



City of Odessa

Intercultural Profile

This report is based upon the visit of the CoE expert team on 30 June & 1 July 2017, comprising Irena Guidikova, Kseniya Khovanova-Rubicondo and Phil Wood. It should ideally be read in parallel with the Council of Europe's response to Odessa's ICC Index Questionnaire but, at the time of writing, the completion of the Index by the City Council is still a work in progress.

1. Introduction

Odessa (or Odesa in Ukrainian) is the third most populous city of Ukraine and a major tourism centre, seaport and transportation hub located on the northwestern shore of the Black Sea. Odessa is also an administrative centre of the Odessa Oblast and has been a multiethnic city since its formation.

The predecessor of Odessa, a small Tatar settlement, was founded in 1440 and originally named Hacıbey. After a period of Lithuanian control, it passed into the domain of the Ottoman Sultan in 1529 and remained in Ottoman hands until the Empire's defeat in the Russo-Turkish War of 1792. In 1794, the city of Odessa was founded by decree of the Empress Catherine the Great. From 1819 to 1858, Odessa was a free port, and then during the twentieth century it was the most important port of trade in the Soviet Union and a Soviet naval base and now holds the same prominence within Ukraine.

During the 19th century, it was the fourth largest city of Imperial Russia, and its historical architecture has a style more Mediterranean than Russian, having been heavily influenced by French and Italian styles. Some buildings are built in a mixture of different styles, including Art Nouveau, Renaissance and Classicist.

Odessa has 18 universities and higher education centres, with an emphasis on science. As a cultural centre it contains 9 theatres including the world famous opera house, more than 40 museums, 10 art galleries and 11 national cultural institutions.

Odessa is the only city in Ukraine with a credible claim to have its own cuisine and this is supported by several gastronomic festivals. It is also known throughout the Russian and former-Soviet lands for its distinctive sense of humour and musical style; and also for its highly developed infrastructure of sanatoriums and other health resorts. It is also a major tourist centre with over 150 large events per year.

Aside from the tourism and health industries and the port activities, Odessa's other significant industry is the oil terminal and related activities.

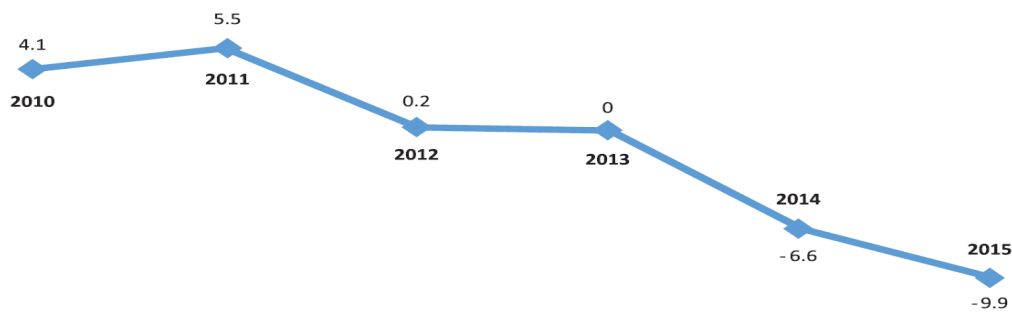
Odessa has a population of 1,016,515 (2015) within a wider Oblast population of 2,396,442. A century ago its population was mainly composed of Russians (49%) and Jews (31%) with Ukrainians

representing only 9%. Nowadays Ukrainians are the largest ethnic group (62%) with Russians the second largest (28%), but Russian is the principal language.

2. Background to Ukraine

Since its formation in 1991, Ukraine has experienced a challenging period of transition in terms of politics, the economy and demographics.

The long-term transition out of the Soviet system, but also the more recent internal conflicts and occupation of Crimea by Russia, have impacted hard upon the Ukrainian economy. The table below describes the pattern of Ukraine's annual GDP percentage change from 2010 to 2015:



Source: World Bank

Ukraine's oligarch-dominated economy has struggled, although after former President Yanukovich fled the country during the Revolution of Dignity, the international community began efforts to stabilize it, including a March 2014 IMF assistance package of \$17.5 billion. Since then Ukraine has made significant progress on reforms designed to make the country prosperous, democratic, and transparent. But more improvements are needed, including fighting corruption, developing capital markets, and improving the legislative framework.

