

## MODERN TRENDS OF UKRAINIAN CULTURAL TRADITIONS AND THEIR TRANSFORMATION

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**Abstract.** Transformation of Ukrainian cultural traditions occurs under the influence of certain changes, namely political, economic, geopolitical and European integration. The aim of the article is to analyze and identify the peculiarities of transformation of Ukrainian cultural traditions from the beginning of independence to 2022. Methodology. A statistical analysis based on the results of the World Values Survey in Ukraine for the period 1996-2020 has been used to investigate the transformation of cultural traditions. The results demonstrate that the transformation of Ukrainian cultural traditions is slow with generational and socio-political system changes. At the same time, the more superficial elements of everyday culture are changing rapidly. Ukraine is among the countries where post-material values are beginning to develop. Compared to the 1996 data, a certain increase in the percentage of people of mixed type, characterized by both materialistic and post-materialistic values, can be observed in 2022. This indicates a trend of slow changes in values. The situation did not alter significantly between 1996 and 2022. Among the main reasons are a lack of structural economic change and low economic growth, with the economy heavily dependent on global market conditions. At the same time, the transformation of cultural traditions was positively influenced by the processes of European integration and citizens' will to join the EU. A positive factor in the transformation of cultural traditions may be the protection of Ukraine's national interests during the Russian-Ukrainian war, which promotes civic identity and trust in political institutions.

**Key words:** cultural traditions, values and mindset, peculiarities of Ukrainian culture, transformation of Ukrainian culture.

### 1 Introduction

The transformation of Ukrainian cultural traditions takes place under the influence of political, economic, geopolitical and European integration changes. Worldview attitudes and beliefs tend to change not only with the change of generations, but also with changes in the socio-economic system and the transition to a market economy, where human rights are protected, there is a high level of freedom of choice, democracy, a decent quality of life and well-being of the population is ensured. At the same time, cultural tradition reflects the values and worldview of citizens on history, customs, rituals, economy, politics and the like. Tradition acts as a certain form of culture broadcasting, as a social memory. Tradition embodies the uniqueness, distinctiveness, identity of the people, nation, society, social group, in other words - the subject to which it belongs. Given the lack of comprehensive studies of the transformation of Ukrainian cultural traditions, the analysis and identification of changes in the worldview and values of Ukrainian citizens is relevant.

The aim of the article is to analyze and identify the specifics of the transformation of Ukrainian cultural traditions from the beginning to 2022.

### 2 Literature review

In a general philosophical sense, "tradition" is a certain type of relationship between successive stages of development of an object, in particular culture, when the "old" passes into the "new" and productively "works" in it. In modern cultural literature, the concept of "tradition" (from Latin *traditio* - transmission) is understood as a social and cultural heritage, which is transmitted from generation to generation and reproduced in certain societies and social groups; customs,

rituals, norms of behavior, views, tastes, historically developed and transmitted from generation to generation; any collective (group) stereotype of activity (Vashkevych, 2013). The concept of cultural tradition is a property of culture, reflecting the form of human interaction with it, is an element of culture, transmitted from generation to generation and preserved for a long time. Culture is defined as a set of material and spiritual values created by mankind throughout its history; a historically acquired set of rules within society for its preservation and harmonization. Thus, cultural tradition is a set of values, norms, rules, transmitted by generations in the course of historical, socio-economic, political development of society.

Cultural tradition is a set of world outlook ideas of a general nature, placed in the basis of the life of individual public national-state, supra-state formations in the form of national unities around the ideas, transversal in the socio-historical existence of large regions in all times of civilization. Cultural traditions are expressed in folk culture and creativity, customs, rituals, language, literature, folklore, etc. In a more general sense, cultural traditions are represented by elements of cultural and historical heritage expressed in ideas, values, customs, rituals, ways of perceiving the world, etc. As a viable spiritual past inherited from previous generations, cultural tradition is enshrined in norms of behavior, mentality, morality, myths, religious rituals and ceremonies (Kopievska, 2014). Cultural tradition is a system of certain rules, tested by a long historical time, obligatory for individual and collective behavior in any social environment from ancient to modern times.

