

Migration in Ukraine and the Case of Kyiv: Suggestions for Preparation of a Research Agenda

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Introduction

Scholars and political analysts focused their attention in the past decade on Ukraine's development as a post-Soviet state – development of democratic institutions, economic liberalization, creation of a civil society, definition of citizenship and identity, relations with other countries. While Ukraine struggled with these larger processes, a new phenomenon almost literally crept in to the country to play a small but growing role in each of these discussions: immigration.

In the early 1990s, migration patterns in Ukraine were dominated by repatriating Ukrainians and Russians, Kazakhs, and other Soviet nationalities departing to their titular states. By mid-decade the makeup of migrants began to shift. Although the Ukrainian economy provided few incentives for migrants from the former Soviet Union, migrants from ethnic groups who had not historically resided in Ukraine continued to arrive, and in larger and larger numbers. These migrants came from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East; they arrived through legal, semi-legal, and illegal channels; and they were often on their way to Europe or other destinations. As Ukraine's borders with Eastern Europe and the European Union solidified, it became more and more difficult for migrants to cross into Europe, and many found themselves in Ukraine for the medium to long term.

The implications of this phenomenon are only beginning to be studied, although officials, local bureaucrats, and residents have already felt them. Two articles in the summer of 2004 attest to the fact that officials see the issue as critical. In July, *Fakty i Kommentarii* published the transcript of a phone-in interview with Hennadiy Moskal, Chairman of the State Committee for Nationalities and Migration. Moskal explained

that illegal migration in Ukraine is “problem number one” and described Ukrainian immigrant camps where up to thirty-eight languages are spoken.¹ Two weeks later, Serhiy Brytchenko, the head of the Presidential Administration’s Migration Directorate, published an article in *Uryadovyy Kuryer* on increasing migration trends in Ukraine. According to Brytchenko, the number of people adopting Ukrainian citizenship in 2004 was far greater than those relinquishing it: in the first six months of the year, the number of people granted Ukrainian citizenship rose 40 percent over the same period in 2003, and by 180 percent in comparison to 2002.²

The article by Brytchenko echoes research conducted by sociologists in Ukraine suggesting that many of these migrants are now seeking permanent residency in the country. While they may not have originally chosen Ukraine as their final destination – either they were in transit further north and west or were simply seeking a safe haven away from political and economic strife in their home countries – they now consider themselves part of Ukrainian society. They are working in Ukrainian markets, sending their children to Ukrainian schools, using Ukrainian state services, and purchasing Ukrainian goods.

The migration phenomenon has the potential to change the way we study Ukraine. First, migrants represent a new community (or, more specifically, communities) in Ukraine that will play into any discussion of democratic, economic, and social development. For example, they present an interesting twist on studies of language use, interethnic relations, and issues of security. Second, and perhaps more interestingly, the migration phenomenon provides an avenue through which Ukraine can be studied as a part of the larger processes of globalization and in comparison with countries outside the “usual suspects.” This serves to bring Ukraine out of the ghetto of “post-Soviet studies” and into international research debates on migration trends, integration of ethnic minorities, global security, and transborder economic processes.

The State of the Field: Research on Immigration, Refugees, and Migration Trends in Independent Ukraine

Immigration and immigrants is not an entirely new arena for research in Ukraine. Ukrainian scholars, in particular legal specialists and sociologists, have focused attention on the phenomenon since the late 1990s.

Several volumes in Ukrainian detail legal questions of residency status and immigration law in Ukraine and comparison to international practices. Piskun published the

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1. “Ukraine: Interior Ministry Official Discusses Immigration, Citizenship Laws, Issues,” *Fakty i Kommentarii* (July 27, 2004).
 2. Serhiy Brytchenko, “Ukrainian Citizenship: Trends and Prospects,” *Uryadovyy Kuryer* (August 5, 2004), as published in BBC Monitoring/BBC Source, “Migration in the News” news service on August 12, 2004.

