

# Ukraine

## *Ethnicity in Ukraine*

### *Group selection*

The **Ukrainians** constitute 77.8% of the population. The largest minority are the **Russians** (17.3%). The proportion of ethnic Russians and Russian speaking Ukrainians declines from East to West, the Russians are thus regionally concentrated in Eastern Ukraine and on Crimea (<sup>4625</sup>, 527).

<sup>4625</sup> [Bos, 2010]

Other politically organized minorities are the **Hungarians**, the **Romanians and Moldovans** in the in the Zakarpattia and Chernivtsi regions and in Odessa, the **Rusyns** who also live in the Zakarpattia region, and the **Crimean Tatars**.

The Bulgarian and Polish minorities are also locally concentrated but politically irrelevant and thus not listed in this dataset (<sup>4626</sup>). There also is a Belarusian minority in Ukraine (0.6%), but they are not politically organized. Most Belarusians in Ukraine are assimilated and speak Russian or Ukrainian, such as former president Viktor Yanukovich who is said to be of Belarusian origin.

<sup>4626</sup> [Kulyk, 2002]

Since the annexation of Crimea in 2014, the population of Crimea is excluded from Ukraine. Following this, the relative group size has been adjusted and the **Crimean Tatars** have been removed from the Ukrainian census. Since 2015, the **Ukrainians** constitute therefore 80.6% of the population. Additionally, **Russians**, the largest minority, have decreased in relative population size from 17.3% to 14.8% (<sup>4627</sup>, <sup>4628</sup>).

<sup>4627</sup> [All Ukrainian Population Census 2001]

<sup>4628</sup> [Crimean Federal District Census 2014]

### *Power relations*

#### *1991-2014*

Since Ukrainian independence, the **Ukrainians** rule in a power-sharing regime as senior partners together with the junior partner Russians. The **Russians** are considered junior partners because the ruling Party of Regions ideologically defends and upholds the rights of ethnic Russians and speakers of Russian language in Ukraine (<sup>4629</sup>). Several ethnic Russians served as ministers since independence.

<sup>4629</sup> [Party of Regions Ukraine, 2009]

An important political issue is the language: According to the constitution, Ukrainian is the only official state language. Organizations and political parties in the Russian speaking community have complained that the increased use of Ukrainian in schools, the media, and the courts is a disadvantage (<sup>4630</sup>). In Ukraine, not only

<sup>4630</sup> [U.S. State Department, 2006-2009]

the ethnic Russians speak Russian, but also the ethnic Ukrainians living in East and South Ukraine as well as in the capital Kiev prefer Russian as their first language. Indeed, there is a polarization between Ukrainian speakers and Russian speakers, which is mirrored in the voting behavior and a cleavage between the center (Ukrainian) and the regions (Russian). However, since this polarization between East and West Ukraine is rather a center-periphery issue and because several ethnic groups speak Russian (Ukrainians, Russians, Moldovans), the coding does not distinguish between Ukrainian speakers and Russian speakers but between ethnic Ukrainians and ethnic Russians. This distinction is supported by the fact that people in Ukraine, especially Ukrainian speakers, handle the language issue pragmatic and switch between Ukrainian and Russian language according to their conversational partners.

The **Hungarian** minority is largely concentrated in the Zakarpattia region. A treaty between Ukraine and Hungary provides the preservation of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious identities, what makes them politically relevant in national politics. But the Hungarian minority has no political power.

The **Tatars** are discriminated: Crimean Tatar minorities have complained about discrimination by the ethnic Russian majority in Crimea and the independent city of Sevastopol and called for the Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar languages to be given a status equal to Russian in Crimea. Crimean Tatars asserted that discrimination by Crimean local officials deprived them of equal opportunities for employment in local administrations, and that propaganda campaigns, particularly by pro Russian groups, promoted hostility towards them among other inhabitants (<sup>4631</sup>).

<sup>4631</sup> [U.S. State Department, 2006-2009]

The **Romanians and Moldovans** are coded as one combined ethnic minority, although in the Ukrainian census these two groups are listed separately, because the division is historically arbitrary. Also, in Ukrainian census the people are more or less arbitrarily allocated to the categories, mostly based on where they live (e.g. in the Zakarpattia and Chernivtsi regions there are Romanians, and in Odessa mostly Moldovans). In these three regions, there are schools teaching Romanian as a primary language, along with newspapers, TV, and radio broadcasting in Romanian. Ethnic Romanians are represented at the local councils of a number of Ukrainian districts. On the national political level, however, the Romanians/Moldovans are powerless (<sup>4632</sup>).