In the 1960s, A. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn conducted a critical review into the definition of culture. Yet the term is still not unambiguously defined (Bakacsi et al., 2002; Hall, 2008). Beugelsdijk and Maseland were the first to distinguish the concepts of cultural understanding (Yu & Pirnazarov, 2020):

1. Culture is the artificially created result of human activity, including interaction and communication, which forms social capital ("connections"). This concept includes a number of elements: lifestyle stereotypes of nations; structure and levels of needs depending on lifestyle, consumption structure; economic behavior and norms, perception of behavior; informal rules of social behavior determining social capital; values determining attitudes to freedom, wealth, labor, legislation, piling up, religion; forms of organization of economic activity culture (individualism or collectivism, liberalism, free or strict regulation of activity); level of cultural tolerance towards other cultures, etc. This approach closely links economic culture and economic activity, with the boundaries of the connections being blurred.
2. Culture as ideas and worldviews that determine behavior, which primarily depends on the level of consciousness and thinking of the individual of a certain nation, the mental and cognitive attitudes of economic culture. At the same time, worldviews depend on the institutions of the country, the legitimacy of the authorities and the level of lawfulness. For instance, according to neoconservatism, existing institutions, traditions and moral values shape the perception of the world.
3. Culture, as a set of values that regulate behavior in society, performs the function of defining forms of human activity. T. Parsons defines values as the highest principles produced by a social system in order to maintain integrity, unity, self-regulation and consensus in different subsystems (Parsons, 1950). Parsons (1950) shares M. Weber's view of personal value standards or modes of value orientation as a separate component of the social system, classified into cognitive, moral and highly assessed models of value orientation (appreciative).

Values can be considered as the basis of worldview and culture. The considered approaches to the understanding of culture are

closely related to each other, forming a logical chain of links between them: values - worldviews - norms and standards of behavior - results of human activity in different areas of life, including in the cultural sphere. Values change over time as a result of long-term changes in the political and economic system, institutions, norms and rules of behavior in society.

Three main worldview approaches have emerged in the literature: 1) American worldview approach based on the moral values of US analyst J. Capen (Capen, 1993) (trust, gratitude, understanding one's personality as a reflection of company principles, Christian values); 2) social and moral foundations of the Western European world with reference to English management scholar J. Mole (understanding people's behavior and motives, generational conflict over professional training, ethical economic behavior based on professionalism) (Mole, 2011); 3) the Asian model of practical ethics as a philosophy of the collective and institution of people, built on the Japanese management system, historical, social and cultural features of Asian countries (Romanenko, 2009).

### 3 Methodology

The study considers the concept of cultural tradition as a set of norms and values that are transmitted by generations depending on the state of the socio-political system and have the property to change within generations. This definition became the basis for the study of the transformation of cultural traditions using the World Values Survey in Ukraine for the period 1996-2020. Table 1 presents socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents who took part in the World Values Survey in Ukraine in the given period.

Tab. 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents to the World Values Survey in Ukraine, 1996-2020

	1996	2006	2011	2020
Number of respondents, persons	2811	1000	1500	1289
Gender				
Male	40,4	45	45	40,8
Female	59,6	55	55	59,2
Age				
Under 25 years old	11,2	15,5	14,7	9,2
25-35 years old	18,5	18,0	18,7	19,1
35-45 years old	23,3	17,8	15,9	21,5
45 years old and older	47,0	48,8	50,7	50,2
Education				
Complete general secondary education	13,3	3,0	4,7	1,7
Professional (vocational) education	41,8	38,7	35,8	23,1
Professional pre-university education	23,2	23,5	26,5	40,2
Higher education	21,2	33,6	33,1	34,2

Source: calculated by the author on the basis of WVS Wave 3 (1995-1998); WVS Wave 5 (2005-2009); WVS Wave 6 (2010-2014); WVS Wave 7 (2017-2020).

To assess the transformation of the Ukrainian cultural tradition, survey data for the period 1996-2020 was used to address and reflect:

- 1) the socio-economic and cultural order in Ukraine, its transformation and reflect the place of the Ukrainian cultural tradition in the world, taking into account the influence of political, economic and religious factors;
- 2) the generally important values for Ukrainian citizens (family, work, friends and leisure time, politics, religion);
- 3) level of interpersonal trust, trust in institutions; level of

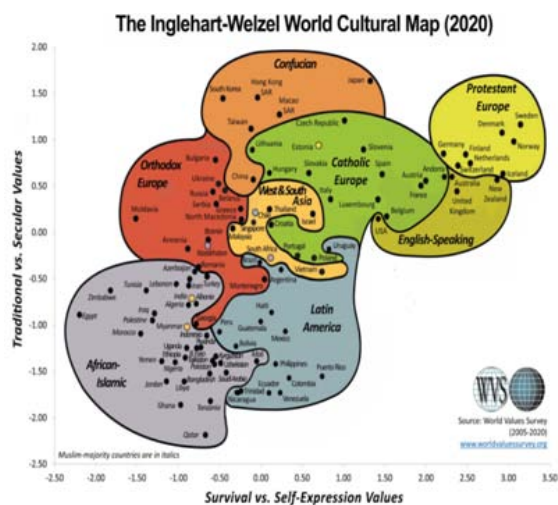
- 4) participation in political activities;
- 4) civic identity, national dignity.