first textbook discussing migration law in 1998, *Osnovy mibratsiinoho prava*; a new textbook developed by the National Academy of Internal Affairs of Ukraine followed in 2000 under the editorship of Kondratiev, Rymarenko, and Olefir.³ *Iurydychni aspekty mibratsiinykh protsesiv v Ukraini* by Chekhovych provides further insight into questions of citizenship and refugee status.⁴ Articles by scholars focusing on immigration and Ukrainian legislation are also published regularly in the journals *Pravo Ukrainy*, *Rozbudova natsii*, and *Problemy mibratsii* (and its English version, *Migration Issues*).⁵ In addition to these legal scholarly works, practitioners and officials have published a variety of guidebooks and informational brochures that help migrants and others to understand Ukrainian regulations.⁶

Sociological research on immigrants in Ukraine first focused on the refugee community (by the late nineties the Afghan community of refugees in particular was growing rapidly and provided an interesting study group). In 1997 Pyrozhhov, Ruchka, Aza, and Malynovska first published the results of their study of the socio-economic situation of refugees in Ukraine.⁷ Shul'ga has contributed several publications on immigration questions. His earlier work focused on Ukraine's human rights record vis a vis refugees and asylum seekers; in 2002 *Velikoe pereselenie narodov* appeared, which is important in that it examines migration issues over the first decade of Ukrainian independence in a comprehensive manner.⁸

3. O. Piskun, *Osnovy mibratsiinoho prava: porivnialnyi analiz* (Kyiv: MP Lesia), 1998; Ya. Kondratiev, Yu. Rymarenko, and V. Olefir, *Osnovy mibratsiieznavstva* (Kyiv: National Academy of Internal Affairs of Ukraine), 2000.
4. S. Chekhovych, *Iurydychni aspekty mibratsiinykh protsesiv v Ukraini* (Kyiv: Ukrainian Center of Legal Studies), 2001.
5. For example, O. Piskun, "Problemy stanovlennia mibratsiinoi pravovoi polityky Ukrainy", *Rozbudova derzhavy* no. 10 (1997): 30-34; A. Mozol', "Kharakterystyka i analiz mibratsiinoho zakonodavstva ta mibratsiinykh protsesiv v Ukraini", *Pravo Ukraini* no. 4 (2001): 118-122; S. Brytchenko and V. Andriienko, "Pravovyi status inozemtsiv ta osib bez hromadianstva v Ukraini", *Problemy mibratsii* 4, no. 1 /*Migration Issues* 8 (1999): 2-13; G. Subotenko, "Deiaki aspekty suchasnoho stanu zakonodavstva Ukrainy, shcho reguluiue pravovyi status bizhentsiv", *Problemy mibratsii* 6, no. 1 (2001): 36-45.
6. For example, see V. Novik, *Derzhavna polityka i rebuliuvannia immibratsiinykh protsesiv v Ukraini* (Kyiv: VAITE Company), 1999; V. Novik, *Dovidnyk dlia bizhentsiv ta immibrantiv* (Kyiv: Grot), 2001; Yu. Buznytsky, P. Burlaka, and S. Rubanov, *Sudovyi zakhyst bizhentsiv i osib, shcho prybyly v Ukrainu u posbukakh prytulku: praktychni rekomendatsii* (Kyiv: MP Lesia), 2000; V. Andriienko and H. Subotenko (eds.), *Pravove rebuliuvannia mibratsiinykh protsesiv v Ukraini* (Kyiv: Atica), 2002.
7. S. Pyrozhhov, A. Ruchka, L. Aza, O. Malynovska, *Bezhenstvy v Ukraine*, joint research report of the Representative office of UNHCR in Kyiv, National Institute on Ukrainian-Russian Relations, and the Institute of Sociology of NAS of Ukraine, 1997.
8. N. Shul'ga (ed.), *Problemy migratsii i vozvrashchennia deportirovannykh v Ukraine*, (Kyiv: Institute of Sociology of NAS of Ukraine, Ukrainian-American Bureau on Human Rights, Verkhovna Rada Commission on Human Rights), 1997; N. Shul'ga (ed.), *Vyvchennia vplyvu zovnishnioi mibratsii 1991-1996 na zminy etnichnogo skladu naselennia Ukrainy*, (Kyiv: IOM), 1998; N. Shul'ga, *Velikoe pereselenie narodov: repatrianty, bezhenstvy, trudovye migranty* (Kyiv: Stylos), 2002.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has provided support for Ukrainian scholars researching immigrants in the country as well as an outlet for publication. In addition to the research of Shul'ga, in 2002 IOM supported scholars studying illegal migration and trafficking, including an international research project that included interviews with migrants as well as information on the illegal trafficking systems and organizations used to transport them.⁹