With the loss of a major portion of Ukraine's heavy industry in Donbas and ongoing violence, Ukraine's economy contracted, but grew by 2.3% in 2016 as key reforms took hold. After the EU and Ukraine enacted the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area and Russia imposed a series of trade restrictions, the EU replaced Russia as Ukraine's largest trading partner. Analysts predict approximately 2% growth in 2017, but a new prohibition on commercial trade with separatist-controlled territories will have an uncertain effect on Ukraine's key industrial sectors.

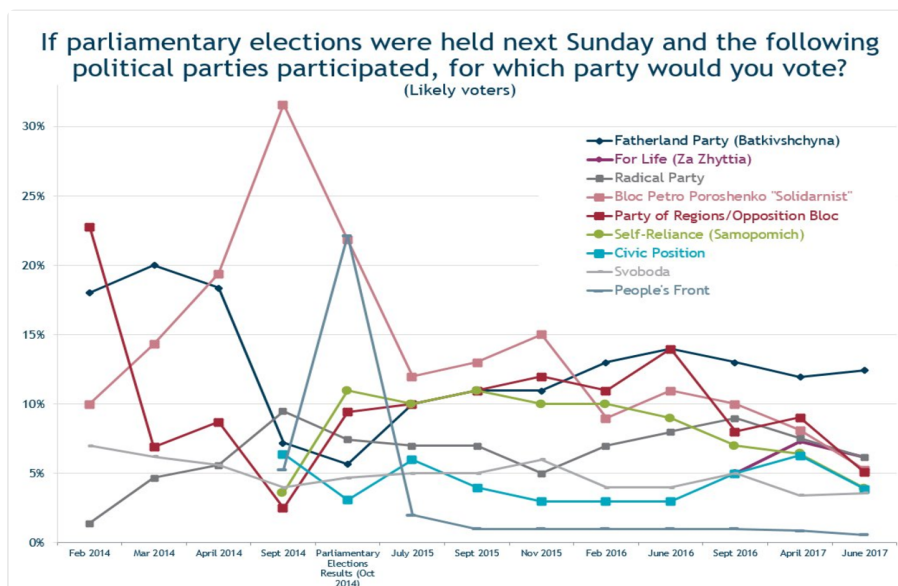
The population of Ukraine, which in 1993 was 52 million people, has decreased by nearly 20% mainly due to negative trends in natural reproduction. In 2010-2015, the natural reduction averaged over 160,000 people per year. According to a forecast by the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, if the birth, life expectancy and migration rates remain unchanged, by 2050, Ukraine's population will have fallen to 32 million people. Within this, the share of people over 60 will increase by 50%.



Source: The Institute of Demography and Social Studies, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine

Ukrainian politics in the era of multi-party democracy has been extremely volatile, with the fortunes of different party/oligarch blocs fluctuating. Although the Poroshenko bloc retains national power,

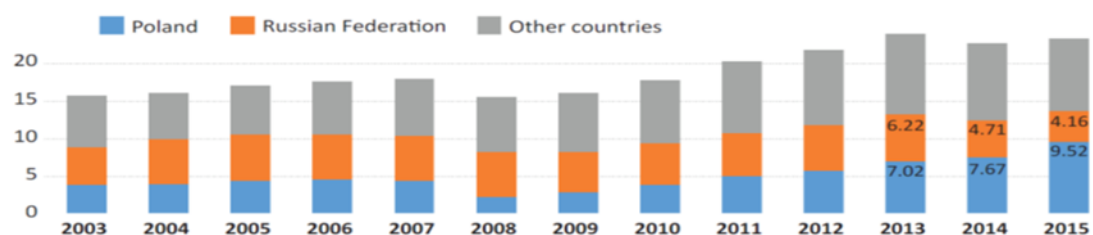
the table below (based upon opinion polling) suggests there is no party which can claim to be dominant:



Emigration from Ukraine

Because of the economic and political difficulties, it is not surprising that many Ukrainians have looked abroad for short term work or longer term settlement. However this is part of a much larger and longer trend of Ukrainian emigration over several centuries, seeing the formation of substantial diasporic communities in many corners of the world.

