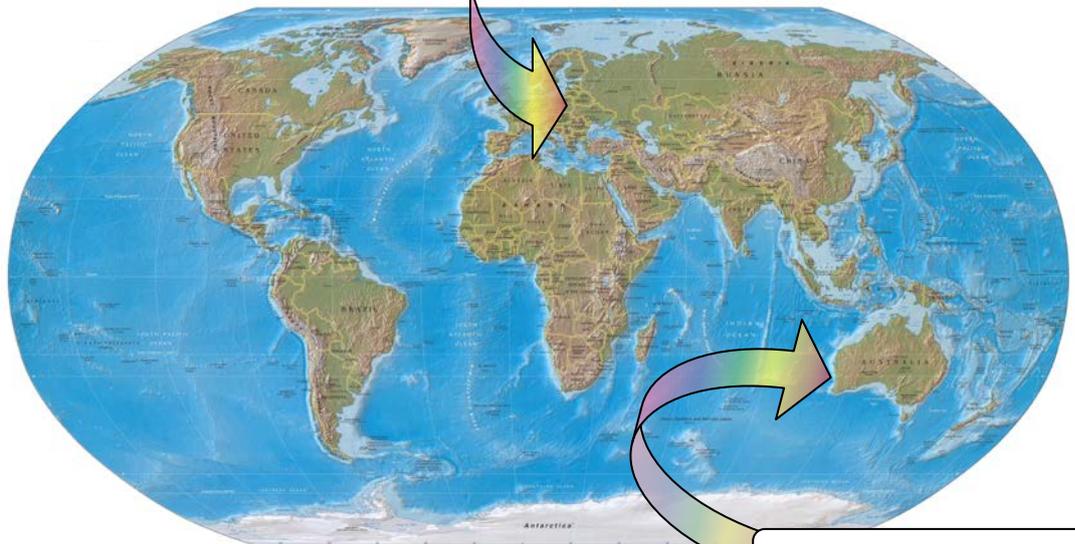


# UKRAINE



We were there



Now we are here

## FACTS:

- **Population:** 46.2 million (UN, 2007)
- **Capital:** Kiev
- **Area:** 603,700 sq km (233,090 sq miles)
- **Major languages:** Ukrainian (official), Russian
- **Major religion:** Christianity
- **Life expectancy:** 62 years (men), 74 years (women) (UN)
- **Monetary unit:** 1 hryvnya = 100 kopyikas
- **Main exports:** Military equipment, metals, pipes, machinery, petroleum products, textiles, agricultural products
- **GNI per capita:** US \$1,520 (World Bank, 2006)
- **Internet domain:** .ua
- **International dialing code:** +380

## **Ukrainian Community in WA**

**Ukrainian Association of Western Australia in Perth Inc**  
PO Box 420 Dianella, WA 6059

**Ukrainian Association**  
57 Ivory Street, Noranda WA 6061

**St. John The Baptist**  
20 Ferguson St, Maylands, WA, 6051  
ph / fax: (08) 9271 4711

## **Overview of cultural groups**

According to 2001 census the population of Ukraine consists of: Ukrainian 77.8%, Russian 17.3%, Belarusian 0.6%, Moldovan 0.5%, Crimean Tatar 0.5%, Bulgarian 0.4%, Hungarian 0.3%, Romanian 0.3%, Polish 0.3%, Jewish 0.2%, other 1.8%.

## **Language/dialects spoken**

According to the Constitution, the state language of Ukraine is Ukrainian. Russian, which was the *de facto* official language of the Soviet Union, is widely spoken, especially in eastern and southern Ukraine. The 2001 census revealed that 67.5% of the population declared Ukrainian as their native language and 29.6% declared Russian.

It is sometimes difficult to determine the extent of the two languages. Many people use a Surzhyk (a mixture of Ukrainian and Russian where the vocabulary is often combined with Ukrainian grammar and pronunciation) while claiming in surveys that they speak Russian or Ukrainian (though most can speak both literary languages). Some ethnic Ukrainians, while calling Ukrainian their native language, use Russian more frequently in their daily lives.

## **Dietary preferences**

Ukrainian cuisine has a rich history and offers a wide variety of dishes. Many have been partly lent to other cuisines like German, Turkish and Polish. The cuisine of Ukraine has also influenced the cuisines of other neighbouring countries, e.g. Russian cuisine. Meat (especially pork), vegetables, fruit, mushrooms, berries, and herbs play a major part. Ukrainian food is intended to be filling, and should be served in large quantities.

The Ukrainian diet includes chicken, pork, beef, fish and mushrooms. Ukrainians eat a lot of potatoes, grains, fresh and pickled vegetables, different kinds of bread. Popular traditional dishes include varenyky (boiled dumplings with mushrooms, potatoes, sauerkraut, cottage cheese or cherries), borsch (soup made of beets, cabbage and mushrooms or meat) and holubtsy (stuffed cabbage rolls filled with rice, carrots and meat). Ukrainian specialties also include **Chicken Kiev** and **Kiev Cake**. Ukrainians drink stewed fruit, juices, milk, sour milk (they make cottage cheese from this), mineral water, tea and coffee, beer, wine and horilka.