While most research has focused on Ukraine as a whole, the presence of large numbers of immigrants and refugees in the capital has led several Ukrainian scholars to focus on Kyiv as a case study for issues of integration, interaction, and survival. The research of Prybytkova, Ivanova, and Vaidin look specifically at migrant issues in the city of Kyiv. Ivanova details who the migrants in Kyiv are, where they came from, and why they are now in Kyiv.¹⁰ Prybytkova's research studies the interaction between native Kyivans and migrants, and Vaidin looks at their place in Kyiv's labor market – both of which are critical to understanding their prospects for integration.¹¹ The Kennan Kyiv Project brought together scholars looking at nontraditional migrants (those from ethnic groups not historically living in Kyiv) in the city in a roundtable in 2000.¹² Results from a survey of nontraditional migrants in Kyiv conducted by Braychevska, Volosiuk, Malynovska, Pylinskyj, Popson, and Ruble (see below) were published in Ukrainian in 2003 and will appear in English in 2004.¹³

9. T. Klinchenko, I. Malynovska, I. Mingazutdinov, and O. Shamshur, *Country Studies on Migrant Trafficking and Alien Smuggling: The Case of Ukraine*. (Geneva: IOM), 1999; T. Klinchenko, I. Malynovska, I. Mingazutdinov, and O. Shamshur, *Migrant Trafficking in Ukraine, Report to the International Organization for Migration*. (Geneva: IOM), 2000; O. Malynovska (ed.), *Problemy nelehanoi mibratsii ta transportuvannia mibrantiv* (Kyiv: IOM), 2002.
10. O. Ivanova, "Mihranty u Kyievi: do stolytsi po krashche zhyttia?" *Filosofska ta sotsiologichna dumka*, no. 9 (1993); and O. Ivanova, "Mihranty u Kyievi. Khto vony?" *Filosofska ta sotsiologichna dumka*, no. 3 (1992).
11. I. Prybytkova, "Korennyie kievliane i migranty: monitoring sotsialnykh izmenenii na rubezhe XXI veka", in: *Nauchnye doklady Tsentra izucheniia problem vynnuzhdennoi migratsii v SNG*, no. 4 (Moscow: Center for the Study of Forced Migration), 2000; T. Vaidin, "Vikova struktura mihrantiv ta rynek pratsi m. Kyieva: deiaki aspekty vzaiemoz'iazku". *Zainiatist ta rynek pratsi*, no. 4 (1996).
12. *Netradytsiini mibranty v Kyievi*. (Kyiv: Kennan Kyiv Project), 2000.
13. O. Braychevs'ka, H. Volosiuk, O. Malynovs'ka, Ya. Pylinskyj, N. Popson, B. Ruble, "*Netradytsiyni' Immibranty u Kyievi*". (Kyiv: Kennan Kyiv Project), 2003. Other publications arising from this study include: H. Volosiuk and Ya. Pylinskyi, "Deyaki aspekty formuvannia vietnams'koyi spilnoty u Kyievi", *Problemy mibratsii* 7, no. 1 (2002): 27-34; H. Volosiuk and Ya. Pylinskyi, "Pakystans'ki immihranty m. Kyieva: mihratsiyni namiry ta yikh realizatsiya", *Problemy mibratsii* 7, no. 3 (2002): 38-48; O. Malynovska, "Osnovni zasady mihraciinoi polityky v Ukraini: maibutni stsenarii ii rozvytku", *Problemy mibratsii* 7, no. 1 (2002): 18-27; O. Malynovska and O. Braichevska, "Mihranty z afrykans'kyh krain u Kyievi", *Problemy mibratsii* 7, no. 3 (2002): 26-37; O. Braichevska, O. Malynovska, "Afhans'ka spil'nota u Kyievi: formuvannia ta sotsial'no-demografichni kharakterystyky", *Problemy mibratsii* 7, no. 2 (2002): 36-48; Nancy E. Popson and Blair A. Ruble, "Kyiv's Nontraditional Immigrants," *Post-Soviet Geography and Economics*, vol. 41, no. 5 (2001), pp. 365-378; Nancy E. Popson and Blair A. Ruble, "A Test of Urban Social Sustainability: Societal Responses to Kyiv's Nontraditional Migrants," *Urban Anthropology*, vol. 30, no. 4 (2001), pp. 381-409; Blair A. Ruble, "Kyiv's Troeshchyna: an Emerging International Migrant Neighborhood," *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 31, no. 2 (June 2003), pp. 139-155.

