

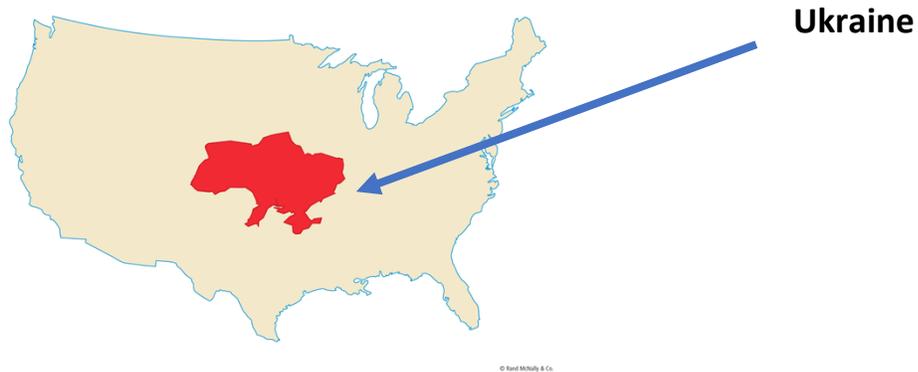
Resource on Ukraine

New Jersey Council for the Social Studies (Feb. 2022)



Ukraine is the second largest country by land area in Europe with Russia being the largest state. It has the eight largest population with approximately 44 million people. In the 10th century Kiev, located on the Dnieper River was the center of the first Slavic state, Kyivan Rus, which was also the most powerful state at the time. When compared in size to the United States, the area is equal in size to the area of New England, Mid-Atlantic states, or the states of Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas and parts of Illinois, Iowa, and Colorado.

New Jersey has about 75,000 people of Ukrainian ancestry living here. New York (148,700), Pennsylvania (122,291), California (83,125), and Illinois (47,623) are other states with a significant population.



During the Middle Ages in the 13th century, the Mongols invaded and destroyed Kiev and the area of Ukraine. The area was divided and ruled by competing states of Poland-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Austria-Hungary, Russia (Moscow) and the Ottoman Empire (Constantinople).



After the Napoleon, the Congress of Vienna redrew the map of Europe to maintain a balance of power. During the 19th century, the identity of Ukraine was strongly influenced by Russian culture and tsars.



A Ukrainian national movement for independence began during World War I following the Russian Revolution. The Ukrainian People's Republic was declared on June 23, 1917. After World War II, the western part of Ukraine merged into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, and the whole country became a part of the Soviet Union. Ukraine gained its independence in 1991, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

