

Article

# Religion and International Migration: A Case Study of Ukraine

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**Abstract:** This paper studies the relationships between religion and migration in modern-day Ukraine. We focus on Ukraine's numerous churches and their attitude toward the phenomenon of emigration, their relevant activities with regard to the outward migration from the country, and the migration experiences and intentions of the believers. We find that the Greek Catholic Church has put special attention on the emigration phenomenon in its social doctrine, while the doctrines of other churches have been less elaborate, both in general terms and with regard to the issue of external migration in particular. Moreover, we demonstrate that worshippers belonging to the different churches have very similar growing concerns about the negative effects of Ukraine's economic development—social divide and unemployment in particular.

**Keywords:** religion; church; international migration; migration experience; migration intentions; Ukraine

## 1. Introduction

International migration has gained unprecedented importance and acquired new forms, becoming a part of the social as well as the spiritual life of the people. The increasing mobility, ease of transportation and infrastructure opportunities, liberalization of migration regimes, and constitution of supranational regional entities has contributed to the fact that an unprecedented amount of the world's population is on the move. This also holds true for modern-day Ukraine.

Ukraine's outward migration has a long history and is well-researched and documented. The fourth wave of Ukrainian emigration began with the fall of the "Iron Curtain" in 1991 and is ongoing. However, the qualitative characteristics of modern Ukraine's emigration, such as the size and the socio-economic consequences, differ substantially from the emigration of the early 1990s. Therefore, the following features of the fourth wave of Ukrainian emigration can be clearly identified:

- reversible nature (unlike previous waves of Ukrainian migration, the majority of workers repeatedly return to Ukraine and leave it again, which diminishes the brain-drain effect and probably has contrary, so called "brain gain" effect);
- the spread of the phenomenon of "transnational families" and "guest families";
- distribution of telecommunication technologies that allow foreign workers to be permanently in touch and "virtually present" with their families in Ukraine;
- changes in the gender balance—men continue to dominate in the general flow of Ukrainian migrants but the share of women is larger than before;

- a shift from economic (materialistic) to institutional and socio-cultural (mixed materialist-post-materialistic) factors of external migration.

In addition to the aspects that clearly distinguish the fourth wave of Ukrainian emigration from the previous waves, it is important to mention that current migration is not to foster the diaspora of communities abroad. This finding can be applied not only to Ukrainian workers but also to other migrants as well. The following factors can be identified as the causes of this phenomenon:

- growing individualization in the cultural, social, and economic life of Ukrainian households;
- loosening of discriminatory barriers that forced members of migrant communities to create dense social networks to deal with the hostile and arrogant environments;
- increasing the segmentation of society based on lifestyle, expertise, values, and interests as opposed to that built on the basis of language and ethnicity.

All these aspects of current Ukrainian migration can be studied in different ways. The vector of scientific inquiry recently changed from focusing on the specific cases (such as the case study on Ukrainian migration to certain destination countries) and dimensions of this phenomenon to the systematic study of the factors that motivate Ukrainian citizens to migrate [1]. One should note that there are certain thematic blind spots within this generally positive process, including the study of church and religious migration intentions and beliefs.

This paper aims to fill this gap by adding the religious dimension to the study of Ukrainian migration. Since Ukraine can rightfully be called a “migration country” due to its long history of migration, has endured a troublesome economic transformation, and has experienced recent political turmoil that led to armed conflict, it is important and relevant to study all aspects of migration in the country. Since religion appears to be one of the key elements that both directs migration and shapes how millions of Ukrainians who belong to various churches operating in the country view it, the study of religion and migration is a novel and unprecedented attempt to link these two phenomena in the Ukrainian context. To the best of our knowledge, our paper represents the first written account of such research and can be seen as very timely, especially with regard to the notion that the recent split of the Ukrainian society might well be based (among other things) on religious beliefs and belonging to a church.