Scholars outside of Ukraine working on immigration and refugee issues are fewer. Most research has focused on issues of interethnic relations with an eye toward more traditional residents in Ukraine (in particular, the Ukrainian-Russian relationship), which can nonetheless provide important insights into the attitudes of Ukrainian citizens towards other ethnic groups. Besides the work published by Ruble and Popson with data from the survey of nontraditional migrants in Kyiv noted above, the work of political scientists Oxana Shevel and Kari Johnstone should be noted.¹⁴ Shevel's doctoral dissertation compares Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, and Czech policies pertaining to refugees, and her work on the roles of international organizations on refugee policies is particularly interesting. Johnstone's work also focuses on the role international organizations can play in creation and implementation of ethnic minority policies, using at Ukraine and Slovakia as case studies.

The above research provides a strong foundation for examination of the phenomenon of immigration in Ukraine and of the impact new residents have had on the country's development. However, the immigrant population has exploded only in the past five years, there is much still to be studied about both the migrant communities and their hosts. This paper will now turn to the situation in Kyiv in order to provide an overview of the immigrant experience and therefore provide a background to discuss avenues for further research.

The Nontraditional Migrant Community in Kyiv

Kyiv is a microcosm encompassing many of the issues created by new migration trends in Ukraine. Changes to the city's functions (from capital of a Soviet republic to capital of an independent nation) and the consequential shifts in legislation and jurisdiction of particular agencies left an opening for migrants to find their place in the city. The development of a robust shadow economy provided space for immigrants – even those with incomplete or no documentation – to find accommodations and employment. Ukraine's willingness to accept immigrants and refugees and to offer them many of the same rights as citizens also made Kyiv a welcoming home for many. Added to this, Kyiv has become an important transit point where international routes for the transportation of illegal migrants from Asia and Africa intersect.¹⁵

14. See, for example, Oxana Shevel, "National Identity and International Institutions: Refugee Policies in Post-Communist Europe," Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Government, Harvard University, 2002; Oxana Shevel, "International Influences in Transition Societies: The Effect of UNHCR and Other IOs on Citizenship Policies in Ukraine," Rosemary Rogers Working Paper Series, #7. (Inter-University Committee on International Migration), August 2000; Kari Johnstone, "Balancing acts: Assessing International Influences on Ethnic Minority Policy in Post-Communist Slovakia and Ukraine," Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Political Science, University of California, Berkeley, 2003.

15. O. A. Malynovska, *Problema nelehalnoi mibratsii ta transportuvannia mibrantiv v Ukraini: Nauk. dop.* (Kyiv: Tsentri tekhnichnoi kooperatsii dlia Ievropy ta Tsentralnoi Azii-Mizhnarodna orhanizatsiia z mibratsii, 2000).