To analyze the level of civic identity, the results of the survey of the Institute of Social and Political Psychology of National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine and the Association of Political Psychologists of Ukraine from 21 to 30 November 2018 among 1204 respondents in all regions of Ukraine, the results of the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) survey 2022 were used. To assess the state of national pride, the results of the survey of the Sociological group "Rating" on April 6, 2022 were used.

### 4 Results

Figure 1 shows the cultural map of the world, reflecting the new socio-economic, cultural order formed in the process of transformation of the political order in different countries, the entry of certain countries into economic unions. This was reflected in the cultural traditions of some countries. At the same time, Ukrainian cultural tradition reflects orthodox ideological orientations of the citizens. Ukrainian society demonstrates a rather high level of religiosity, in which the level of religiosity depends on gender, age, place of residence (urban/rural), and level of education, while there is no connection between religiosity and income. Ukrainian cultural tradition is characterized by the expressive regional nature of all aspects of religious and confessional-church self-determination. The West is traditionally characterized by a high level of religiosity, the South and the East by the lowest, with the self-determination of the South and East in the religious sphere being unstable in recent times. This probably reflects the overall contradictory changes in the mass consciousness of these regions since 2014.

Figure 1: World Cultural Map, 2020



Source: World Value Survey (2022).

As Figure 1 illustrates, developed European countries are characterized by the expression of secular-rational values (less importance of religion, family, authority) compared to traditional values (religion, parent-child bonding, respect for authority, family values). The Western European cultural tradition is also characterized by values of self-expression through the influence of Protestantism on the worldview of the population of Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Switzerland, Ireland and the Netherlands. Protestant Western Europe is also characterized by a gravitation towards environmental protection, a growth of tolerance towards different social groups and minorities, and an increasing importance of participation in the socio-political life of the country. Rational values and values of self-expression are also characteristic of Catholic Europe and English-speaking countries, especially in France, Austria, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, the UK and the USA. Unlike Ukraine, where religion is still an important value orientation,

these Western countries are also characterized by a high level of freedom, democracy and recognition of the significance of human rights protection. In the most developed countries of Europe culture is built on the Protestant ideology of M. Weber's times, Catholicism, which highly values a person, his labor, innovation and honesty.

Table 2 presents the priority of values in Ukraine in 1996, 2006, 2011 and 2020, which indicates no radical changes in the transformation of assessments. Consequently, for the period 1996-2020 work remained the most important for Ukrainians, second place was taken by family (average 1.77), third by politics (average 1.94), fourth by friends (average 1.94). In fifth place - religion (average 2.34), in sixth - leisure time (average 2.9). It should be noted that the importance of friends and religion decreased insignificantly, while the priority of politics increased. On the whole, three groups of values can be traced in terms of priority: 1) work; 2) family, friends, politics and religion; and 3) leisure time.

Tab. 2: Value prioritization based on citizens' assessment of the importance of work, family, friends, leisure, politics, religion in Ukraine in 1996, 2006, 2011 and 2020

	1996	2006	2011	2020	Average value, +/-	Deviation (2020-1996), +/-
Number of respondents, persons	2811	1000	1500	1289	1650,00	-
Importance in life (Very important - 1, Rather important - 2, Not very important - 3, Not at all important - 4)						
Importance in life: work	1,16	1,14	1,10	1,15	1,14	-0,01
Importance in life: family	1,78	1,80	1,72	1,78	1,77	0,00
Importance in life: friends	2,07	1,96	1,87	1,85	1,94	-0,22
Importance in life: leisure	2,92	2,76	2,94	2,97	2,90	0,05
Importance in life: politics	1,69	1,90	1,78	1,87	1,81	0,18
Importance in life: religion	2,45	2,40	2,26	2,25	2,34	-0,21

Source: calculated by the author on the basis of WVS Wave 3 (1995-1998); WVS Wave 5 (2005-2009); WVS Wave 6 (2010-2014); WVS Wave 7 (2017-2020).