## 2. Religious Dimension of External Migration

When studying the religious dimension of external migration in the world, both European and Ukrainian researchers are dealing almost exclusively with long-term surveys of emigrants’ communities in the host countries in the context of the problems and peculiarities of migrants’ adaptation to the local conditions as well as rules and norms of their societies. During recent decades, the main research focus that combined migration and religion was dedicated to the theme of Muslim migrants and their communities in the host countries in Europe [2]. However, there is another (and according to the authors of this paper unjustly ignored) aspect of migration and religion studies: the impact of religion and religious identity on potential migrants’ migratory intentions.

Recently, the majority of religious denominations prepared detailed interpretations of the pressing issues of our time (from bioethics to the social inequality and policy) that together form a social doctrine. Each social doctrine has a function of adapting faith to the dynamic conditions of the new situational and moral dilemmas. One of the topics (and dilemmas) that believers of religious denominations in Ukraine are exposed to and must face is the topic of emigration. Denominations (by interpreting external migration in terms of acceptable or unacceptable practical life, developing a network of organizations in host countries or concentrating solely on working within the country of origin, supporting migrants’ families who remained at home, or ignoring this topic) contribute to the formation of the guidelines (attitudes) for believers toward external migration and to the formation of specific behavioral repertoire.

This interpretation is relevant for the theory of segment assimilation within the study of migration. According to the theory, migrant workers are not only “embedded” in certain segments of the recipient society but also belong to a particular segment of the donor society situated in the migration flow. The migrants’ origin has a significant impact on processes of adaptation in the host society [3]. For example, not all people leave their country, but members of certain groups in a donor society do: These might be people who are motivated or those seeking to run away. In these cases, the push-factors can be the following: difficult economic, institutional, social, and cultural circumstances or persecution based on ethnic or religious grounds [4]. The pull-factors can have both an economic and socio-cultural or institutional nature. In particular, these are social guidelines for external migration: the ideas and dreams potential migrants have about the potential host countries (the so-called “imaginary geography”) and traditional patterns of migration (inherited and transmitted during the socialization process into behavioral repertoire which may include guidance for the external migration).

### 3. Migration, Religion, and Ukraine: A Discourse Analysis

Essentially, Ukrainian society is multi-confessional. However, a significant portion of all believers in the country dedicate themselves to Orthodoxy (around 80%). The survey, carried out in 2014 within the framework of the Sociological Monitoring and conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, presented the following results regarding the confessional structure of Ukrainian society (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Responses to the question “To which confession/church do you belong?” ( $n = 1800$ , response rate—99.7%).

| Confession/Church              | Frequency | % of Total Respondents | % of Those Who Actually Answered the Question |
|--------------------------------|-----------|------------------------|---|
| Non-religious                  | 192       | 10.7                   | 10.7  |
| Orthodoxy                      | 1419      | 78.8                   | 79.1  |
| Catholicism                    | 21        | 1.2                    | 1.2   |
| Greek Catholicism              | 136       | 7.6                    | 7.6   |
| Protestantism                  | 13        | 0.7                    | 0.7   |
| Judaism                        | 1         | 0.1                    | 0.1   |
| Other (please, indicate which) | 13        | 0.7                    | 0.7   |

Source: Own results.

The recorded responses regarding belonging to confessions in Ukraine have taken their current shape due to a range of factors, including external migration and Jewish alia. It can be shown that the Jewish minority significantly shrank during the late 1980s and the early 1990s due to the massive emigration of ethnic Jews from Ukraine. According to the data of the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, of the 954,000 Ukrainian Jews who left the country in 1990, about 92% were heading for Israel ([5], p. 117). According to the statistics of Jewish organizations in the United States, between 1989 and 1994, more than half of all legal emigrants from Ukraine were Jewish. Later, their share in the migration inflow reduced significantly: from 54% in 1994 to a mere 8% in 2001 [6].