There is anything between 8.2 million and 20 million people of Ukrainian origin living abroad. The first wave of Ukrainian emigration dates back to the late XIX – early XX century, which was a period of mass emigration of Europeans overseas. The second wave of emigration occurred during the interwar period. As a result of the setback of the national liberation revolution of 1917-1920, economic emigration was accompanied by the political emigration. The Second World War and its aftermath caused a third wave of emigration. Westward, it was almost entirely political. Eastward, it consisted of forced evacuation and wartime fleeing and repressive deportation. The fourth wave of emigration occurred at the end of the XX century and was primarily socio-economic in nature. As a result of the fourth migration wave, the old diasporas were greatly enriched, and new diasporas were formed in the countries where previously there were almost no Ukrainians, particularly in southern Europe.¹ The table below indicates the number of state border crossings (by the million) by Ukrainian citizens exiting Ukraine between 2003 and 2015, which particularly indicate the growth in people departing towards Poland (and presumably, for many, then on to other western European destinations).

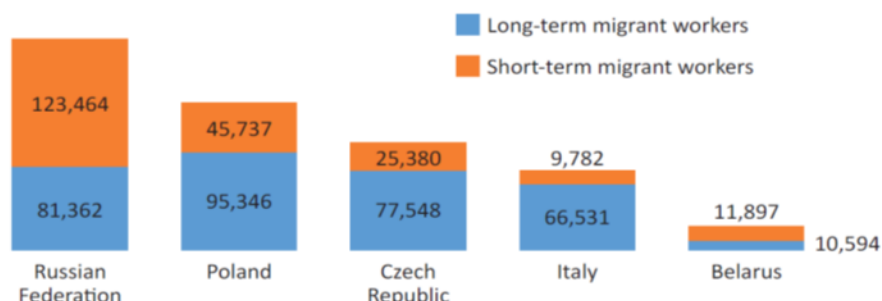


Source: State Border Guard Service of Ukraine

¹ Migration in Ukraine: Facts and Figures. (2016) IOM Mission in Ukraine. Edited by Olena Malynovska.

Whilst not all of these border crossing will be by people seeking to migrate it is an indication of the increasing out-mobility of Ukrainian citizens.

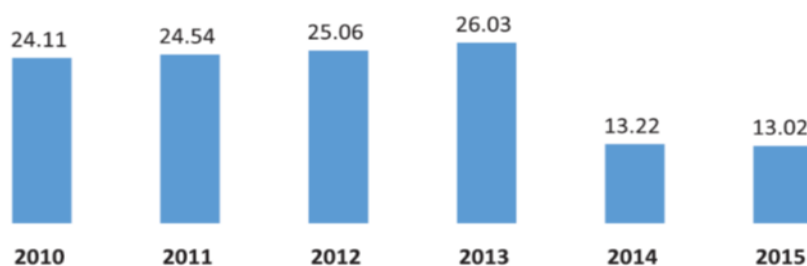
The following table gives a closer picture of actual migrant worker flow and their destination, in 2014/15:



According to a study conducted under the International Organisation for Migration in 2014-2015, about 700,000 Ukrainian citizens were working abroad.²

Migration to Ukraine

The conflict in eastern Ukraine, the economic crisis and decline in the living standards has reduced the attractiveness of the country for immigrants. In 2014-2015, foreign nationals visited Ukraine nearly half as frequently as in 2013. The table below shows the number of Ukrainian border crossings (per million) by foreign nationals entering Ukraine, 2010-2015:



Source: State Border Guard Service of Ukraine

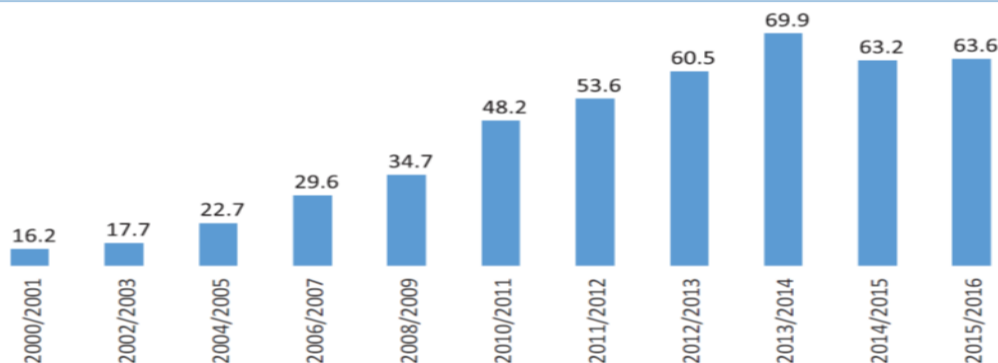
As the table below shows, the number of immigrants in Ukraine (i.e. foreign nationals residing based on permanent residence permits) is 250,000 people, or slightly more than half a per cent of the population. As a result of the events of 2014-2015, the number of immigrants decreased. The citizens of post-Soviet states comprise the largest share of immigrants (80%). More than half of them obtained permanent residence permits on the basis of close family ties with the citizens of Ukraine.