<sup>4632</sup> [Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2004]

The status of **Rusyns** (Carpatho-Rusyns) is controversial. “Since the 1990s, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, and the Czech Republic have recognized Rusyns as a distinct national minority eligible for state support for educational and cultural activity” (<sup>4633</sup>). In Ukraine, their status is not recognized, but “the regional assembly in the Transcarpathian oblast (Zakarpattia) recognized Rusyns as a distinct nationality, and the central government in Ukraine adopted a law (August 2012) that lists Rusyn (rusynska) as one of the country’ regional languages” (<sup>4634</sup>). There is an organiza-

<sup>4633</sup> [Magocsi, 2017]

<sup>4634</sup> [Magocsi, 2017]

tion called “Sojm Podkarpatskih rusinov”, which demands regional autonomy. The organization and their leader Dimitry Sydor are being accused of being subsidized by Russia (<sup>4635</sup>). Whether these claims are true or not, this situation gives them political relevance. The Rusyns have no regional autonomy and are powerless. Since Ukraine does not recognize this ethnicity, finding reliable population figures is difficult (but see <sup>4636</sup>).

<sup>4635</sup> [Gvat, 2011]

<sup>4636</sup> [Magocsi, 2017]

### *2015-2017*

Since the turbulent events in Ukraine starting in November 2013 with the Euromaidan movement, the Russians lost their status as junior partners - there are almost no Russian government members anymore (and if yes, they are pro-European) and the former ruling Party of Regions has lost its significance and was replaced by the Opposition Bloc (<sup>4637</sup>). Hence, the status of **Ukrainians** has changed to dominant.

<sup>4637</sup> [Kuzio, 2015]

The **Russians** are self-exclusionist. The eastern parts of Ukraine, the Donbass area (Donetsk and Luhansk), and Crimea are de jure still a part of Ukraine, but de facto controlled by Russia. While the referenda were strongly criticized, a large part of ethnic Russians are living in those territories beyond Ukrainian governmental influence (<sup>4638</sup>, <sup>4639</sup>). Thus, self-exclusion reflects the status quo most accurately (<sup>4640</sup>).

<sup>4638</sup> [BBC, 2014]

<sup>4639</sup> [BBC, 2015]

<sup>4640</sup> [Chossudovsky, 2014 and 2017]

Since the events of 2014, the **Hungarian** minority has gained more political relevance: their parties advocate “for a better representation of ethnic Hungarians in the Ukrainian government, granting more rights to the minority and do not raise separatist talks” (<sup>4641</sup>). Additionally, they demand recognition of their dual citizenship and maintenance of their language rights. In September 2017 a controversial language law circumscribed minority language rights in general and it raised concerns among Hungarians. “The law, approved Sept. 5, restructures Ukraine’s education system and specifies that Ukrainian will be the main language used in schools” (<sup>4642</sup>). Yet, the same coding as in the former period was applied.

<sup>4641</sup> [Chelyadina, 2016]

<sup>4642</sup> [AP News, 2017]

The **Romanians and Moldovans** in Ukraine do not ask for independence or even regional autonomy. However, they want to preserve their culture and language. Hence, as in the Hungarian case, the language bill of September 2017 was criticized and caused the Romanian president to cancel his visit to Ukraine (<sup>4643</sup>). In sum, the aftermath of the events of 2014 created tensions with almost every ethnic group in Ukraine (<sup>4644</sup>).