As one of the main endpoints for immigrants in Ukraine, Kyiv has been forced to develop a strategy for dealing with this largely new group of residents. Integration of immigrants is not an easy process, especially during times of economic and political uncertainty. A similar process has occurred throughout Ukraine, and other cities with large immigrant populations – like Kharkiv, L'viv, and Odesa – have similar issues to address.

According to official statistics, in 2001, 101,268 foreigners were registered with the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Kyiv. These include foreigners with permanent residency status on business and work permits, students in the city's colleges and universities, refugees and asylum seekers, and illegal migrants who have been identified by the city's law enforcement agencies. These figures surely miss a number of illegal migrants who have escaped the notice of city authorities. According to estimates of social scientists working on migration in Kyiv, approximately 15,000 of these foreigners represent ethnic groups that were not present in Soviet times – in particular migrants from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.¹⁶

This group of Kyiv residents is difficult to study at best. Many have vague legal status in the city and do not wish to be counted or noticed. Yet they are an important part of Kyiv's post-Soviet development. The Kennan Institute therefore helped to fund a study in 2001–2002 that included surveys of 233 Asian, African, and Middle Eastern households in the city of Kyiv. This represents the first study of this group of immigrants and sought to understand not only who they are and why they came to Kyiv, but also how they interact with the people, officials, and agencies in the city.¹⁷

In all, 547 people were included in the survey, 370 of which were immigrants coming from twenty-three countries. The majority of respondents were from Afghanistan and Vietnam. Some of the respondents had first arrived in Kyiv on work or student visas during the Soviet era. However, most arrived between 1991 and 1998; in 1999–2000 the number of migrants entering Kyiv began to drop off. The majority of respondents were from urban areas in their home countries, were educated, and of working age. Many of them – 38 percent of all migrants, and a much larger proportion of those from African countries – entered Ukraine illegally.

When asked why they migrated to Kyiv, 38 percent gave economic reasons: to find a good job, to better their living condition, to get a decent education or medical care, or to start a business. While some of these respondents may have been searching for these amenities beyond Kyiv (in Europe), survey questions on their standard of living and their

16. Braychevs'ka et. al., “*Netradytsiyni Immibranty u Kyievi*,” p. 27.

17. Information provided on Kyiv immigrants in this paper comes from this study unless otherwise noted. For a more detailed look at the data collected and the conclusions of the research team, see Braychevs'ka et. al., “*Netradytsiyni Immibranty u Kyievi*”. A condensed version of the study results will be available in English in 2004 from the Kennan Institute in Washington, DC.

satisfaction with their jobs and lives suggests that many are now in Kyiv for the long term. In fact, 34 percent of respondents expressed a desire to become citizens of Ukraine. Another 26 percent came in search of asylum to escape political and military conflicts in their home country (in particular, migrants from Afghanistan, Iraq, Angola, and Kurds from Turkey). Twenty percent came as students or to work on government contracts in the Soviet period, and 10 percent to reunite with family members. Only 3 percent admitted that they originally intended to resettle in Europe but were unable to move past Ukraine's western border.

One of the most difficult problems for migrants in Kyiv is the lack of legal documents. Such documents are necessary for conducting a normal life in the city: they are necessary to find a job, rent a reasonable apartment, obtain medical care, register births, and receive marriage licenses. In the survey of migrants in Kyiv, 20 percent of respondents did not have any official document authorizing their residency in Ukraine (either they entered illegally, they had overstayed their original visas, or they had only letters from UNHCR which are not considered sufficient for identification). Moreover, even those who did possess legal documents were often violating residence regulations because they could not register with the organs of Internal Affairs.

It is clear that immigrants are now a part of the city's economic system: they provide services, produce and sell goods (some of which were not available earlier in Ukraine), pay taxes, and in some instances create jobs for other citizens. The majority of migrants work as traders or entrepreneurs, often in the large bazaar-type markets on the outskirts of the city. This is one sphere of the economy that does not require registration documents, and where individuals have been able to do fairly well. However, as the economy develops, these markets are becoming less and less important in Kyivan life. Other migrants are hired workers or entrepreneurs (for example, restaurateurs), and a full 25 percent of respondents are unemployed. It is this group of unemployed migrants, represented disproportionately by those from African countries, who are most susceptible to the criminal side of Kyivan life.