² Migration as an Enabler of Development in Ukraine. – K: IOM, 2016.

http://www.iom.org.ua/sites/default/files/iom_migration_as_an_enabler_of_development_in_ukraine.pdf

75,200 foreign nationals reside in Ukraine on the basis of temporary residence permits as of 2016, which is about a quarter less than in 2010. These are mainly foreign students and employees, the number of which has dipped given the deep economic crisis, as the table below indicates:



Source: Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. Ukrainian State Centre for International Education

Over the years (and deriving from a tradition established in Soviet times) the opportunity of studying in Ukraine has proved attractive to many from the developing world particularly Africa and Southeast Asia.³

Immigrant workers are mainly executives and managers (63% in 2015), engaged in the wholesale and retail trade (23%) and processing industry (17%). The majority of them are citizens of Russia (19%), Turkey (11%), Poland (6%), Belarus (5%), and Germany (4%).

A separate group of foreign nationals in Ukraine are refugees and persons provided with complementary protection. The introduction of the complementary protection in 2011, a tense situation in Afghanistan, the traditional country of origin for the majority of refugees in Ukraine, and the war in Syria led to a moderate increase in the number of refugees and applicants for asylum and additional protection in 2012-2015. Citizens of Afghanistan and Syria are the most frequent asylum applicants in Ukraine. However, the number of refugees in Ukraine remains low.

The situation with irregular migration of foreign nationals to and through Ukraine is quite moderate. However, during 2014-2015, there was an increase in the number of detected irregular migrants both at the borders of Ukraine and within the state. The number of attempts to illegally cross the border almost doubled in 2015 in comparison with 2014.

Internally-displaced people (IDPs)

Since 2014, the annexation of Crimea and military operations in the Donbas has been the driver for massive forced internal migration in Ukraine. As of July 2016, 1.029 million persons were displaced from the non-government controlled areas to other regions of Ukraine, including 1,007,112 persons from the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, 22,459 people from the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol city, with 170,581 children and 495,093 disabled and elderly among them.⁴

However, according to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, which registers IDPs as a prerequisite for the provision of social support, the number of displaced persons is higher and as of July 2016 comprised 1.774 million persons. The Interdepartmental Coordination Headquarters provided the following information on the accommodation of IDPs. Most of them were accommodated in areas east of the Dnieper river in Luhansk (275,000), Kharkiv (191,000), Donetsk (120,000), Dnipropetrovsk

³ See Helbig, A. N. (2014). *Hip hop Ukraine: Music, race, and African migration*. Indiana University Press; & Ruble, Blair A. (2008) *Establishing a New Right to the Ukrainian City*. Woodrow Wilson Center.

⁴ Interdepartmental Coordination Headquarters reports.

<http://www.dsns.gov.ua/ua/Mizhvidomchiykoordinaciyinyi-shtab.html>

(81,000), Zaporizhia (69,000), Kyiv (51,000) regions and Kyiv city (39,000). The smallest number of IDPs was accommodated in the Ternopil (2,500), Chernivtsi (3,000), Rivne (3,000), Zakarpattia (4,000), Ivano-Frankivsk (4,000) and Volyn (5,000) regions.

3. National Policy Context

National minorities

As recorded in the 2001 census, the main minority groups include Russians 8,334,100 (17.3%), Belarusians 275,800 (0.6%), Moldovans 258,600 (0.5%), Crimean Tatars 248,200 (0.5%) and Bulgarians 204,600 (0.4%). Ukraine also has smaller populations of Poles, Jews, Romanians, Armenians, Hungarians and other nationalities.

