

# Ukraine – Teaching Resource



## Country Profile

Ukraine is the second largest country in Europe after Russia. From 1921 until 1991 it was part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and it was a Communist state.

The country declared its independence in 1991 after the USSR collapsed and today it is a capitalist society. Ukraine is not currently a member of the EU.

Ukraine is situated in Eastern Europe, and borders Moldova, Romania, Hungary, Slovenia, Poland, Belarus and Russia, and the Black Sea. Geographically, Ukraine is made up of plains and plateaux, with mountains in the West of the country and in the southern Crimean peninsula. The South has a more Mediterranean climate, but the rest of the country is more temperate: it has very cold winters and extremely hot summers. Like the UK though, Ukraine has lots of rain!

47 million people live in Ukraine and life expectancy is 70. Almost a third of the population lives below the poverty line earning less than £1.30 a day.



## SOS Children's Villages in Ukraine

The poor have suffered since the collapse of the USSR, as the state welfare system collapsed too. This has led to huge social problems in the country. People have turned to drink and drugs, and child abandonment is becoming more common as parents are unable to look after their children; there are thousands of street children in Ukraine today. The HIV/AIDS rate is rising fast; currently around 400,000 people are HIV positive. 70 per cent of infections are due to sustained drug use.

A nuclear disaster in Chernobyl, northern Ukraine, in 1986 affected thousands of people. Even today, the effects are felt, and many parents are today dying of diseases linked to radiation poisoning. Therefore SOS Children has decided to open a new Children's Village near Kiev,

Ukraine's capital, to help care for children who have been abandoned or whose parents have died of AIDS or other causes.

This new SOS Children's Village will be the first in Ukraine. However SOS Children has been running an SOS Social Centre in Kiev since 2003 for disadvantaged families. Most beneficiaries are young single mothers who receive food packages every month, HIV/AIDS and drug advice and legal advice. We also offer young street children games and activities, as we have a mobile 'PlayBus' which goes round Kiev. Older children are given information and advice on drugs and HIV/AIDS.

Andriy Shevchenko, the European Footballer of the Year and top AC Milan striker, is Ukrainian and recently visited the site of the new Village. He is a big supporter of the SOS/FIFA campaign.

## The '6 Villages for 2006' Village in Ukraine

The "6 villages for 2006" campaign is a joint project between FIFA, and SOS Children's Villages which will run until the end of the 2006 football World Cup.

The aim of the campaign is to raise money for six new SOS Children's Villages and provide more orphaned and abandoned children with a new home and hope for the future. One of these six villages will be in Ukraine. It will be in Brovary, which



has lots of local amenities, such as a market, shops, schools and a hospital, and it has good transport links. SOS Children's Village Brovary will provide 100 children with a loving, safe home.

## SOS Children's Ukrainian Shopping List:

66p a day helps support a child in an SOS Children's Village

£7.50 buys a school uniform

£2000 buys new playground equipment for an SOS Nursery School



# Case Study

## Lighting up the Lamp

SOS Children supports poorer families in Kiev, Ukraine, by providing them with advice, support, counselling and food. This is the story of one of the families, told by an SOS worker.

"We enter the home of one of the beneficiary families in the evening when all six children are home with their mother. Their father is still at work. There are only two little rooms in the house which are both very dark as there's only one lamp which is not bright enough to light up the whole house.

"More than the dimness in the rooms, the dampness hits me first - the wallpaper is coming off the walls because of the water dripping down them.

"It's October, and it is starting to turn cold. It is currently around 10°C, but the chair I sit in feels soggy. I wonder what the beds and the sheets feel like when the children are sleeping and it makes me feel cold just thinking about it. I don't know what it must be like in winter, when the weather in Kiev is around -10°C".

### Didivs'ka Iushka (Ukrainian 'Grandfather' Soup)

#### Ingredients

2 cups water  
 2 teaspoons salt  
 1/2 cup milk  
 3 tablespoons of butter  
 2 medium-sized potatoes  
 1 onion

1 carrot  
 1/2 cup flour

#### Instructions

- Peel the potatoes and then cut them into 1/2 inch cubes
- Slice the carrot very finely and chop the onion
- Bring a pan of water to the boil, salt it, and add the carrot and potatoes. Boil slowly for 8 minutes.

- In a bowl, mix together the flour, one tablespoon of butter and enough milk to make a stiff dough. Pinch of 1/2 inches of dough and drop into the boiling soup.
- In a frying pan, sautee the onion in the remaining two tablespoons of butter until the onion starts to brown.
- Then add the onions and butter and remaining milk to the soup and boil for another five minutes.
- Serve and eat immediately