Later in this text, we analyze attitudes about the phenomenon of emigration by major denominations (by number of believers) in Ukraine, relevant historical and present activities of these churches, and attitudes of the believers of the churches concerning emigration and their migration experiences, which allows us to partly trace how clergy position coincides with the position of believers, as well as describe the differences between believers of different churches. This task represents a discourse analysis of semantic universes of specific religious denominations, as well as the place of foreign migration. Typically, such topics should be considered sought within the broader theme of economic activities, on certain sense-of-the life guidelines relevant to the economic activity and to the

relationships of citizens with the state, as well as to the problems of coexistence of a given society with other cultures and societies.

In this sense, the Greek Catholic discourse can be perceived as the most “Euro-Atlantic”-oriented. To some extent, this opens the boundary nature of the church, which belongs to the organizational structure of the Catholic Church with the Orthodox elements of worship. The elements of this discourse that are relevant to the problems of emigration can be summarized as such: “[W]aiting for enculturation of a certain generalized set of European democratic standards of political life into our society; opportunities to implement individual and group economic potential through free movement of labor, the development of mass small and medium enterprises; development of cultural potential through free access to the European education system” [6,7]. In the discourse of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), somewhat contradictory semantic structures are combined: On the one hand, there is a positive attitude toward the incorporation of the cultural, social, and economic space of Ukraine into the united Europe and an approval of innovative technologies in the form of the European culture of entrepreneurship. On the other hand, there is concern for the crisis related to emigration (especially of disruption of family life of migrants and problematizing the socialization function of the family). Somewhat arbitrarily, this position can be described as right-wing conservative. At the organizational level, the evidence of such a progressive position of this denomination is the work of organizations such as the “The Church’s Commission for Migrants in Europe” and the “Social Center of Supporting Workers and Their Families ‘Unity’” (Yednannya).

An additional factor that forms the attitude of the Greek Catholic Church is that 17 of the 29 dioceses and Church exarchates are located outside Ukraine. According to the UGCC, about a quarter of its believers (1500 parishes) reside outside Ukraine. As a result, the UGCC is often nicknamed the “Church of migrants.” Every year, on the last Sunday before Christmas, the Church celebrates the Day of the Migrants.

The historic background of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was very much political from the day of its establishment. The very formation of this Church took place as a consequence of interactions between Catholicism and Orthodoxy on the border territories located between their areas of influence. Religious division overlapped the political one since the UGCC flourished geographically in the territories that bordered Catholic “Rzeczpospolita” Poland and the Austrian-Hungarian Empire on one side and the Eurasian (Orthodox) Russian Empire on the other. Political pressure from both geopolitical poles reached its maximum at the end of World War II, when under both military and administrative Soviet occupation and with direct participation of Stalin’s punitive service, the merger between the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church actually took place in 1946. Formally, this was arranged through the fictitious Lviv Council of 1946 that rubber-stamped this so-called “unification” [8].

However, one cannot interpret these events as the forced conversion of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church followers into Russian Orthodoxy since in most cases the followers were simply not aware of “political changes,” including the shift of subordination from the Vatican to Moscow, while on the everyday-life level there were no obvious or significant changes. Moreover, the transition of Greek Catholic clergy to Orthodoxy due to their hidden loyalty was often confidential. Thus, in February 1946, Russian metropolitan John secretly consecrated former Greek Catholic priest Antonii Pelvetsky to become Russian Orthodox bishop with a seat in Stanislaviv and also Greek Catholic priest Mykhailo Melnyk to become a Russian bishop for Drohobych and Sambir. At the same time, a disloyal clergy were severely oppressed. In particular, five Ukrainian Greek Catholic lords were arrested, imprisoned, and received long prison sentences (metropolitan Josef Slipyi and bishops Mykyta Budka, Mykola Charnetskyi, Grygoriy Khomyshyn, and Ivan Lyatyshevskiy) [9].