During the first years of its independence Ukraine has managed to develop a substantial legal framework for inter-ethnic relations, established by the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine and the Declaration of the Rights of Nationalities of Ukraine. These fundamental documents have established the principles on which ethnic-national policy is developed today, provide for respect and equality of citizens of Ukraine of different ethnicities, and forbid discrimination on ethnic grounds.

Protection of the rights and freedoms of national minorities is controlled by the Verkhovna Rada (parliament) of Ukraine, the President of Ukraine and the Cabinet of Ministers.

Since 2011 public policy on inter-ethnic relations and protection of national minorities' rights has been developed and implemented by the Ministry of Culture. Meanwhile policy on protection of the rights of persons deported on national grounds who have returned to Ukraine, has been developed and implemented by the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine.

In 2012 the Council of Europe Framework Convention For The Protection Of National Minorities reviewed Ukraine's treatment of its national minorities.⁵ It judged that Ukraine was pursuing a constructive approach towards the Framework Convention and its monitoring process. There had been improvement in the field of education in particular. However, there was concern that in a number of fields there had been no progress. The polarisation of society on questions surrounding the use of the Ukrainian and Russian languages was mentioned (and the failure of Ukraine to formulate a better policy of ethnicity and language has been acknowledged as a contributing factor to the conflict in eastern Ukraine, as may be seen from the speech given by the Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada, quoted overleaf.).

There had been no progress with regard to the legislative framework for the protection of national minorities and the status and restitution of rights of formerly deported persons, and no comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation had been adopted. Draft legislation on the status and restoration of rights of formerly deported persons has, however, been prepared and submitted to parliament. There are continued reports of significant inequalities experienced by Roma in areas such as education, health, access to housing and employment, as well as within the justice system. Despite some efforts made at regional level, there was no comprehensive national action plan for

⁵ Council of Europe (2012) Advisory Committee On The Framework Convention For The Protection Of National Minorities: Third Opinion on Ukraine adopted on 22 March 2012

the promotion of full equality of Roma. However there has been progress on the case of Crimean Tatars in recent years⁶.

There were no clear criteria and transparent procedures for the allocation of support to the cultural activities of minorities, which was seen to encourage the perception that support is granted arbitrarily.

The government agency responsible for dealing with all issues pertaining to minority protection issues had been dissolved at the end of 2010 and responsibilities entrusted to a small sub-division within the Ministry of Culture. Minority representatives were very concerned that access to higher-level officials in all ministries had since become much harder and that, overall, consultation on and effective participation in decision-making processes on issues of their concern is diminishing. The report recommended the Ukrainian government to:

- Adopt without delay and in close consultation with national minority representatives a comprehensive legislative framework pertaining to national minority protection and the status and restoration of rights of formerly deported persons, including as regards access to land;
- Take comprehensive and targeted measures to promote the full and effective equality of persons belonging to disadvantaged minorities, such as the Roma and Crimean Tatars, particularly regarding access to education and housing;
- Re-establish a specialised governmental body with sufficient financial and human resources to co-ordinate all issues relating to the protection of persons belonging to national minorities.

Since then, and with the change of regime there has been notable progress in some areas. Policy on minorities is developed and implemented by central executive authorities appointed by the President of Ukraine. If necessary, permanent commissions on inter-ethnic relations may be established by local councils, and respective structural subdivisions may be established by local state administrations. The Constitution makes provision for ethnic/national public associations to nominate candidates for people's deputies at election to public authorities.

Compliance with the laws on national minorities' rights is controlled by the Constitutional Court of Ukraine, and the Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities and Inter-Ethnic Relations of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, and the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights.

However, it is acknowledged there is still much work to be done, On March 11, 2015 parliamentary hearings were held on the *Role, Importance and Impact of the Civil Society on Development of the Ethnic-National Policy of Unity in Ukraine*. In particular, Oksana Ivanivna Syroyid, Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada stated, "Ukraine is at war... we have to admit that one of the causes of the present-day aggression and our certain inability to resolve the situation is, in fact, lack of a consistent public ethnic-national policy which would apply to the national minorities and, in the first place, interaction inside society... In order to win the war we have to contemplate and adopt a new public policy in ethnic-national relations."

