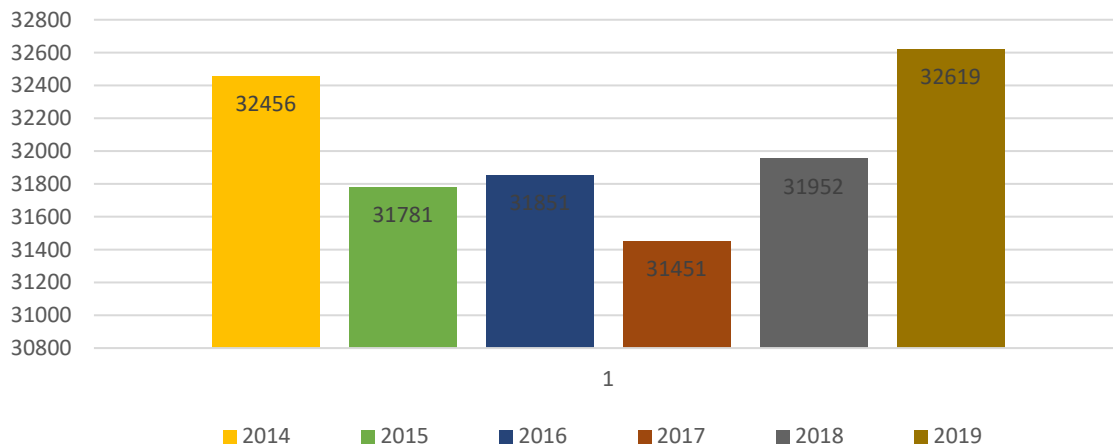


Fig. 6. Clergy

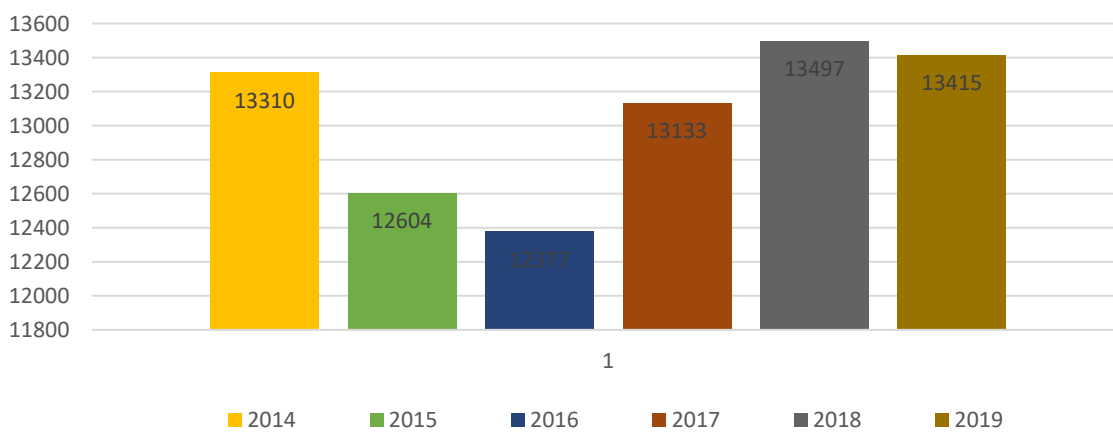


Fig. 7. Educational institutions

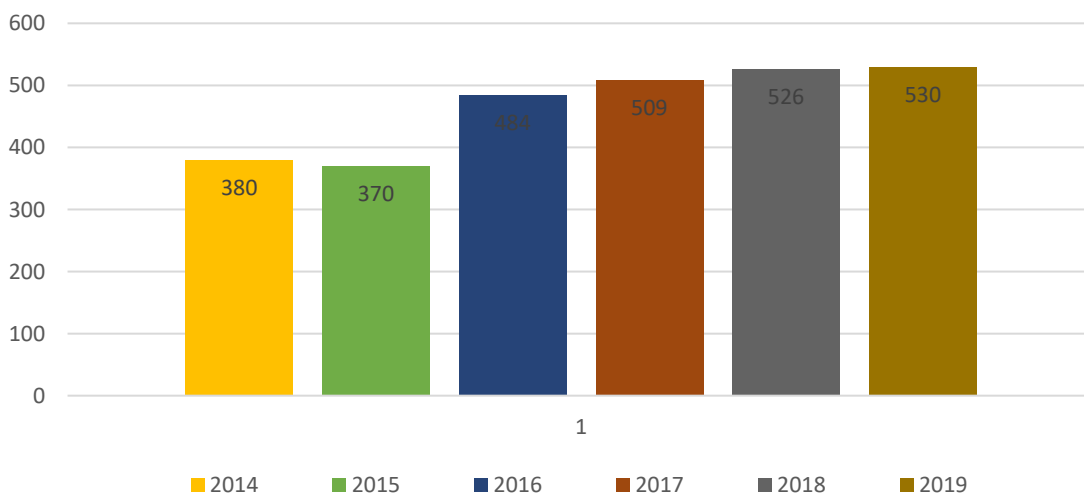


Fig. 8. Mass media

Analyzing the data of the Department for Religions and Nationalities of the Ministry of Culture, it should be noted that the growth rate of church and religious institutions after the annexation of Crimea and the occupation of Donbas in 2014 decreased by an average of 8%, and starting from 2015-2019, has become established and is about 1.1-1.2% per year. Therefore, the state and trends in the development of the network of church and religious institutions largely determine the religious situation in the country.

In conclusion, it is important to emphasize the sustainability of the development and influence of religious organizations in Ukraine on the democratization of Ukrainian society. The dynamics of quantitative changes in the confessional environment over the past two decades is a reflection of qualitative transformations in the religious life of the country: in the understanding of religions of their place in society; determination by churches, religious organizations of the attitude to the state, society; in relation to the dominant values in secular society [4].

Surprisingly, the only stable institution of such a society is the Church, in particular, religious organizations which are reliable partners of the state in developing civil society, intercultural and religious tolerance, protection of the rule of law and human rights.

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