**Borsch** - is Ukrainian beet soup.

**Varenyky** - (or pyrohy or perogies) are dough pockets filled with potato, or potato and cheddar cheese or kapusta (sauerkraut), or cottage cheese, or blueberries, or cherries.

**Holubtsi** - are Ukrainian cabbage rolls. The filling is mainly rice with a small amount of beef minced.

**Kutya** - is a Christmas Eve mixture of cooked wheat, poppyseed and honey, served cold as a thick slightly liquid mixture.

**Nalysnyky** - are the Ukrainian version of crepes.

**Kyshka** - is a sausage made from buckwheat and blood.

## **Religion/spirituality/observances**

The dominant religion in Ukraine is Eastern Orthodox Christianity, which is currently split between three Church bodies: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church autonomous church body under the Patriarch of Moscow, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Kiev Patriarchate), and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

A distant second by the number of the followers is the Eastern Rite Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, which practices a similar liturgical and spiritual tradition as Eastern Orthodoxy, but is in communion with the See of Rome (Roman Catholic Church) and recognizes the primacy of the Pope as head of the Church.

Additionally, there are 863 Roman Catholic (Latin or Western Rite) communities, and 474 clergy members serving some one million Roman Catholics in Ukraine. The group forms some 2.19% of the population and consists mainly of ethnic Poles, who live predominantly in the western regions of the country.

Protestant Christians also form around 2.19% of the population. Protestant numbers have grown greatly since Ukrainian independence. The Evangelical Baptist Union of Ukraine is the largest group, with more than 150,000 members and about 3000 clergy.

There are an estimated 500,000 Muslims in Ukraine. About 300,000 of them are Crimean Tatars. There are 487 registered Muslim communities, 368 of them on the Crimean peninsula. In addition, some 50,000 Muslims live in Kiev, mostly foreign-born.

### **Public Holidays:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>English Name</b>	<b>Notes</b>
January 1	New Year's Day	
January 7	Orthodox Christmas	Religious Holiday
March 8	International Women's Day	
May 1 & 2	Spring and Labour Days	
May 9	Victory Day	Commemoration of those who perished in the war against fascism
June 28	Constitution Day	
August 24	Independence Day	
November 7	Traditional day off	This former Soviet holiday has lost its political meaning

## **Customs/traditions**

Ukrainian customs are heavily influenced by Christianity, which is the dominant religion in the country. The culture of Ukraine has been also influenced by its eastern and western neighbors, which is reflected in its architecture, music and art.

Communist rule had quite a strong effect on the art and writing of Ukraine. In 1932, Stalin made socialist realism state policy in the Soviet Union when he promulgated the decree "On the Reconstruction of Literary and Art Organizations". This greatly stifled creativity. During the 1980s glasnost (openness) was introduced and Soviet artists and writers again became free to express themselves as they wanted.

The tradition of the Easter egg, known as pysanka, has long roots in Ukraine. These eggs were drawn on with wax to create a pattern; then, the dye was applied to give the eggs their pleasant

colours, the dye did not affect the previously wax-coated parts of the egg. After the entire egg was dyed, the wax

was removed leaving only the colourful pattern. This tradition is thousands of years old, and precedes the arrival of Christianity to Ukraine.

## **Recreational activities**

Ukraine greatly benefited from the Soviet emphasis on physical education. Such policies left Ukraine with hundreds of stadiums, swimming pools, gymnasiums, and many other athletic facilities. Of the many different sports Ukraine plays, the major sport is soccer.

Other sports are also popular in Ukraine. Boxers Vitali Klitschko and Wladimir Klitschko have held heavyweight world champion titles. Ukraine has an ice hockey league and a national ice hockey team. They also have a basketball league, and cricket clubs.

Many Ukrainians enjoy picnics outside at almost any time of year. Picnics often involve shish-kabobs or barbecued meat, homemade salads, and, of course, alcohol.

Ukrainians love to sit around fires at night and snack, drink, and sing songs to a guitar. It's one of those quintessential Ukrainian things that you see everywhere.

Increasingly popular in Ukraine are all sorts of extreme sports (hangliding, bungee jumping, river rafting, downhill mountain biking, spelunking, etc.), and, more generally, all forms of active recreation (hiking, biking, boating, horseback riding, skiing, etc.).

## **Environment**

The Ukrainian landscape consists mostly of fertile plains (or steppes) and plateaus, crossed by rivers such as the Dnieper (*Dnipro*), Seversky Donets, Dniester and the Southern Buh as they flow south into the Black Sea and the smaller Sea of Azov. To the southwest, the delta of the Danube forms the border with Romania. The country's only mountains are the Carpathian Mountains in the west, of which the highest is the Hora Hoverla at 2,061m, and those on the Crimean peninsula, in the extreme south along the coast.

Ukraine has a mostly temperate continental climate, although a more Mediterranean climate is found on the southern Crimean coast. Precipitation is disproportionately distributed; it is highest in the west and north and lesser in the east and southeast. Western Ukraine receives around 1,200mm of precipitation annually. While Crimea, receives around 400mm of precipitation. Winters vary from cool along the Black Sea to cold farther inland. Average annual temperatures range from 5.5°C to 7°C in the north and from 11°C to 13°C in the south.

## **Your Notes and Comments:**