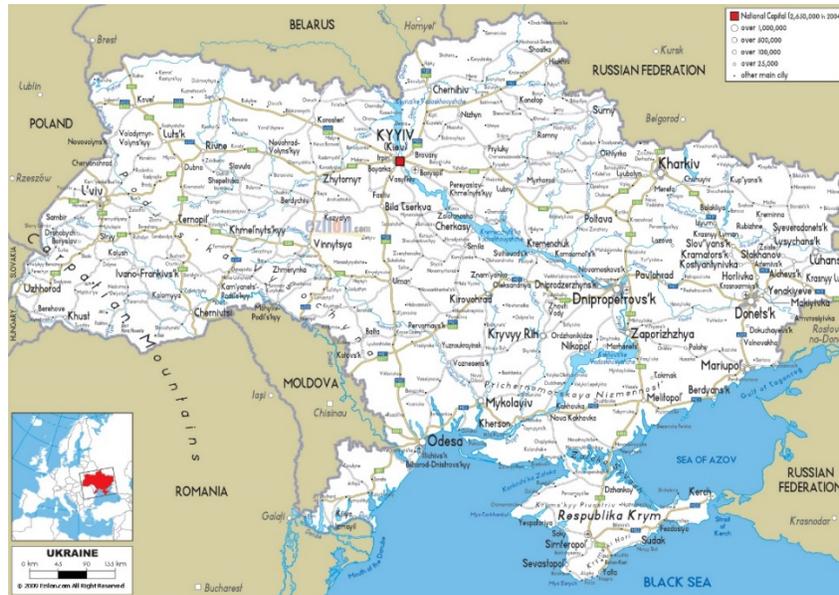


Following its independence, Ukraine declared itself a neutral state; it formed a limited military partnership with Russia and other CIS countries while also establishing a partnership with NATO in 1994. In 2013, after the government of President Viktor Yanukovich had decided to suspend the Ukraine–European Union Association Agreement and seek closer economic ties with Russia, a several-months-long wave of demonstrations and protests known as the Euromaidan began, which later escalated 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 the annexation of Crimea by Russia in March 2014 and the War in Donbas in April 2014. On January 1, 2016, Ukraine applied for the economic component of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with the European Union.



Ukraine is a developing country ranking 74th in the Human Development Index. It is the poorest country in Europe, suffering from a very high poverty rate as well as severe corruption. However, because of its extensive fertile farmlands, Ukraine is one of the largest grain exporters in the world. It also maintains the third-largest military in Europe after Russia and France. Ukraine is a unitary republic under a semi-presidential system with separate powers: legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The country is a member of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the GUAM organization, and the Lublin Triangle, and is one of the founding states of the CIS, even though it never became a member of the organization.

As the map below illustrates, Ukraine is a large country with 44 million people. In comparison, New Jersey has a population of 9 million, New York State, 20 million, Pennsylvania, 13 million. Canada, 38 million. The population of Ukraine might be compared to the population of NJ, PA, NY, and DE.



President **Volodymyr ZELENSKY**
 Prime Minister **Denys SHMYHAL**
 Capital: Kyiv

Economic Overview:

GDP per capita/person: Ukraine \$3,100, Russia = \$1,786, European Union = \$36,700, USA = \$56,200
 GDP Purchasing Power Parity (PPP): Ukraine = \$12,100, Russia - \$26,200, European Union = \$41,500, USA = \$60,500

Industries - coal, electric power, ferrous and nonferrous metals, machinery and transport equipment, chemicals, food processing Agricultural products - maize, wheat, potatoes, sunflower seed, sugar beets, milk, barley, soybeans, tomatoes

Exports \$60.67 billion (2020 est.) corn, sunflower seed oils, iron/iron products, wheat, insulated wiring, rapeseed (2019) partners: Russia 9%, China 8%, Germany 6%, Poland 6%, Italy 5%, Turkey 5% (2019)

Imports \$62.46 billion (2020 est.) refined petroleum, cars, packaged medicines, coal, natural gas (2019) partners: China 13%, Russia 12%, Germany 10%, Poland 9%, Belarus 7% (2019)

Population 43.7 million (July 2021 est.) Population Growth -0.49% (2021 est.)

Ethnicity Ukrainian 77.8%, Russian 17.3%, other 4.9% (2001 est.)

Language Ukrainian (official) 67.5%, Russian (regional language) 29.6%, other 2.9% (2001 est.)

Religion Orthodox, Ukrainian Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, Jewish (2013 est.)

[Ukraine - The World Factbook \(cia.gov\)](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/00_00_00_00_00.html)

1st in Europe in proven recoverable reserves of uranium ores, 2nd place in Europe and 10th place in the world in terms of titanium ore reserves, 2nd place in the world in terms of explored reserves of manganese ores and iron ore.

Ukraine Famine



The people in Ukraine experienced devastating oppression during the Stalin era beginning in the 1930s and continuing through World War 2. The Ukrainian famine—known as the Holodomor, a combination of Ukrainian words for “starvation” and “to inflict death. Almost four million lives were lost in the attempt by Josef Stalin to replace Ukraine’s independent farms with government run ‘collective farms’. Stalin also wanted to punish Ukrainians who wanted independence and their own country. This was a famine deliberately caused by the confiscation of grain from farmers identified as ‘kulaks’, who were well-to-do peasants. The state police transported over 50,000 kulaks from Ukraine to Siberia because they failed to meet the quotas set by the totalitarian Soviet government.

[How Joseph Stalin Starved Millions in the Ukrainian Famine - HISTORY](#)



St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Church in South Bound Brook, NJ was constructed as a memorial to the victims of the Holodomor.

