



## My Drift

**Title: Ukraine**

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**Ukraine is a country in Eastern Europe. It is the second-largest country by area in Europe after Russia, which it borders to the east and north-east. Ukraine also shares borders with Belarus to the north; Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary to the west; Romania and Moldova to the south; and has a coastline along the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea.**

- **Currency: Hryvnia**
- **Capital: Kyiv**
- **Area: 233,031 square miles**
- **President: Volodymyr Zelenskyy**
- **Population: 45 million**
- **Official language: Ukrainian**
- **Major religion: Christianity**



**Volodymyr Zelenskyy**

## **Brief History**

The territory of modern Ukraine has been inhabited since 32,000 BCE. During the Middle Ages, the area was a key center of East Slavic culture which was destroyed by the Mongol invasion in the 13th century. Over the next 600 years, the area was contested, divided, and ruled by external powers, including the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Austrian Empire, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and the Tsardom of Russia. The Cossack Hetmanate emerged in Central Ukraine in the 17th century but was partitioned between Russia and Poland, and ultimately absorbed by the Russian Empire entirely. In the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, a Ukrainian national movement resurfaced and the Ukrainian People's Republic was formed in 1917. This short-lived state was forcibly reconstituted into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, which became a founding member of the Soviet Union in 1922. From 1932 to 1933 the Holodomor (Great Famine) killed millions of Ukrainians. In 1939, Western Ukraine was annexed by the USSR. Ukraine was the most populous and industrialized republic after the Russian Soviet Republic, until regaining its independence in 1991, following the dissolution of the USSR.

Following its independence, Ukraine formed a unitary republic under a semi-presidential system, with separation of powers into legislative, executive, and judicial branches. It declared itself a neutral state, forming a limited military partnership with Russia and other CIS countries while also establishing a partnership with NATO in 1994. In 2013, after President Viktor Yanukovich suspended the Ukraine–European Union Association Agreement in favor of closer economic ties with Russia, mass protests and demonstrations known as the Euromaidan erupted, escalating into the Revolution of Dignity that led to the overthrow of Yanukovich and the establishment of a new government.

These events formed the background for Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014 and the War in Donbas the following month, a protracted conflict with Russian-backed separatists that culminated in a Russian invasion in February 2022. Ukraine has continued seeking closer economic, political, and military ties with the West amid continuing war with Russia.

Ukraine is a developing country with a lower-middle income economy, ranking 74th in the Human Development Index. Ukraine is the poorest country in Europe. As of 2020 it suffers from low life expectancy and widespread corruption. However, due to its extensive fertile land, Ukraine is one of the largest grain exporters in the world. It is a member of the United Nations and the Council of Europe. Ukraine is not a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).



## Some General Information

Five cities with the most population:

1. Kyiv 2,800,000
2. Kharkiv 1,500,000
3. Donetsk 1,440,000
4. Odessa 1,100,000
5. Dnipro 1,000,000

78% of the population is ethnic Ukrainian, with another 17% being Russians and the remainder made up of other, smaller ethnic groups.



**Kyiv**



**Kharkiv**



**Donetsk**



**Odessa**



### **Tallest mountains**

There are predominantly two main mountain regions in Ukraine which are the Carpathians and the Crimean mountains. Ukraine is located on the East European Plain, therefore most of its area consists mostly of rolling hills rather than real mountains.



**Mount Hoverla**

Mount Hoverla at 6,762 feet is the highest mountain in Ukraine and part of the Carpathian Mountains. The mountain is in the Eastern Beskids in the Chornohora region.

### **Primary rivers**

The most notable rivers of Ukraine include the Dnieper, Dniester, Southern Buh, and Siversky Donets. The longest river is the Dnieper and the longest tributary is the Dnieper's tributary Desna.



**Dnieper River**



### **Largest lakes**

The contiguous territory of Ukraine contains some 4,000 lakes. Within the borders of Ukraine there are over 3,000 lakes with a combined surface area of more than 772 square miles, which constitutes nearly 3.5 percent of the country's total land area.

The largest natural lake in Ukraine is Lake Yalpuh. It covers an area of 58 square miles, has an average depth of about 6.6 feet, a maximum depth of 18 feet and, at its southernmost point, adjoins Lake Kugurluy.

Svitiaz Lake is the deepest lake in Ukraine with a maximum depth of 192 feet. It is also the second largest lake in the country. Svitiaz belongs to groups of Shatsk's lakes, which are in Polissya (Volyn region) in the utmost north-western corner of Ukraine, close to the borders with Poland and Belarus.



**Lake Yalpuh**



**Svitiaz Lake**

The Kremenchuk Reservoir is the largest water reservoir in Ukraine and is located on the Dnieper River. It covers a total area of 870 square miles in the territories of the Poltava, Cherkasy, and Kirovohrad Oblasts in central Ukraine. The reservoir is 92.5 miles long, 17.3 miles wide, and has an average depth of 20 feet.



**Kremenchuk Reservoir**

## Questions and Answers

### Is Ukraine safe to visit?

*Not now. Russia is currently invading and bombing Ukraine.*

**Travel advisory:** All areas of Ukraine are unsafe for travelers. Russian troops are advancing in the north, south, and east and major cities are being targeted.

Normally, Ukraine is quite safe to visit, except for the Donetsk and Lugansk regions (where war has been going on for years). Ukraine has numerous tourist attractions: mountain ranges suitable for skiing, hiking and fishing; the Black Sea coastline as a popular summer destination; nature reserves of different ecosystems; churches, castle ruins and other architectural and park landmarks; various outdoor activity points. The major tourist destinations are the cities of Kyiv, Lviv, Odessa, and Chernivtsi.