Ukraine is among the post-Soviet countries with low average incomes, dominated by the value systems of former generations and low material security that limit opportunities for self-expression. It is noteworthy that respondents in the age category of 15-29 years show indicators more oriented towards post-materialistic values than the generation of 50 and older. This suggests a transformation of the socio-cultural tradition in Ukraine in the direction of post-materialistic societies. This situation is a confirmation of R. Inglehart's socialization lag hypothesis, demonstrating a qualitative gap between values of different generations, reflecting the difference in conditions of their growing up. The development of self-expression values is important for Ukraine because it stimulates the emergence of democracy and civil society. Socio-economic development enhances people's material, intellectual and social independence, gives rise to a sense of security and autonomy, allows for greater attention to self-realization, participation in social processes and quality of life. Thus, socio-economic development is the basis for the transformation of culture.

Ukraine, as a country with an industrial economy, is characterized by survival values, which are manifested in low levels of tolerance towards various social groups and minorities, low levels of trust in institutions and interpersonal trust (Table 3), the political system, low levels of political activity and self-expression due to low income levels.

Tab. 3: Distribution of Ukrainian respondents' answers on the level of interpersonal trust, 1994-2019

The wave of the survey	Level of interpersonal trust		Level of interpersonal trust		Total
	Most people can be trusted	You need to be very careful	Most people can be trusted	You need to be very careful	
1994-1998	809	1803	31%	69%	2612
2005-2009	245	644	28%	72%	889
2010-2014	347	1054	25%	75%	1401
2017-2019	388	868	31%	69%	1256
Total	1789	4369	29%	71%	6158

Source: calculated by the author on the basis of WVS Wave 3 (1995-1998); WVS Wave 5 (2005-2009); WVS Wave 6 (2010-2014); WVS Wave 7 (2017-2020).

For the Ukrainian cultural tradition one of the most important values is the sense of security, freedom, which is due to a long period of existential insecurity during the USSR. European integration, democratization, decentralization and liberalization in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war will ensure the transformation of Ukrainian cultural traditions in the future. We can expect a shift from the importance of values of physical, economic freedom and security to the values of self-expression, the importance of quality of life and well-being. In the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the Ukrainian cultural tradition is also characterized by an increase in the level of civic identity. Consequently, according to a survey 2022 by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS), 85% of the Ukrainian population consider themselves first and foremost citizens of their country (Figure 2). At the same time among different social categories of the population - age, regional, linguistic-ethnic, gender and settlement - there is no big difference in this indicator. Thus, among residents of the East 81% consider themselves first of all citizens of Ukraine, among Russian-speaking Ukrainians - 81%, among Russian-speaking Russians - 78%.

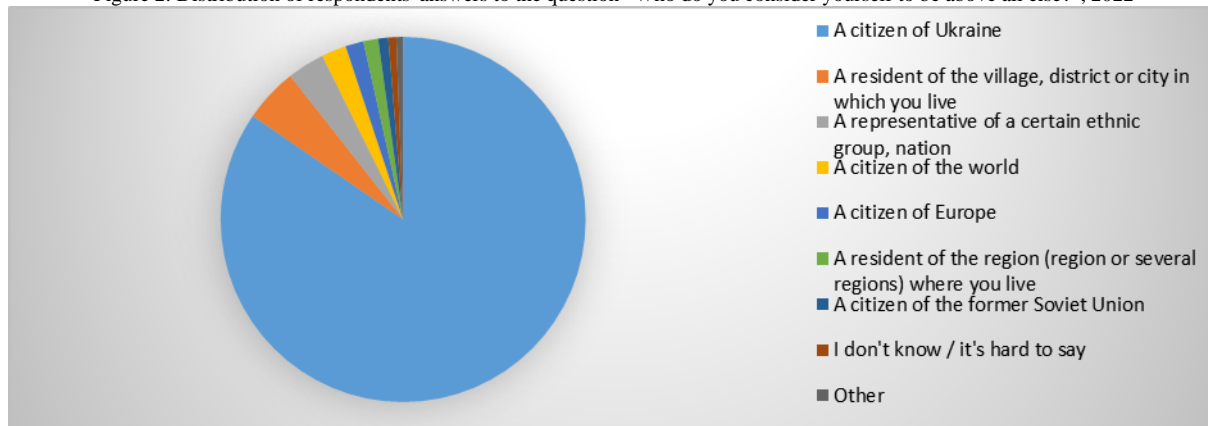
The dynamics of changes in civic identity in 1992 and in the period from 2000 to 2022 (Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine) are indicative. Indeed, civil identity has almost doubled - from 45.6% in 1992 to 84.6% in 2022, thus making all other identities in the territorial and political context marginal. It should be noted that civic identity grew during the periods of revolution and the outbreak of military conflict in eastern Ukraine: from 50.6% in 2013 to 64.4% in 2014; from 62.6% in 2021 to 84.6% in 2022. This means that the cultural tradition in Ukraine, which is part of civic identity, is affected by political, military developments. The mechanism of the regional conflict, together with external aggression by the Russian Federation in 2013, triggered a sustained positive evolutionary change in the acceptance of civic identity, which moderately intensified over the following eight years. Finally, the Russian Federation's full-scale aggression against Ukraine in late February 2022 triggered another revolutionary change in civic identity. It launched a third phase of civic mobilization in which other options for territorial or political identities gained a marginal or subsidiary place (KIIS, 2022).