Immigrants from the Ukraine

The first Ukrainian immigrant to America, **Ivan Bohdan**, who sailed with John Smith to Jamestown in 1607. Bohdan had escaped captivity from the Turks. The first significant group of Ukrainians came between 1880-1914 to escape oppression from Austria-Hungary and Russia. Most settled in North Dakota and the Midwest. The second wave of immigrants came during the Ukrainian famine, with about

12,000 finding a way to flee the oppression of Stalin. During World War II, many families were separated in the Ukraine and left homeless. About 80,000 refugees settled in New York City and the Mid-Atlantic states. The largest wave of immigrants from the Ukraine came in the 1990s after the fall of communism in Europe and the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, with many settling in New Jersey. The United States has almost 1 million Ukrainian immigrants, the largest population of any other country. Although Ukrainians live throughout New Jersey, Fair Lawn has one of the largest populations.

The Current Issue: [What Putin Really Wants in Ukraine | Foreign Affairs](#)

The article above provides a balanced perspective of the issues, although every news source has a bias. If you discuss the issue with your students, it is important to emphasize that the current situation is complicated as views of Europeans, Russians, Americans, and Ukrainians all see things from different perspectives. There is also the issue of new leaders in Germany, Ukraine, and the United States in the past year. It is also important to understand that Vladimir Putin is not challenged by elected leaders and the democracies in Europe and the United States have political parties and representatives advocating for peace, diplomacy, sanctions, military support, etc.

The most accurate perspective in this complicated process should emphasize Russia's fear of expanding western or European/American influence through the enlargement of NATO. Russia understands the costs of military action from its involvement in Chechnya, Syria, and Crimea. Russia also wants to maintain its influence over Crimea and the Donbas region in eastern Ukraine, where a majority of the population is influenced by and sympathetic to Russia. The presence of American produced weapons sold to Ukraine is something that Vladimir Putin opposes.

This is an important lesson for students to understand regarding how diplomacy works, the effectiveness of sanctions, the impact of 'red line' statements, and the influence of the media. The sanctions will have a costly effect on Russia but also on Europe (shortages of natural gas, higher prices, unemployment, supply chain disruptions, etc.) and likely on the United States. (higher energy costs, decline in stock market values, travel, etc.) It takes time for sanctions to change the behavior of a country.

The NJCSS suggests that it is important for students to understand how decisions affect the ordinary people in Ukraine, Europe, and Russia. As teachers we understand that solutions to problems in the Middle East, North Korea, Afghanistan, and other areas effect innocent lives, take decades of debate, and have economic costs. Unfortunately, the situation in Ukraine is likely to continue for a considerable time.

Strategies for the Classroom:

[The Choices Project](#) (Brown University)

Although Ukraine may not be directly cited in the Standards or your curriculum, it provides an opportunity for students to understand the disciplinary concepts of history.

Continuity and Change over Time:

Since the fall of communism in 1989

Since the end of World War 1 and fall of ottoman Empire in 1918

Since the end of the Napoleonic Empire in 1814

Since the Mongol invasion in the 13th Century

Understanding Multiple Perspectives:

Views of Ukrainians

Views of Europeans

Views of China

Views of Russian population and families of soldiers killed in action

Views of United Nations

Views of Americans in an Election Year (by political party, news sources, youth, etc.)

Making and Supporting a Claim:

Economic sanctions are an effective deterrent.

Russia has a legitimate historical claim to the Ukraine.

The United States must defend NATO.

This is a European issue and not an international one.

“Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice. And moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.” (Barry Goldwater)

Russia has created an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in Ukraine.

Credibility of (News) Sources:

Examine reports by multiple news sources in the United States and in other countries.

What if Scenarios?

What if President Zelensky is killed?

What if Russia is able to control most or all of the Ukraine?

What if Covid-19 spreads and the Russia military becomes incapacitated?

What if China takes a strong position in support of Russia?

What if Russia does not gain control of Ukraine and retreats?

What if the sanctions cripple the economy of Russia?

What if the U.S. Congress unites in support of President Biden to stop Russia aggression?

What if Russia expands its aggression to other places in eastern Europe?

What if refugees from Ukraine overwhelm countries in Europe?