The example of the Greek Catholic Church of Ukraine’s merger with the Russian Orthodox Church and all further religious life processes in the country became an illustration of a typical Soviet policy toward religion as such and religious organizations of any sort. This policy combined in itself the officially declared atheism, total formal separation from religion as such, and its subsequent

marginalization in the society under state-level favoritism of the Russian Orthodox Church (up to the mass repressions to other Christian clergy who refused to demonstrate their loyalty to the Orthodoxy). The very existence of the Russian Orthodox Church was considerably tolerated by Soviet authorities, albeit under certain boundaries and restrictions.

The second wave of forced migration from Ukraine after World War II led to the emergence of the new communities within the Ukrainian diaspora in a number of countries, and emigrant clergy of the Greek Catholic Church made a successful attempt to restore the Church outside the geographical boundaries of Ukraine (which was formalized at the Second Vatican Council that took place between 1962 and 1965). Overall, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine operated underground from 1946 to 1989, and at the same time it legally functioned abroad. This most certainly led to the formation of Euro-Atlantic orientation of both clergy and followers, and also to the concentration on the issues of external migration in the social doctrine of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.

Similar processes took place with regard to the churches within Ukrainian Orthodoxy. At the structural and organizational level of Ukraine, there are three large Orthodox churches: Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP), and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC). The Russian Orthodox Church has significantly fewer followers than the other churches, but organizationally it was connected to the UOC-MP. The formal split of the Ukrainian Orthodoxy took place at the beginning of the 1990s, just after the collapse of the Soviet Union, although historic preconditions for this date back to the All-Ukrainian church councils of 1918, when the collapse of the Russian Empire provoked numerous attempts to obtain both political and religious autonomy. It is worth mentioning here that the described division into the churches did not always correspond to religious preferences and actual affiliation of the followers. This uncertainty was also noted by sociologists who attempted to investigate this issue in many surveys conducted in Ukraine by asking the respondents about belonging to the Orthodoxy as such, without any further specifications [8–10].

Therefore, today's situation with the Orthodox denominations is far from simple because a number of Ukrainian Orthodox denominations claim that, despite the efforts of ecumenical dialogue in some areas, the debate remains tough. Although this debate is usually resolved when it comes to issues such as ownership of places of worship, the sense of belonging of individual parishes to this or that church, and other everyday situations, the confrontation remains deeper and more fundamental. At the level of the elements of the churches' social doctrines relevant to the economic behavior of the opposition and external migration of Orthodox denominations in Ukraine, there is an opposition to the "Eurasian" and "European" choices. The Eurasian choice is justified by the concept of "*ruskyj mir*" ("Russian world"), described below in the text. At the level of support of any social policy proposals, it represents a combination of traditionalist models of economic and social activity, as well as the elements of collectivism and state socialism, paternalism, and even sacralization of power. At the level of practice, the UOC-MP in particular developed a training course for priests and church social workers that helped prevent illegal migration and showed how to coordinate assistance for victims. In other words, even when paying attention to the emigration phenomenon, this particular religious denomination regards migration as highly problematic [10].

Two other major representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church—the Kyiv Patriarchate and the UAOC—are opposed to the Eurasian choice, emphasizing the isolation of the Ukrainian national identity and focusing on the conservative spectrum of "European values" (which brings their positions closer to those of the Greek Catholics and the Catholics of Roman tradition), but do not have a clearly articulated social doctrine.

#### 4. Empirical Evidence

Empirical studies of the religion and migration axis inevitably face the problem of a lack of empirical data, especially in the case of the relatively small and less popular churches. A number of respondents belonging to small denominations are detected as such, and it becomes impossible to



obtain even a small degree of significant results and reliable conclusions. This happens because within the available databases representative for the Ukrainian society, researchers commonly use a typical set of features in the formation of the sample such as: age, gender, and location (region, state, type of settlement). However, the set does not typically include religious affiliations of the respondents. Thence, specialized quantitative studies that include religious affiliations as a criterion sample do not exist for Ukraine. For example, the trend research of Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine entitled “Ukrainian Society: Sociological Monitoring,” which has been held annually since 1992, considers only the “classic” list of characteristics of respondents (age, sex, region, and type of locality of residence) and does not include the issue of migration experience in the design of its sample [11].