In Ukraine one can trace a gravitation towards secular-rational values, where values such as family and religion are still important. At the same time there is no value orientation on authority, in particular the authority of the authorities, as evidenced by the low level of trust in political institutions and the high level of support for democracy. In addition, citizens of Ukraine are oriented towards survival values: weighty priorities such as freedom, security, their own financial situation, low level of trust in socio-economic system, gradual increase of tolerance to social groups and minorities, increasing level of participation

in social and political life, as evidenced by the Dignity Revolution, protests during the war of 2022, numerous protests and calls to the authorities to solve socially significant problems for citizens. It should also be noted that in Ukraine, since the beginning of European integration and decentralization, a mechanism for citizen participation in social development through projects of united territorial communities has been working. At the present stage, Ukraine can be classified as a country with secondary modernization thanks to the processes of European integration. It promotes borrowing of EU experience in public administration, functioning of political institutions,

implementation of decentralization reforms in various spheres of life and other important reforms according to the leading experience of European countries. Accordingly, the processes of European integration will accelerate the transformation of Ukraine's cultural tradition towards an increase in the importance of rational values and an orientation towards personal well-being and quality of life. Due to European integration one can expect cultural changes: citizens of Ukraine will recognize democracy in the context of ensuring human rights, the widest possible freedom to choose their own life path.

Figure 2: Distribution of respondents' answers to the question "Who do you consider yourself to be above all else?", 2022



Source: KIIS (2022).

In terms of civilisational and cultural attributes, modern Ukraine is generally committed to Western European political values, although a prominent role in the political life of the people is played by features of mentality and culture peculiar to Eastern civilisation. In a complex worldview and axiological situation, the Ukrainian people choose the priorities of freedom, responsibility, solidarity, dignity and law, despite the decline in national economic growth rates and the general poverty of large segments of the population.

Given the radical changes in Ukraine's geopolitical reference points in 2022, one can trace the transition to European cultural values and at the same time the recovery of Ukrainian culture and worldview. In today's globalised world, a certain country's success largely depends on which geopolitical cluster it belongs to. While Ukraine used to be at the intersection of clusters that differed not only in economic or political-strategic, but also in worldview-values, today Ukraine's geopolitical choice is in favor of the EU. It is this choice of democratic outlook that is the key condition for Ukrainians to join the integrity (even if not in formal EU terms) of the European nations. Ukraine's belonging to Europe is a new objective reality, and active cooperation in the political, economic space to ensure EU security and protection of Ukraine will contribute to a positive cultural shift. Today, Ukrainians at the level of values are forming their own identity, similar to the European identity, but different due to their own history and culture and the protection of national political, security, economic interests. As noted by Inglehart (2020), "economic development, cultural change, and political change go together in coherent and even, to some extent, predictable patterns". The full self-identification of Ukrainians and the transformation of their culture, values and worldview will be facilitated by the modern end-to-end democratization and liberalization of society, the state and civil society.