In his turn, Vice Prime Minister Kyrylenko and Minister of Culture of Ukraine, said, "... inter-ethnic accord, inter-ethnic peace, good balanced ethnic-national policy is one of the top priorities of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and, in fact, all Ukrainian leaders."

⁶ On March 20, 2014 the Verkhovna Rada adopted the Resolution on Guaranteeing the Rights of the Crimean Tatars as a Part of the Ukrainian State. According to the Resolution, Ukraine guarantees the preservation and development of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of the Crimean Tatars.)

A Law on Education adopted in September 2017 has raised concerns about lowering standards of the protection of minorities' rights to learn, and learn in, their mother tongue.

Immigration and Integration

A report in 2011 by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe on the Integration of Migrants in Ukraine was highly critical of the situation. Amongst other things it said that foreigners had limited access to residence or citizenship; participation in public life was low and not encouraged; obtaining a work permit was difficult and costly leading to much unofficial employment; access to health care was difficult; there was evidence of growing xenophobia and most foreigners had a low level of trust in state institutions.⁷

Since then, of course, there has been a radical change in government and political culture in Ukraine and progress, albeit patchy, has been made. The migration policy of Ukraine has not been finally shaped yet, notwithstanding that several framework laws for regulation of immigration processes were approved over a decade ago, including early versions of the *Law of Ukraine on Refugees and the Law of Ukraine on Immigration*. In 2011, the new version of *Law of Ukraine on Refugees and Persons in Need of Temporary Protection* was approved. After having existed for a long period of time without a defined status, the State Migration Service became a full-fledged operational agency, established as a body subordinate to the State Department on Citizenship, Immigration and Registration of Physical Persons of the Interior Ministry of Ukraine, and the Department on Refugees of the former State Committee for Nationalities and Religions (these departments were later dissolved). The State Migration Service of Ukraine was authorised to operate as the central executive body in the sphere of migration (immigration and emigration), including combating illegal migration; dealing with such issues as citizenship and registration of physical persons, refugees and other legislatively defined categories of migrants.⁸

In 2011, the *Concept of Migration Policy of Ukraine* was developed and approved by a Presidential Decree. The Action Plan for its implementation was developed and approved. These legal acts were the first migration policy regulations of a comprehensive nature.

In July 2016, the Europe Without Barriers NGO published a report reviewing the progress which had been made in the interim. It concluded that:

Significant progress has been made in reforming Ukraine's migration policy in all its aspects, from border management to readmission, from the management of all forms of migration including asylum to the integration of recognized refugees and Ukrainians displaced by the conflict in the East (IDPs), from cooperation with EU countries and agencies to respect for human rights regarding to the movement of people. Long-term cooperation with the EU within the framework of the EU-Ukraine Action Plan on Justice, Freedom and Security, as well as on visa liberalization has helped Ukraine to implement best practices in migration policies.

Now, after Ukraine has met all the conditions of the European Commission for visa-free travel, Ukraine must continue and deepen the undertaken reforms, particularly in the areas of refugees' integration and IDPs' reintegration. Although some structural aspects of Ukraine's migration policy have been introduced based on the lessons from earlier reforms, the integration policy especially with regard to IDPs has been implemented from scratch.⁹

⁷ OSCE (2011) *Integration of Migrants in Ukraine. Situation and Needs Assessment*.

<http://www.osce.org/uk/odihr/81761>

⁸ International Organization for Migration (IOM) Mission in Ukraine (2011). *A Study on Integration, Hate Crimes and Discrimination of Different Categories of Migrants In Moldova and Ukraine*

⁹ Kateryna Kulchytska, Iryna Sushko & Andriy Solodko (2016) *Ukrainian Migration Policy Reform*:

However, the authors believed there was still considerable work to be done to bring the process of integration up to an acceptable standard, particularly with regard to refugees and asylum seekers:

One of the EU's requirements was the introduction of an integration policy, which is reflected in the Action Plan for the Integration of Refugees, and Persons in Need of Subsidiary Protection into the Ukrainian Society, as well as 25 regional action plans, introduced in 2012.

