



Central European
Digital Media
Observatory



Christmas in Kyiv How War Changes Culture

Coffee Beans





CEDMO and DEKK Institute representatives spent part of the holidays in Kyiv and its outskirts. As part of the trip, they held meetings at several sociological workplaces, public opinion polling agencies and partners from the Ukrainian World Value Survey.

Hunger is the best cook and necessity the best motivator. In a severe crisis, people quickly learn to overcome differences and cooperate. Crises can thus influence people's identity and behavior with unprecedented speed and magnitude. Sometimes of the entire nations.

The most visible example is the mass transition of a large segment of Ukrainian society to the **Gregorian calendar** when **celebrating Christmas**, i.e. moving Christmas from January 7 after the New Year to December 24-25, as is more customary in the cultural sphere of Western Christianity. Hardly anyone expected that the Ukrainian effort to separate their identity from Russian cultural influences would go so far.

In the past, about 20% of Ukrainians celebrated Christmas on December 24-25. Today, the number is up to 45%. Some European media incorrectly reported the figure to be 60%. This was taken from a survey of users of the Ukrainian state application Дія (Digital country), which allows, among other functions, to answer poll questions. However, the results are not representative. Ukrainian sociologists estimate that the number will grow. A joke is starting to circulate that Ukraine will be the first country where people routinely celebrate Christmas twice.





In similar situations, which cause extensive disruption of people's lives, in the insensitive language of science, we also talk about the so-called „natural experiment“. The scientific interest of the academic part of CEDMO is the understanding of information flows and information disturbances. The scientific interest of DEKK is the understanding of social cohesion. For that purpose, we **established cooperation with Ukrainian scientists** who stayed at home during the war: in a country facing an invasion.

They will help us answer questions such as:

- What has happened to the Ukrainian collective identity since 2014 and especially since February 24, 2022?
- How does war change culture? We already know that it has a massive impact on language, religious affiliation, political and national identity. Similar changes usually take generations, Ukrainians today go through them over the course of years or months.
- What can the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Central Europe, which has a long-term problem with information disorders and polarization, learn from this?

We will look for answers utilising scientific public opinion polls, focus groups or field research in the territory of Central Europe and Ukraine

You can follow our short insights into the ongoing research on the CEDMO website in the form of microblogs, which will be added at regular intervals from February 2023.