By comparison with the average Kyiv resident, migrants' monthly earnings are approximately 1/3 higher in nominal terms. However, migrants do not receive the same social payments, state benefits, or free services that local citizens enjoy. While medical care is very rarely denied to migrants, they do have to pay for adult health care (more than 90 percent of infant care and 60 percent of maternity care was provided free of charge), and such services are often very expensive. In addition, rent on apartments for migrant families is often significantly higher than rates charged for local citizens.

Immigrants from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East are interacting with their Kyivan neighbors, with municipal authorities, and with Kyivan society on a variety of levels. Their economic activity has already been mentioned. Another important area of interaction is the local school. Almost three-quarters of the surveyed families send their children to local schools. More children attend Ukrainian than Russian schools (58 percent and 42 percent, respectively), although school choice was based largely on location

and quality of instruction rather than language of instruction. On the whole, immigrant children do fairly well in school. However, some did report problems, mostly connected to a lack of preparedness due to language or the fact that they had not attended school in their home countries. Reasons for truancy in Kyiv included lack of funds for school supplies and fees, the perceived need for children to work to help support the family, and concern over illegal status or improper documentation.

Language has been a hot point in Ukraine since its independence, and it is particularly interesting to see the trends in language use by newcomers to Kyiv. As in other immigrant communities, the children are far better versed in local languages and culture than first-generation immigrants. The Kyiv study reflects this: 21.5 percent of adult immigrants did not know Ukrainian or Russian, compared to 3 percent of children. Both adults and children are more likely to know Russian than Ukrainian. In part this can be traced to the number of immigrants from Afghanistan and from countries “friendly to the USSR” with some background in Russian prior to arrival. Of adults, 61.5 percent know Russian and some Ukrainian and 17 percent can communicate effectively in both languages. Of children, over 97 percent speak Russian fluently, and almost 69 percent also know Ukrainian. Most speak their native language at home, although 31 percent of children in the surveyed households speak Russian at home and 8 percent speak Ukrainian.

In addition to the survey of immigrant families, researchers also interviewed local Kyivan citizens and experts on their perceptions of immigration in Kyiv. The surveys showed that the majority of the city population is not concerned by the arrival of immigrants from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. For an overwhelming majority of respondents, immigrants are not considered to be competitors for jobs or services. Many of those respondents who viewed the influx of immigrants negatively in general did not have a clearly negative attitude toward immigrants in particular, providing cause for optimism that relations will continue to improve. This is particularly interesting given a tendency in the press to focus on negative aspects of immigration such as its connection to crime, disease, and drug use.¹⁸

The Kennan Institute study provides important data on the lives of immigrants in Kyiv and their interaction with the city and its residents. But as an early survey tool, its main advantage is in its ability to provide a broad picture of life in Kyiv for these families. It therefore leaves many avenues open for more in-depth research and provides data that can complement studies on other issues in Ukrainian and global migration studies.

Migration’s Place in a Research Agenda for Ukraine

Migrants are changing the face of Ukraine in what is, as of yet, small but important ways. To get a true picture of daily life, development of society, and the implementation of pol-

18. Olena Nikolayenko, “Press Monitoring: Illegal Migration in Ukraine, 1997–2001.” Unpublished paper, 2001.

icy, it is important to study migrants as a group and their interactions with their hosts. Their level of integration into Ukrainian society and the level of acceptance of Ukraine and Ukrainians will tell us much about Ukraine's still developing civil society and democracy. Although our survey showed that the numbers of nontraditional migrants entering Ukraine slowed in 1999-2001, the statements by General Moskal of the State Committee for Nationalities and Migration and Serhiy Brytchenko of the Presidential Administration's Migration Directorate suggest that the numbers of illegal migrants and those seeking residency and citizenship continues to be significant. Media coverage focusing on refugee and migrant camps and on the links between migrants, disease, and crime keeps the issue in the public eye. The manner in which the government deals with these new citizens and potential citizens and whether they are able to integrate into their chosen Ukrainian community will be an important test of Ukraine's nascent democracy.