<sup>4643</sup> [RadioFreeEurope Radio Liberty, 2017]

<sup>4644</sup> [Daynova, 2016]

## *Bibliography*

- [All Ukrainian Population Census 2001] All Ukrainian Population Census (2001). Retrieved on 16.03.2018 from: <http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/nationality/Crimea/>
- [AP News, 2017] AP News. (2017). Romanian leader cancels visit to Ukraine over language law. Retrieved on 13.10.2017 from: <https://www.apnews.com/bfd3f114e34c09b0f34db01aa41a/Romanian-leader-cancels-visit-to-Ukraine-over-language-law>.
- [BBC, 2014] BBC. (2014). Ukraine's sharp divisions. Retrieved on 13.10.2017 from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26387353>
- [BBC, 2015] BBC. (2015). Ukraine crisis in maps. Retrieved on 13.10.2017 from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27308526>
- [Bos, 2010] Bos, Ellen. (2010). Das politische System der Ukraine. In: Ismayer, Wolfgang, Richter, Solveig Soldner, Markus. (eds.). (2010). Die politischen Systeme Osteuropas. Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- [Chelyadina, 2016] Chelyadina, Inga. (2016). Between East and West: The Hungarian Minority in Ukraine. Retrieved on 13.10.2017 from: <http://www.nouvelle-europe.eu/node/1951>
- [Chossudovsky, 2014 and 2017] Chossudovsky, Michel. (2014 and 2017). Three Years Ago: The U.S. has Installed a Neo-Nazi Government in Ukraine. Retrieved on 13.10.2017 from: <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-u-s-has-installed-a-neo-nazi-government-in-ukraine/5371554>
- [Crimean Federal District Census 2014] Crimean Federal District Census (2014). Retrieved on 16.03.2018 from: [http://www.gks.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/population/demo/perepis\\_krim/KRUM\\_2015.pdf](http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/demo/perepis_krim/KRUM_2015.pdf)
- [Daynova, 2016] Daynova, Milena. (2016). Anton Kisse: Bulgarians in Ukraine seek to preserve their cultural identity, language and traditions. Retrieved on

- 13.10.2017 from: <http://bnr.bg/en/post/100712213/anton-kisse-bulgarians-in-ukraine-seek-to-preserve-their-cultural-identity-language-and-tradition>
- [Gvat, 2011] Gvat, Ivan. (2011). Ukraina v leshhatah pocijskix spetssluzb. Retrieved on 13.10.2017 from: <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/24433107.html>
- [Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2004] Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada. (2004). Ukraine: Treatment of ethnic Romanians; state protection. Retrieved on 28.4.2014 from: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/403dd22114.html>
- [Krymova 2017] Krymova, Julija. (2017). Na vyborah gubernatora Sevastopolja progolosovali krymskie tatary. (<https://rg.ru/2017/09/10/reg-ufo/na-vyborah-gubernatora-sevastopolia-progolosovali-krymskie-tatary.html> [03.10.2017]).
- [Kulyk, 2002] Kulyk, Volodymir. (2002). Revisiting a success story: Implementation of the recommendations of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities to Ukraine, 1994-2001. Retrieved on 21.4.2014 from: [http://edoc.vifapol.de/opus/volltexte/2008/605/pdf/32\\_CORE\\_Working\\_Paper\\_6.pdf](http://edoc.vifapol.de/opus/volltexte/2008/605/pdf/32_CORE_Working_Paper_6.pdf)
- [Kuzio, 2015] Kuzio, Taras. (2015). Rise and Fall of the Party of Regions Political Machine. *Problems of Post-Communism* 62(3), 174-186.
- [Magocsi, 2017] Magocsi, Paul Robert (2017): Rusyn. Retrieved on 13.10.2017 from: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Rusyn-people>
- [Makarenko, 2017] Makarenko, Olena. (2017). Fixing mistakes. How Ukraine treats Crimean Tatars after the occupation of Crimea. Retrieved on 13.10.2017 from: <http://euromaidanpress.com/2017/05/19/how-ukraine-treats-crimean-tatars-after-their-return-from-deportation/>
- [Party of Regions Ukraine, 2009] Party of Regions Ukraine. (2009). Program. Retrieved on 12.5.2009 from: [www.partyofregions.org.ua/meet/program/](http://www.partyofregions.org.ua/meet/program/).
- [RadioFreeEurope Radio Liberty, 2017] RadioFreeEurope Radio Liberty. (2017). Kyiv 'Disappointed' As Romanian President Cancels Ukraine Visit Over Language Bill. Retrieved on 13.10.2017 from: <https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-romania-president-cancels-visit-over-language-law/28751116.html>
- [U.S. State Department, 2006-2009] U.S. Department of State. (2006-2009). Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Ukraine. Retrieved on 21.4.2014 from: <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/#wrapper>

## *Political status of ethnic groups in Ukraine*

*From 1991 until 2014*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Ukrainians	0.778	SENIOR PARTNER
Russians	0.173	JUNIOR PARTNER
Romanians/Moldovans	0.008	POWERLESS
Crimean Tatars	0.005	DISCRIMINATED
Hungarians	0.003	POWERLESS
Rusyns	$2.0 \times 10^{-4}$	POWERLESS



Figure 960: Political status of ethnic groups in Ukraine during 1991-2014.