There is an analogous case with research that employs qualitative methods. For example, one of the few similar research topics described in the article by Rowentschak entitled “Transformation of Cultural and Religious Identities and Practices on the Example of Ukrainian Migration to Poland and Greece” is based on the analysis of texts of in-depth interviews with 120 respondents who were selected based on such criteria as gender, or work experiences of staying or working in Poland and Greece, but belonging to the confession was not among the criteria that shaped the selection of the respondents [12].

Therefore, in both quantitative and qualitative sociological research, migration experience and confession are seldom the main criteria for the selection of the respondents. In this context, the research by Ivankova-Stetsyuk entitled “Ukrainian Labour Migration in its Qualitative Dimension: The Materials of In-depth Interviews and Focus Groups” [13] is worth mentioning. The author writes that “while analyzing the in-depth interviews with Ukrainian host workers in Poland the researchers observed a range of specific motives for selecting this particular country, among which the leading place was occupied by former connections and contacts of the female workers, that had existed long before the decision on labour migration was made. In particular the interviews revealed that having relatives in Poland or Polish family roots as well as social contacts in the country (though less often) provide Ukrainian females with certain advantages which become actual in the situation of labour migration” ([13], p. 113). These findings tell us about the determining influence of sociocultural factors, including closeness of cultural identities with host societies (of which confession and/or religion are some of the aspects). Similar conclusions were also reached by Volodko [14] and Brycz [15].

Likewise, the EU-funded “EUImagine” project that was carried out from 2010 to 2013 did not specifically focus on the issue of religious confessions. However, the religious factor was still present, albeit indirectly. For example, during interviews with the dwellers of the Zbarazh district in Western Ukraine, the role of the church and its reaction to the external migration challenges was mentioned: “Priests in churches speak because families break up [because of migration], this is no good” (41116, Zbarazh). For the same area, the most significant problem of long-term external migration was found to be characteristic and the consequent moral panic was noted: “Well, that’s all about family . . . It is very often that, for example, one goes abroad and leaves a family here, family breaks up” [41118, Zbarazh research area]; “I.: And is this a problem only for Ukrainians that someone goes abroad, while other stays here? R.: Yes, this is a big problem. It broke a lot of families. I.: Are there any examples among your friends, colleagues? R.: Yes, there are” [41126, Zbarazh research area]; “R.: It happens, certainly it happens, even often . . . So if a man or a woman does not come back for a long time young couples in most cases divorce. Even though they have a child, they get divorced.” [41240, Zbarazh research area].

According to the respondents in Western Ukraine region, the second most serious problem (after divorce) for the families of external migrants was taking care of the children of the migrants who were left to stay in Ukraine: “I think in the country there is a new generation forming, of mindless children who do not want to achieve anything in their life but they want leisure time to which they already got used, as well as to the fact that they always have money. They don’t feel the lack of financial means . . . To a certain extent, this is degradation, because they are not developing, they are only resting” [41245, Zbarazh].

It should be mentioned here that, along with certain moral panic about the threats of external migration to families and child-rearing in Western Ukraine, the EImagine project findings also observed widespread traditional perceptions of the gender models in employment and professional career growth. This is still hypothetical and requires further verification and more grounding through empirical data. However, we can still note that, in Western Ukraine, a systemic functional correlation was found between: (1) social and cultural rooting of emigration behavior patterns; (2) actual spread of this practice and the related social problems (including families' breakup and orphans); and (3) social demand for a religious organization functioning for normative control and creating a sense of belonging. Such structural connections were not detected in the other regions of Ukraine that were covered by the research survey carried out under the EImagine project.

Thus, the available qualitative data lead us to reveal the large-scale social and cultural buildups which are historically rooted and reproduced further through the application of a range of differentiating structures, as well as the historic dimensions to which the specifics of a certain community's behavioral repertoire (and the geographic area of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was, to some extent, the area generating waves of emigration from Ukraine in the Euro-Atlantic direction) are related.

