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ETHNOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF UKRAINE: UKRAINIAN MENTALITY

Background. Ukraine has a diverse number of ethnic groups, which have distinctive cultures and beliefs. Currently, a majority of them speak either Russian or Ukrainian but there are also those who speak Polish, Bulgarian, Romanian, Hungarian and Turkish and so on. However, there are lesser known ethnic groups that have existed in the country for centuries. Joseph E. Trimble, a professor from Western Washington University, defines «ethnic groups» in a way that many anthropologists agree with. According to him, an ethnic group is a band or nation of people who share common historical experiences, customs, traditions, and in some instances geographical residence.



Retrieved from: <http://www.google.ru/url?ukraina-vid-nezalezhnosti-do-revoljutsiyi-gidnosti/&psig=AFQjCNFvs-F42wQXaEs0LzAe7cGSBCdaSa&SA&ust1478789464293622>

Historical and geographical regions in Ukraine [24]

Below are four Ukrainian ethnic groups:

The Boikians (Boikos) live in the Boikian region, which stretches from the Solotvynian Bystrytsia region to Tereshva in the East. Historians consider them as the pioneers of the Ukrainian Carpathian colonization. They are divided into three groups with different dialects. There are those that inhabit the Transcarpathia region and their northern neighbors who refer to themselves as Verchovyntsi, and the Tukholosi, who reside near the town of Skole. The Tukhol'tsi were known as sellers of grapes and other fruit before the First World War broke out. Some of the Boikians breed cattle. Generally, the Boikians have preserved their ancient customs and rites including much of their material culture, architecture and costumes.

The Hutsuls live in the area to the east of the Boikian region. Their culture has some influences from the Wallachians, who belong to the Romanian population. The Hutsul region is mostly mountainous but is more suited for agriculture compared to the Boikian region. Despite this, the Hutsul's occupation is cattle and sheep breeding. They are also lumberers and are known as skillful builders of wooden houses. Most of their old wooden churches resemble those in the Byzantine times. Hutsuls are also celebrated for their highly developed skills in domestic handicrafts like wood-carving, pottery and rug weaving. They wear traditional costumes similar to those worn by Boikians and the Lemkians and still observe some of their old rituals.

The Lemkians (Lemkos) live in the region called Lemkovyna or Lemkovshchyna, which is at the western side of the Boikian region. They used to occupy most of the Carpathian range but lost most of it many centuries ago to the Poles and the Slovaks. They dislike the Poles more than the Slovaks. In 1946-48 Poles transferred a great number of Lemkians to the USSR and resettled others in the Polish provinces, which were German before the Second World War. Just like the other ethnic groups in Ukraine, Lemkos are can be found in many other European countries. In Ukraine this ethnic group is in the process of disappearance because they have mixed with the local population. Lemkos have lost most of their traditional Ukrainian costumes and it is very common to find modern influences in their traditional creative work. They also keep cattle and engage in farming.

The Polischuks live in the area to the east of Podlachia and have preserved much of their traditional lifestyles. Polischuks participate in a number of traditional rituals and have a great wealth of oral tradition. They have preserved carols that have ancient themes and still sing their old ritual songs.

Despite the fact that Ukraine has these many ethnic groups, most of its citizens either identify themselves as ethnically Russian or Ukrainian. In a 2001 census about 68 percent of Ukrainians identified their mother tongues as Ukrainian while 17 percent of the population said they spoke Russian [25].

MENTALITY

Ukrainians are very well-wishing and frank people! And not just at first sight! – amazingly tell our foreign friends. Such observation makes us happy. Probably when God asked the Ukrainians about something, they not only agreed but also talked with Him for a long time and even advised something to the Heavenly Father. Probably you have noticed that brevity is not a national feature of the Ukrainians. Some people even compare the expressive gesticulation of the Ukrainians with the Italian gesticulation. We agree – active talkativeness is one if our national features. However, it gets along well with the tolerance. We enjoy advising but we do it without any snobbery or stubborn resolution. We think that the tolerance, which is in fashion today, was born some time and somewhere in Ukraine. We have no imperial ambitions, we do not touch anybody but we stand up for ourselves.