*From 2015 until 2017*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Ukrainians	0.806	DOMINANT
Russians	0.148	SELF-EXCLUSION
Romanians/Moldovans	0.009	POWERLESS
Hungarians	0.003	POWERLESS
Rusyns	$2.0 \times 10^{-4}$	POWERLESS



Figure 961: Political status of ethnic groups in Ukraine during 2015-2017.

## *Geographical coverage of ethnic groups in Ukraine*

*From 1991 until 2014*

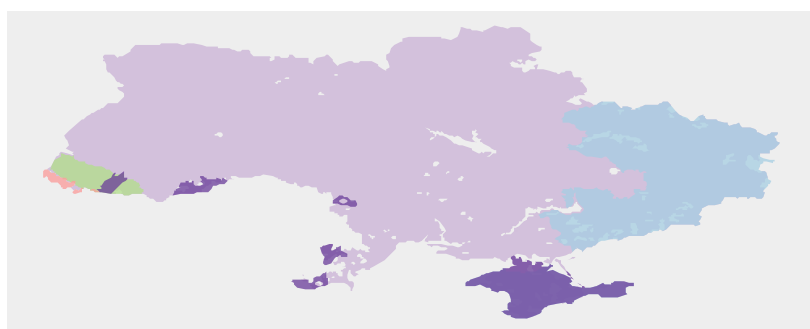


Figure 962: Map of ethnic groups in Ukraine during 1991-2014.

Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
Ukrainians	562 370	Statewide
Russians	132 645	Regionally based
Crimean Tatars	25 560	Regionally based
Rusyns	10 487	Regionally based
Romanians/Moldovans	8 998	Regionally based
Hungarians	1 637	Regionally based

Table 323: List of ethnic groups in Ukraine during 1991-2014.

*From 2015 until 2017*

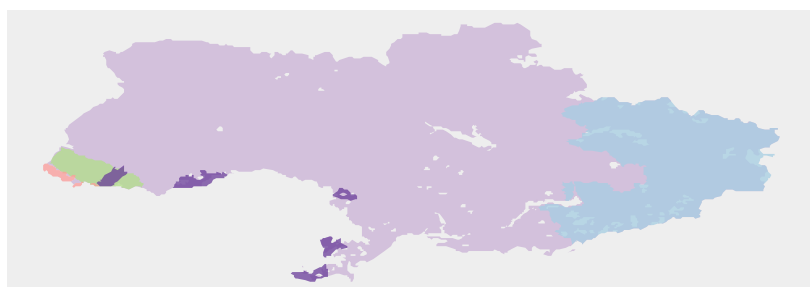


Figure 963: Map of ethnic groups in Ukraine during 2015-2017.



	Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
■	Ukrainians	544 292	Statewide
■	Russians	109 238	Regionally based
■	Rusyns	10 487	Regionally based
■	Romanians/Moldovans	8998	Regionally based
■	Hungarians	1637	Regionally based
■	Crimean Tatars	0	Regionally based

Table 324: List of ethnic groups in Ukraine during 2015-2017.

## *Conflicts in Ukraine*

*Starting on 2014-01-21*

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of Ukraine	Maidan	Ukrainians	2014-01-21	No	Yes, from EGIP	Split

*Starting on 2014-04-11*

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of Ukraine	DPR	Russians	2014-04-11	Explicit	Yes, from EGIP	Yes

*Starting on 2014-05-03*

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of Ukraine	LPR	Russians	2014-05-03	Explicit	Yes, from EGIP	Yes

*Starting on 2014-09-16*

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of Ukraine	United Armed Forces of Novorossiya	Russians	2014-09-16	Explicit	Yes, from EGIP	Yes
Government of Ukraine	DPR	Russians	2015-06-10	Explicit	Yes, from EGIP	Yes
Government of Ukraine	LPR	Russians	2015-06-10	Explicit	Yes, from EGIP	Yes