As noted above, religion was not the main focus or an aspect of the quantitative data the EImagine project gathered for the purpose of this research. Accordingly, the share of representatives of the Ukrainian religious denominations within the population sample cannot reproduce the general structure of the population. The number of respondents who declared their affiliation to the denominations of the Byzantine Church tradition (represented by the UOC-KP, UAOC, UOC-MP, and UGCC) is sufficient in order to formulate our research hypotheses. Since the share of other worshippers in our sample was low, no conclusions on the migration experiences of the believers of these (relatively rare in Ukraine) denominations were reached.

First of all, available empirical data can shed some light on the differences of perception between different denominations when it comes to their place by believers and the role of the churches in social issues. Thus, the database of the World Values Study 2008 contains the question "Do you feel responsible for the social problems of the Church?" Most of the respondents with an affirmative answer were the believers of the UGCC (42.6%). The corresponding figure for the UOC-MP was 27.2%, and 29.3% for the UOC-KP. Most of the respondents who did not consider the Church to be responsible for social problems were among the members of the UOC-MP (55.7%). About 46.9% of UOC-KP believers did not consider the Church to be responsible for social problems, and the smallest numbers of believers who did not consider the Church to be responsible were the members of the UGCC (29.6%). This division clearly indicates the degree of externalities of the churches and their degree of "deepening" into everyday worldly problems, particularly in the form of a developed social doctrine. In this sense, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church inherited some flexibility and the innovation that the Catholic Church seems to possess, in an effort to meet the challenges of modernity and the requests of today's believers. Instead, the Orthodox tradition has no long experience of converting social doctrine and boasts a greater metaphysical nature, mysticism, and withdrawal from social and political issues.

In the formation of the Church's position on foreign migration, the issue of whether this perspective is important for believers probably becomes quite crucial. European Social Survey results revealed in 2012 made it possible to determine those members of the largest Ukrainian churches who had the longest migratory experiences. When answering the question "During the past 10 years, have you done any paid work in another country over at least 6 months?" 8% of the UOC-MP believers, 9% of the UOC-KP, and 12.9% of the UGCC members provided a positive answer.

The available empirical evidence, namely the Lviv population survey conducted by the Department of History and Theory of Sociology of the Lviv National Ivan Franko University in 2014 and 2015 (the number of respondents were 384 and 383 persons, respectively, and the sample was structured by quotas based on age, area of residence, and sex), allows us to formulate some

preliminary conclusions about the migration positions of the UGCC members (in the sample from 2014, there were 219 people; in the sample from 2015, there were 193 people) and the UOC-KP (in the sample from 2014, there were 84 people; in the sample from 2015, there were 76 people). The survey tools included questions on conditions that could encourage respondents to leave Ukraine (see Table 2). It is interesting to see which conditions were named and ranked by the believers of these two denominations.

**Table 2.** The answers of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) and Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP) believers to the questions about the conditions that may encourage traveling abroad (data from 2014 and 2015), in %.

| Religious Affiliation  | UGCC |   | UOC-KP  |   |   |
|------------------------|------|---|---|---|---|
|                        | Year | 2014  | 2015  | 2014  | 2015  |
| Reasons for emigration |      | The desire for self-realization and better living conditions 33.9 | Unemployment, job search 34.4                                     | The desire for self-realization and better living conditions 48.1 | Unemployment, job search 41.3                                     |
|                        |      | Unemployment, job search 35.5                                     | The desire for self-realization and better living conditions 33.1 | Unemployment, job search 32.5                                     | The desire for self-realization and better living conditions 39.7 |
|                        |      | Political instability 13.7  | Economic crisis 16.3  | Economic crisis 7.8   | Economic crisis 11.1  |
|                        |      | Economic crisis 11.5  | Political instability 13.1  | Personal and family circumstances 7.8                             | Personal and family circumstances 6.3                             |
|                        |      | Personal and family circumstances 5.5                             | Personal and family circumstances 3.1                             | Political instability 3.9   | Political instability 1.6   |

Source: Own results.