There are three avenues through which the migration phenomenon can be included into a research agenda for the future: continued study and monitoring of immigrants as a group; inclusion of immigrants and of migration trends in broader research on Ukraine's political, economic, and social development; and comparative research that looks at Ukraine not only as a post-Soviet state but in relation to states encountering similar issues around the globe.

Further Research on the Migrant Community

Continued surveys and interviews of the migrants and the local population will help to determine the long-term goals of migrants and the dynamic relationship between them and the host society. Studies focusing on particular communities of migrants might also provide interesting data on adaptation and coping strategies. There are many other issues touched on in the Kyiv study that could be fleshed out by further research. For example, the difficult but important topics of crime and health issues in the immigrant community remain to be studied in depth.

Immigration policy has certainly been a contentious issue in other countries and other settings, and it will be an interesting test of policymaking in Ukraine. Further analysis of legislation pertaining to migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers is also important as Ukraine is still finding its footing on this issue. The liberal approach of Ukrainian legislation toward ethnic minorities in the first decade of independence has provided space for these individuals to reside and build a life for themselves. We cannot be certain that policies will remain the same. For example, a new law implemented in Kyiv in 2000 aimed at restricting migration by limiting the rights of foreigners – even those in Ukraine legally – to gain residency permits in Kyiv.¹⁹ With several cities attracting significant

19. O. Braychevska et. al., p. 104.

numbers of migrants, comparison of local policies and various implementation strategies for national policies may also be of interest.

Immigrants as a Factor in Political, Economic, and Social Development

Migrants should also factor in to the research on Ukraine in other areas, as their story can provide an interesting case in the development of Ukraine's institutions and systems. Research on the development of the political system could benefit from understanding how these minorities are taken into account, if at all. The Crimean Tatar population has become a strong voice in the Crimean peninsula. Issues of representation and voting patterns for other groups will become more important as more and more migrants become Ukrainian citizens. Are they voting? Are they represented in local governing bodies? Is illegal migration becoming a hot political issue in certain regions or cities? At the level of local politics migrants become a possibly important factor: how do local governments deal with interethnic conflict or issues of a multicultural nature? If migrants begin to reside in compact settlements, how will local policies be affected?

Also of interest is their impact on the economy. While our survey showed that Kyivans do not generally view migrants as competing with them for jobs, this is a dynamic situation that could change as the economy shifts. Are there niches for migrant workers that help to invigorate the economy? One leader of a Kurd association suggested this might be the case, explaining that incoming Kurdish migrants are willing to provide rural labor that is unappealing to Ukrainian citizens.²⁰ As noted above, the bazaars at which most migrants work as traders are giving way to new types of commerce. How will migrants adjust their strategies and how will this affect the developing economic system? General Moskal implied in his remarks that a significant portion of his department's budget is now going to clothe, feed, and provide medical care for migrants and refugees, and that there is no money to deport those who arrived illegally.²¹ What impact does migration – both illegal and legal (as more legal residents means more people eligible for state services) – have on Ukraine's budget?

The issue of migrants in Ukraine's cities and towns is an interesting avenue of research for those looking at civil society development. In Kyiv alone there were nearly 500 national and regional ethnic cultural associations who were active in 2000.²² Some,

20. Interview with Timur D. Mamoyan, President, Media Association of Kurdish Public Organizations, Kyiv (September 15, 2000).

21. "Interior Ministry Official Discusses Immigration, Citizenship Laws, Issues."

22. Interview with Vasyl' Gazhaman, former official, Kyiv City Department of Refugee Status and Migration, Kyiv (January 26, 2000).

although by far not all, communities are tight-knit, and provide support for their members in need. Do these ties provide an advantage in organizing power to migrant communities over Kyivans? While migrants tend not to get involved in political organizations, one arena where they regularly interact with state/local institutions is their local primary and secondary school – like Kyivan parents, they participate in parent-teacher meetings and gather with other parents to help clean or renovate school grounds. Their experience is an important part of the story of the development of the education system in Ukraine. How is it dealing with migrants and with the linguistic and educational issues they bring to the classroom? Similarly, how is the health care system managing newcomers as it struggles to provide a minimum level of service to all citizens?