Have you ever asked somebody about the features of Ukrainians? What did they say? Very few things... The problem is that the outside world does not really know what kind of nation we are. Of course, there are a lot of stereotypes but none of them seem to be true.

Therefore, I decided to generate my own research based on the observation of Ukrainian scientists and create some tips for foreigners about who the Ukrainians are. The base for my research is the study «Ukrainian mentality. Illusions, myths and reality» of Oleksandr Strazhnyi, writer and scientist.

In his book, he isolated many key qualities which characterize Ukrainian nation [26].

25 Ukraine ethnographic profile / Wikipedia. [Electronic version]: <https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki>

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1. Settled way of life

On the one hand, Ukrainian does not tend to move somewhere. On the other hand, there is no country without Ukrainian emigrants. Several million Ukrainians work abroad today including European Union. However, not everyone wants to stay there forever – having earned money most people seek to return home. A Ukrainian archetype is a cat – it walks where it wants, but always returns to its yard.

2. Thrift

The archetype of land was for centuries the main for Ukrainians. Slavonic, Slavic tribes, the residents of Kyiv Rus and their descendants were engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry. Except in periods of bad weather, wars and man-made famine, Ukrainians and their ancestors always had enough food. Neat and tidy estates with the fence, fruit gardens, flower gardens and livestock are traditional for Ukrainians. Moreover, sometimes we can even see gardens under the windows of apartment buildings, which means that thrift is in our blood.

3. Conservatism

Ukrainian farmers are not only thrifty, but also have such features as mistrust, irony, judgment, rejection of everything new. Is it good or bad? Well, it depends. On the one hand there are many examples when inability to keep pace with the development of mankind brought nothing but failure to Ukrainians. On the other hand, thanks to its conservatism Ukraine survived and remained itself — saved its language, culture, rituals, and views of life.

4. Versatility

Slavs and their ancestors usually lived in small villages and hamlets. In such circumstances, each host and hostess had to be masters of all trades. This versatility has remained in the Ukrainian character now. The ability to repair a car and computer, make repairs yourself or cope with illness is not typical, for example, for Europeans.

5. Daring

Ukrainian nonaggressiveness does not mean cowardice. Only brave and daring people could live like Cossacks in the desert and fearlessly went into battle with a stronger army as it often happened. At Sich the Cossacks took only one who was brave and fearless to the enemy.

6. Love of freedom

From previous generations moved to the Ukrainians traits such as freedom, independence, and insubordination to strangers. Ukrainians did not obey Tatars, Lithuanians, Poles, and Turks. Free, proud on any government Ukrainians were still caught by assurances from Moscow boyars, who circumvent them. However, Ukrainian opposition to slavery helped our nation to become independent in 1991.

7. Democracy

The paradigm of Greek democracy firmly stuck in the archetypes of Ukrainian mentality. Slavic always gravitated towards democracy and anarchic forms of government. Ukrainian democracy was shown in the first constitution made by Philip Orlik. It was drawn up on the traditions of Cossack rights 80 years ahead of French constitution and 60 years ahead of American constitution.

8. Spirituality

The farmer is organically the category of humanity closest to space. Absolutely dependent on the whims of the universe farmers are a priori religious.

9. Genius

The gene pool of people, who take the products grown on black soil, is significantly different from the gene pool of the peoples of other poorer lands. These ethnic groups tend to have good health, physical and mental endurance and talent. World civilization is impossible without Tripoli heritage, ancient culture of the northern Black Sea coast, Scythian gold, Ukrainian icons, songs and embroidered shirts.