The survey recorded similar responses for the UGCC and UOC-KP members. This happened because “The desire for self-realization and better living conditions” was considered to be the most influential condition that could encourage the believers of both denominations to travel abroad in 2014. On the contrary, it was “Unemployment and job search” in 2015. The “Economic crisis” reason was seen as compelling by a larger share of the members of both denominations, and “Personal and family circumstances” seemed less important in 2015 than in 2014.

A significant difference in the distribution of answers of the members of the two churches was in the understanding of the term “Political instability” and in acknowledging its importance. In both surveys, it gathered wide support—from 13.1% to 13.7% of Greek Catholics but only from 3.9% to 1.6% among the members of UOC-KP. The differences appeared quite significant, and the dynamics seemed to be quite diverse. A possible explanation might be that the worshippers of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church were more concerned about the military conflict in East Ukraine. Half a century of forced underground and exile existence of the UGCC probably contributed to the formation of a certain behavioral repertoire by both representatives of the clergy and the members of this church. Political conflict, particularly when it is long and sharp, can be perceived as a fact that can force many Ukrainians to leave the country. In this sense, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is the “Church of migrants” not only historically, but also at present, though this reveals itself in a latent form.

Our further analysis of the Lviv population survey found that the UOC-KP believers prefer the USA as a potential direction for migration abroad (over 56%), but the members of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church were divided in their migration intentions, combining intentions for migration to the USA (29.2%) and other European countries, especially Poland (26.2%) and Germany (7.7%).

This study recorded that there was a relationship between religious affiliation and migration intentions observed in our sample of Ukraine’s population. The content of this relationship showed that, among the largest Churches of the Byzantine tradition in Ukraine, the UGCC pays the most attention to the topic of emigration. This interest is apparent when analyzing the speeches of the Church leaders and in the Church and parish structures’ activities. Their content can be called right-wing conservative and pro-European. In the authors’ opinion, the explanation for this situation is the



historical experience of this particular Church in general and especially its underground experience after the Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine. From 1939 to 1989, the UGCC carried out a very limited underground activity in Ukraine, and fully existed as a public legal institution only in Western Europe, the United States, Canada, and Australia. A lot of the UGCC clergy were migrants who personally experienced difficulties in adapting to the non-trivial conditions of the host countries. At the same time, the believers who formed the parishes of the Church abroad were also migrants from Ukraine.

Therefore, 50 years of recent history of the UGCC includes forced (e)migration. During this time, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church acted among migrants and had to integrate into the host society and to provide answers to the believers' question related to emigrant life. Therefore, the metaphor of the "Church of the migrants" is quite adequate for describing the life of the UGCC in the 20th century. As it turns out, the migratory intentions of modern Ukrainian Greek Catholics, which are similar to the position of their Church, are the most oriented to outward migration as the design of their standard of living. Among the reasons that may encourage travelling abroad named by the Ukrainian Greek Catholics were not only socio-economic reasons but also issues such as political persecution (this issue is unusual for members of other Ukrainian churches). According to the authors, the probable reason for that is a sense of threat in connection with the situation in Eastern Ukraine and in Crimea. However, in general, people decide to emigrate due to various reasons, all of them leading to the accumulation of different types of capital, such as human capital (knowledge, abilities, competences, experiences), as well as financial capital (money, savings, etc.) [16–19]. Thus, the UGCC of the second half of the 20th century can be rightly renamed to the "Church of the potential migrants."

