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The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC KP)

Religious institution

All actors • Ukraine

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate; primate – Filaret (Mykhailo Denysenko), Patriarch of Kyiv and All Rus'-Ukraine.

Official position/functions regarding the conflict

From the beginning of the protests on the Maidan until today, the UOC KP has followed a clear and confident pro-Ukrainian line of the Patriarch Filaret, who openly emphasized the importance of the role of this church many times. [For example, earlier he declared that “if it were not for the UOC \(MP\), there would be no war in Ukraine.”](#)

Having attracted politically active believers in the past, this church has greatly lost its public influence after the granting of the Tomos of Autocephaly and the formation of the OCU. Although initially, Patriarch Filaret supported this process and even received the status of an “honorary Patriarch,” he [later criticized it, accusing his previous team of betrayal and urging his flock to fight against Metropolitan Epifaniy and the OCU.](#)

Although publicly the UOC KP continues to position itself as the “Ukrainian church,” upon the formation of the OCU its influence has practically reduced to zero; from time to time the UOC KP posts individual messages about the psychological imbalance of the OCU primate on social networks, albeit without any confirmation.

Interests in the region of the conflict

If earlier the main interest of the UOC KP was to function as the pro-Ukrainian political alternative to the UOC (MP), now it is primarily interested in maintaining its ambiguous status and retaining its former supporters. The vision of this church is determined by the personal position of Patriarch Filaret, who would like to see the collapse of the OCU and the return of its parishes to the UOC KP, along with his own influence. According to the theologians, however, after he dies, it is most likely that most of its clergy will join the OCU, and the UOC KP will cease to exist as a separate structure.

Activity regarding the conflict

Before 2018 and the granting of the Tomos, the UOC KP publicly and actively supported the new government in the person of Ukraine’s former president Petro Poroshenko. Its actions mainly concerned active humanitarian service. An unusual change happened when the UOC-KP priests were mobilized into the ranks of military chaplains; many of them started serving in the conflict zone in the Armed Forces of Ukraine and in the National Guard of Ukraine; their number decreased later, however, and they mainly stayed at the level of individual brigades and units, where they received official employment.

[Another important step of Patriarch Filaret was his letter addressed to Patriarch Kirill, which was regarded as an attempt at reconciliation; however, according to the comments in the UOC KP, in fact, it was not meant to be reconciliatory and did not bring any actual result.](#)

After the public condemnation of the Unification Council and the creation of the OCU, the UOC-KP severed any relations with the Orthodox world and withdrew itself into the zone of ecclesial alienation. [This did not prevent Patriarch Filaret from ordaining two more bishops after the outflow of the UOC KP hierarchs to the OCU, as well as from re-creating the Synod of the UOC KP.](#)