## 5 Discussion

The study of values makes it possible to assess the transformation of cultural tradition in Ukraine, the departure from Soviet values and the transition to the values of a market economy, free will and freedom. This means that the transformation of the socio-economic system and European

integration processes have led to changes in the values, beliefs and worldview of citizens. The analysis of the cultural map of the world on the results of values of citizens in different countries for the period 1999-2020 shows that Ukraine occupies an intermediate position on the scale of "traditional-secular" and we observe a gradual movement closer to the pole of secular-rational values in 1999-2022. In addition, Ukraine's journey from the values of survival to the values of self-expression is slow, as in other post-Soviet countries, although countries in Eastern Europe have seen a more rapid movement (e.g. Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary) (World Values Survey Ukraine 2020). As Inglehart (2005) notes, in pre-industrial societies the family is crucial for survival. In Ukraine, the family has the highest value (the average estimate of importance for 1996-2020 is 1.77). However, despite the high importance of the family to Ukrainian citizens, the divorce rate is 3.6 per thousand people (as of 2019). In 2020, 167.9 thousand marriages were officially registered compared to 493 thousand in 1991. In 1991, 200,810 couples were divorced, while in 2020 the number is 119,253. Ukraine is the leader among European countries by divorce rate. On the whole during the period of independence the number of marriages has decreased several times. Thus the recognition of the value of the family is not identical to the desire to create one, which may imply a higher level of choice for Ukrainian citizens to register their marriages. According to Inglehart (2005), pre-industrial societies are also characterised by social conformism rather than individualistic aspirations, support for respect for authority and a high level of national pride and a nationalistic outlook. According to such theoretical postulates, Ukraine cannot be classified as a pre-industrial society for several reasons. Firstly, a nationalistic worldview has not been largely characteristic of Ukrainian citizens since independence. The overwhelming majority of the population lacked national pride in their history, culture and state. The level of national pride increased in 2022 during the escalation of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the protection of national interests by the Ukrainian government. According to the surveys, the following features of Ukrainian cultural tradition in the context of national dignity can be traced:

- 1) According to a survey conducted by the Institute of Social and Political Psychology of National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine and the Association of Political Psychologists of Ukraine from 21 to 30 November

- 2018 among 1204 respondents in all regions of Ukraine, the work of great Ukrainian poets, writers, composers and performers is a subject of national pride for 56.5% of Ukrainians. In particular, the achievements of Ukrainian athletes make 48.0% of Ukrainians proud, let alone the history of the Ukrainian Cossacks, Zaporozhian Sich (47.0%), the victory in World War II (46.7%) and the achievements of Ukrainian folk art (dumas, songs, decorative arts, folk architecture, etc.) (38.4%). Compared to 2015, the number of respondents who agreed with the statement that these achievements were a source of national pride increased, and significantly (from 36.9% to 48.0%) with regard to sports achievements (Slyusarevskyy, 2019);
- 2) The data of the survey, conducted by the Sociological group "Rating" on April 6, 2022, recorded a significant increase of the feeling of pride for Ukraine among the respondents. If in August 2021 34% of respondents said that they felt pride for the state (then the emotion of summation towards Ukraine prevailed), today this feeling is dominant (80%). Sadness about Ukraine is felt by 32% of respondents, joy - by 20%, fear - by 16%, anger - by 11% and interest - by 6%. Since August 2021 the number of respondents who self-identify as citizens of Ukraine has increased significantly (from 75% to 98%) and as "European" - from 27% to 57%. Instead, fewer respondents talk about themselves as a "Soviet person", their number decreased from 21% to 7%. A very high level of local patriotism is also recorded. Civic self-consciousness is now dominant in all age and regional groups. As far as the pro-European self-identification is concerned, there are practically no differences in the age fractions. At the same time, certain differences in the macro-regions are recorded: the European identity is somewhat more prevalent in the west and in the center. The pro-Soviet identity is relatively more frequent among the oldest ones.

## 6 Conclusion

The transformation of Ukrainian cultural traditions occurs slowly as generations and the socio-political system change. At the same time, the more superficial elements of everyday culture are changing rapidly. Ukraine is among the countries where post-material values are beginning to develop. Compared to the data of 1996, a certain increase in the percentage of people of mixed type characterized by both materialistic and post-materialistic values can be observed in 2022, indicating a trend of slow changes in values. The situation did not change significantly between 1996 and 2022, the main reasons being the lack of structural economic shifts and low economic growth with a high dependence of the economy on the global market conditions. At the same time, the transformation of cultural traditions was positively influenced by the processes of European integration and citizens' will to join the EU. A positive factor in the transformation of cultural traditions may be the protection of Ukraine's national interests during the Russian-Ukrainian war, which promotes civic identity and trust in political institutions.

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**Primary Paper Section: A**

**Secondary Paper Section: AL**