The positions of other Churches of the Byzantine tradition represent a wide spectrum of conservative positions, ranging from considering external migration as an acceptable, though problematic, experience and that care should be provided through the organization in-church life of the believers who reside abroad (e.g., UOC-KP, UAOC), to a position that emphasizes only the negative aspects of the phenomenon of external migration and does not seek to follow their members in the host countries (e.g., UOC-MP). While the position of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was outlined above as being right-wing conservative and pro-European [20], the position of the UOC-MP may be regarded as left-wing conservative and Euro-skeptic. By this, we mean elements of social doctrine, promoting collectivism, paternalism, and certain sacralization of the state and hierarchical subordination to the Russian Orthodox Church with the concept of the so-called "Russian world."

The majority of researchers think that the "Russian world" concept emerged after the Soviet Union split in 1991, when the vast majority of Russians found themselves on the territories of the newly established independent countries and had a strong feeling of economic, political, and cultural deprivation. In order to deal with this situation, the expert and political circles of the Russian Federation developed a special policy concerning, first of all, former Soviet republics, and second, the Russian minorities residing in them. Although Shchedrovitskiy is widely thought to be the father of the Russian world concept, Shchedrovitskiy himself mentioned that this concept was crystalized from 1993 to 1997 [21]. The authors of this Russian world concept stress not Russian ethnicity as such, but the cultural connections between the so-called "Russian people" on the territories of neighboring countries and Russian Federation ([22], p. 26). For example, in 2001, Vladimir Putin stated publicly that "the notion of Russian world for centuries back was far beyond the geographical borders of Russia and even much further beyond the borders of Russian ethnos" [23].

Russian politicians became very keen on this idea and started using it in external affairs, including migration policy. In fact, the very idea of building up the system for illegal migration prevention was rejected as such, and the very institute of state borders was disregarded, especially when it came to demarcation and delimitation of borders with neighbors (since, according to this concept, Belarus and Ukraine were parts of the Russian world).

With similar enthusiasm, the Russian world concept was adopted by the clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church. As noted by Fokina: "the representatives of Russian Orthodox Church, including the Patriarch Kirill himself, using the notion of "Russian world" usually imply the area of Orthodoxy

*distribution*" ([24], p. 6). In the theological vocabulary widely used by the ROC, the synonym of the "Russian world" would be the so-called "canonical territories."

Moreover, our results demonstrated that the members of the UOC-MP were less focused on foreign migration. The primary cause of possible migration was thought to be related to socio-economic reasons, such as better employment possibilities in other countries [25] and the possibility of attaining freedom of expression as well as the possibility of criticizing the representatives of the community [26–28]. Among the preferred countries of migration, it was the Russian Federation that occupied one of the first places [29,30]; it was rated higher by the respondents than in the case of Greek Catholics or other Orthodox believers.

## 5. Conclusions

Our analysis of migration experiences and the intentions of Ukraine's population showed greater intentions toward outward migration expressed by the UGCC believers, and, in the hierarchy of motives for emigration, UCGG believers named political instability significantly more often than members of other churches. The reason for that was probably the traumatic experience of a 50-year prohibition of the UGCC (from 1939 to 1989) by the Soviet authorities, and concerns and worries about the current war conflict in Eastern Ukraine.

Potential challenges brought by the European integration and the mentioned denominations appeared to be different. Thus, for the UGCC, the "Church of the migrants" in the past and the near future, there is a significant increase in the activities of migrants abroad, and the appropriate infrastructure and adaptation activities in host countries. For the UOC-KP and UAOC, these challenges are linked to the announced plans of the association and the prospect of creating a "united national Ukrainian Orthodox Church." In the context of the topic and the theme of our study, there is a clear need for a statement of their own social doctrine with the answers to the questions posed by its members, including the issues related to Ukrainian external migration. For the UOC-MP, the main challenge seems to be the dissonance between the Church position with regard to the phenomenon of emigration and the modern observable trends in the Ukrainian society. The latter updates the choices that confront the UOC-MP—a review of its social doctrine or relative marginalization as a result of the failure to respond to the demands of time and the community of its believers.

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## Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| UGCC   | Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church                      |
| UAOC   | Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church              |
| UOC-MP | Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate |
| UOC-KP | Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate   |

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