10. Imagery perception

Ukrainian perception of reality is the flow of saturated with different colors slides. To see this it is worth comparing the pictures of Ukrainian artists with the pictures of other masters. Imagery perception of Ukrainians can be seen not only in painting, but also in literature and poetry. Ukrainian literature is powerful due to visual feeling. It is almost usually a picture. Ukrainian authors think not about the structure but about the atmosphere of spirit and image. Therefore, the most powerful genre of Ukrainian literature is fantasy.

11. Mysticism

Ukrainian always worshiped nature. Mavkas, goblins, vampires, mermaids, spirits, ghouls and other mystical creatures considered sacred. Ukrainian always had the feeling that possible in nature may be intertwined with the impossible. In addition, this may be not only in nature but also in real life. Ukrainians still celebrate pre-Christian holidays; believe in mysteries and trust horoscopes and dreams.

12. Openness

From time of Kievan Rus and perhaps even earlier there were no blinds, curtains or drapes on windows in Ukrainian houses. Openness of every person and family was influenced by the open landscape. Perhaps, this openness helped Ukrainians to build their own country.

13. Intelligence, cunning, craftiness

The propensity for unconventional solutions and unexpected behavior emerged in Ukrainian not by chance. The necessity to survive among wild nomads, primordial need to hide something from someone raised in Ukrainian ancestors such features as intelligence, cunning, craftiness. They had to think one thing, say second, and do third.

The ability to deceive the enemy, speak in an unusual manner or take fight with the unknown for the enemy rules often helped Ukrainians to survive in tough situations.

Cunning and optional lively thinking is one of the defining features of modern Ukrainian mentality. It is very easy for Ukrainian to make the electric meter spin backwards. However, European will unlikely be able to change burned plug without instruction.

14. Optimism

Ukrainian would not have survived without his optimism. Huge amount of funny national songs is the cure for boredom, bad mood and gray everyday life and serious view of existence. Not looking at ordeals, Ukrainians had little space for depression, anger and fatalism in their souls.

15. Animal spirits

Animal spirits of Ukrainians can be shown in the bright and colorful ceramics of Tripoli and stories of many travelers. Everything in Ukraine has animal spirits: embroidery, pottery, painting, music and humor.

16. Developed sense of humor

In Ukraine without humor, funs and jokes any talk, party or discussion cannot happen. Humor is a permanent attribute of Ukrainian television, parliament, business, even litigations. The most popular plot of jokes is not dedicated to Russian, Chukchi or anyone else. Ukrainians usually laugh at himself in different situations where he either failed or acted very reasonably. The nation who is able to laugh at itself is invincible.

17. Respect for the family

Family values always took special place in Ukrainian mentality. In Ukraine, everyone is equal in a family; everyone has an equal right for happiness. In Europe, family happiness lies in high material status. However, Ukrainians still try to build families on love and respect.

Conclusion. Culture is often compared to an iceberg: there is more to it than meets the eye. We believe that the research in English into the national values can help the foreigners to better understand the hidden part of Ukrainian cultural iceberg.

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UKRAINIANS' ATTITUDE TO CORRUPTION

Introduction. Corruption can be defined simply as behavior that corrupts. It tends to subvert the cultural system in which it occurs. This means that one cannot recognize corruption in a particular society without knowing something about how that society works.

Corruption perception in Ukraine. Citizens' corruption perception indices (CCPI) were calculated based on respondents' answers to the question of how widespread corruption seemed in Ukrainian government bodies and among public officers. The more respondents believed it was widespread in the 20 different services and sectors, the higher mean CCPI was set (with 100 being the highest and 0 standing for the lowest).

The mean CCPI for Ukraine was 39.4 in 2011 and reached 42.8 in 2015. Thus, over 40% of the major sectors and institutions in Ukraine are perceived by its people as too corrupt.

In regions, the most dramatic positive changes are observed in Kirovohradska oblast, which has moved from the first rating position to the last but one since 2011. In four regions (Odeska, Cherkaska, Kyivska oblasts and the Kyiv city) perceived as very corrupt are over a half of the sectors – and all of them demonstrate a negative tendency in time. To estimate the general regional differences, we have used the median indices by oblasts.