**Black Sea Coastline**

### Is Ukraine rich or poor?

Ukraine is a developing country with an economic growth rate of 2.3%. Despite these improvements, Ukraine remains the poorest country in Europe by nominal GDP per capita, which is mostly attributed to high corruption.

### What is Ukraine life expectancy?

Life expectancy at birth for women is 78.3 years and for men it is 68.4 years. Overall life expectancy is 73.4 years.

### Is Ukraine a good country to live?

Not now but could be. Ukraine has a rich cultural history, and the lifestyle of its people is characterized by good food, deep friendships and a love of nature.

### **Traditional Ukrainian food**



**Borsch perogie (borsch) with pickled potato and carrot cake**

### **What is Ukraine known for producing?**

Partly because of rich soils and a favorable climate, Ukraine's crop production is highly developed. Its output of grain and potatoes is among the highest in Europe, and it is among the world's largest producers of sugar beets and sunflower oil.

### **What is President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and wife Olena Zelenska age and do they speak English?**

Both are 44 years old, and both speak fluent English.

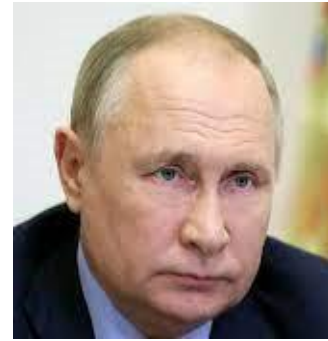


**Ukraine's first lady Olena Zelenska issues plea to the world: 'STOP WAR'**



## **Russia invades Ukraine**

On 24 February 2022, Vladimir V. Putin ordered Russian forces to invade Ukraine, a European democracy of 45 million people, bombarding its cities along with tanks and troops closing in on the capital, Kyiv, prompting a mass exodus of refugees.



**Russia President  
Vladimir V. Putin**

Russia's full-scale invasion is the largest mobilization of forces Europe has seen since 1945 is still underway. So far, four weeks later as I write this article, Moscow has been denied the swift victory it anticipated, and has failed to capture major cities across the country, including Kyiv, the capital. It has been weighed down by an ill-prepared military and has faced tenacious resistance from Ukrainian soldiers and civilian resistance fighters. Still, Russia has superior military might, and Putin has indicated that he won't back down from his ultimate goal of capturing Kyiv, toppling Ukraine's democratically elected government, and subsuming the country into Russia's orbit.

## **Russia invades Ukraine**





**The war has unleashed a devastating humanitarian toll and claimed thousands of lives. It has also prompted more than 3 million people to flee Ukraine in less than three weeks, spurring what the United Nations has called the fastest-growing refugee crisis since World War II.**

**In the besieged southern port city of Mariupol, a Russian strike on a maternity hospital on March 9th killed at least three people and injured 17. The city has no electricity or water, and people have been boiling snow for water, felling trees to burn for heat and digging trenches to accommodate the city's mounting numbers of bodies.**



**Russian airstrike on Mariupol Maternity Hospital draws world-wide outrage**

**Why did Russian troops invade?** President Putin declared Russia could not feel "safe, develop and exist" because of what he claimed was a constant threat from Ukraine. Most of his justifications for war were false or irrational.

**Here is what I think.** Most older people in the world remember when the Russia lead communist state was called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) or just the Soviet Union. That communist state was established on 30 December 1922 and was the successor to the Russian Empire and was the first country in the world to be based on Marxist socialism.

**The Russian-dominated Soviet Union grew into one of the world's most powerful and influential states and eventually encompassed 15 republics—Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Belorussia, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan,**

**Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.**



**USSR Map**

**In 1991, the Soviet Union was dissolved following the collapse of its communist government.**

**Vladimir Putin worked as a KGB foreign intelligence officer for 16 years, rising to the rank of lieutenant colonel before he had to resign in 1991 due to the turmoil in Russia's government at the time. Putin continued to work in various government positions until he became the president of Russia in 2000. He has been either president or prime minister ever since then.**

**Well, an angry president Putin has stated on multiple occasions that the collapse of the Soviet empire “was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century” and had fostered separatist movements inside Russia. Putin said the Soviet collapse also was a tragedy for all Russians. Tens of millions of our fellow citizens and countrymen found themselves beyond the fringes of Russian territory.**

### **The Russia – Ukraine Peace Treaty**

**The Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership between Ukraine and the Russian Federation was an agreement between Ukraine and Russia, signed**



**in 1997, which fixed the principle of strategic partnership, the recognition of the inviolability of existing borders, and respect for territorial integrity and mutual commitment not to use its territory to harm the security of each other. The treaty prevents Ukraine and Russia from invading one another's country respectively and declaring war. Ukraine announced its intention not to renew the treaty in September 2018. By doing so the treaty did expire on 31 March 2019.**

**Russia didn't abide by the treaty anyway. In February 2014, Russia invaded and subsequently annexed the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine. This event took place in the aftermath of the Revolution of Dignity and is part of the wider Russo-Ukrainian War. Putin has been planning this all-out invasion of Ukraine since then.**

**Putin's ongoing war is a nightmare for the Ukrainian people!**

**If Putin is not stopped, Ukraine will not be the only country Russia invades!**

**Vladimir Putin wants to build back or create another Russian Empire.**

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