Perhaps the most fertile ground for researchers to include the migrant community as a factor in their work is when looking at social behavior and language issues. How do people interact with each other on a daily basis? On scales of ethnic tolerance, do migrant ethnic groups become more or less accepted as they become more visible in society? What language do migrants use or choose to learn and how does their presence in the country change the language debate? Who is considered “nash”? Many of these newcomers are visibly different than native Ukrainians, and their presence will be evident beyond the marketplace – on the street, in the school yard, in neighborhoods, and in mosques and other religious establishments. Will Ukrainians embrace such a multicultural society?

Ukraine’s newcomers bring with them serious implications for Ukraine’s security environment as well. Ukraine’s growing reputation as a gateway country on transit routes to the West means that it is in Ukraine’s best interest to control migration in coordination with its neighbors. The only way to control migration is to understand the routes and the networks that they use to move across the continent. Also, like Russia, Ukraine now has a growing Muslim population that will likely be of interest to those fighting terrorism. There are also health issues that play into Ukraine’s security environment. Many of the claims of communicable disease among migrants and the fear of its spread to the population at large seem to be blown out of proportion by the Ukrainian press.²³ Yet as Ukraine’s HIV/AIDS infection rates and incidences of other communicable diseases skyrocket, the migrant population is a factor that should be explored more fully. This is particularly important for global security issues because at least a portion of the migrant population in Ukraine continues to seek entrance to other countries.

23. A physician who works with refugees and asylum seekers claimed that the migrant population is actually healthier than the local population. Interview with William Arutunovych Amalian, Chief Physician, Nefto-Gaz Industry Hospital, Kyiv (May 29, 2001).

Ukraine as a Comparative Case Study

The presence of the immigrant population in Kyiv opens up many avenues for comparative research with other countries across the globe. Migration is a global trend, and cities and states around the world are facing similar problems associated with regulation of, care for, and relations with immigrant communities. Ukraine's new position as a country at the crossroads of migratory routes and as an endpoint for many immigrants provides an excellent topic for comparative work that moves outside of the post-Soviet paradigm.

One example of this type of research is the work of Blair Ruble, who has begun to include Ukraine in a comparative perspective on migration and its impact on Kyiv, Washington, D.C., and Montreal. Ukraine is a particularly good case for this sort of research, as migrants arrived just as Ukraine was attempting to build a new independent state. Everything was in flux, from border patrols to residency regulations; even what it meant to be a citizen of Ukraine was still under debate. This left Ukraine's policymakers a wide open playing field when designing policies. Its migration policy also took much from the experience of other states, and so its application in this new environment can help scholars to evaluate the impact of these policies in different settings. The case of Ukraine may therefore provide lessons for other states dealing with their own migrant integration and regulation issues.

Conclusion

The appearance of immigrant communities in Ukraine – many of them made up of ethnic groups that are obviously “other” and who do not have a shared history of Soviet life – is an important new aspect of Ukrainian development. The impact of these migrants thus far has been small and isolated to particular cities and communities; beyond the sensationalistic news stories about illegal migration, crime, and drug trafficking, many Ukrainians do not yet feel the presence of the newcomers. However, the decisions the state makes today regarding their acceptance, regulation, and integration is an important indicator of the type of society Ukraine is creating and what it means to be “Ukrainian.” The reaction of the local population to immigrants can bolster or destroy the characterization of Ukraine as a tolerant society. And as these groups gain citizenship and begin to participate more fully in Ukrainian society on all levels, they will become an ever more important factor in the debates still underway over what sort of democracy, economy, and society Ukraine should aspire to become. A new research agenda for studying Ukraine would therefore be remiss if it were to overlook this small but important part of the Ukrainian population.