The plans envisage that traditional measures are taken to ensure that refugees enjoy their rights such as access to opportunities of learning the language, history, culture and laws of Ukraine; temporary refugees housing units; and that tolerance education takes place in local communities. However, none of the regional plans covers all the elements of a logical integration process: education, employment, social inclusion, citizenship and political participation. Also, there are no performance indicators for integration. Since it came into force four years ago, the national programme has never been revised, evaluated, or extended to particular migrant categories in spite of the fact that modern best practices show that each category of migrants, like children, women or workers needs a specific integration model.

Social cohesion

Following the crisis in eastern Ukraine and Crimea, the IOM commissioned a survey to assess various factors of social cohesion across the country, for both IDPs and the local population by such aspects as: their confidence in the public authorities, trust to social institutions and other state establishments; solidarity with other groups; participation in political and civic activities as well as in social and cultural life.¹⁰

It found that

- Public trust in social protection institutions has dramatically increased over the past years (4.7% in 2008 and 18.4% in 2016).
- Trust in the police has increased by 6.3% in comparison to 2008
- The percentage reporting complete or partial trust in the police is 56.8% in 2016 compared to 29% in 2008.
- Trust in local authorities has increased from 3.7% in 2008 to 11.8% in 2016, and this is the only governmental authority that shows positive change in public esteem.

In regards to IDPs in particular, they reported 4% more trust in the state media than the population as a whole. 9.4% of IDPs had complete trust in state media institutions, in comparison to 5.7% of local households. IDPs demonstrated almost 8% higher trust in the armed forces and 10.8% higher trust in the police.

IDPs generally demonstrate a higher level of satisfaction and trust in democracy and governance: 5.8% difference in the reported trust to the Administration of the President and the Cabinet of Ministers, whilst 5.7% more trust to the Verkhovna Rada.

In regards to how accepting the whole population is of each other there are signs that general levels of solidarity have risen significantly in recent years as the following table demonstrates:

Paving the Way for the EU-Ukraine Cooperation. <http://english.europeweb.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Ukrainian-Migration-Policy-Reform.pdf>

¹⁰ International Organization for Migration (IOM) Mission in Ukraine (2015) *Social Cohesion in Ukraine: Survey Report*. <http://www.iom.org.ua/en/social-cohesion-ukraine-survey-report>

ACCEPTANCE



4. Local Diversity and Policy Context

Representatives of 133 nationalities live in the Odessa region. The largest ethnic groups are:

- Ukrainians 622,000(61.6%);
- Russians 292,000 (29.0%);
- Bulgarians 13,300 (1.3%);
- Jews 12,400 (1.2%);
- Moldovans 7,600 (0.7%);
- Byelorussians 6,400 (0.6%);
- Armenians 4,400 (0.4%);
- Roma 4,000 (0.4%);
- Poles 2.100 (0.2%).

Ten ethnic communities are given special recognition by the City Council. These communities have community centres which are provided by the city council. By the decision of the Odessa City Council No. 1433-VII dated December 7, 2016, the amount of the rent - 1 hryvna per year is set to the following public organizations:

- Odessa City Czech Society "Czech Family ";
- National-cultural association of citizens "Belarus ";
- Gagauz national-cultural society "Birlik";
- Odessa branch of the Union of Poles in Ukraine "Adam Mickiewicz";
- Odessa Association of Political Repressions' Victims;
- Odessa regional association of Jews-former ghetto prisoners and Nazi concentration camps;
- Jewish Youth Center "Hillel ";
- Association of Bulgarians of Ukraine;
- International Congress on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of Citizens "Shield ";
- International Charitable Foundation "Reformation".

Other key organisations include:

- Roma congress "Bakhtalo drom";
- Odessa Society of Jewish Culture;
- Czech society "Ceska Rodina";
- Georgian national-cultural society "Sakartvelo";
- Odessa Society of Greeks;
- Russian national community "Rusich";
- Odessa Armenian community;
- Odessa Bulgarian cultural and educational club "Ognishte";
- All-Ukrainian national-cultural Moldovan Association.

Any formally constituted ethnic group can request support to establish facilities or to run social services. This mechanism has been successfully implemented over many in Odessa and has been

used to solve many priority social problems. For instance, the Jewish Youth Center "Gillel" is the 2017 winner in the annual award for "Creation of conditions for preserving the national identity and ethnic identity of the national and cultural societies of Odessa".

The Council's Department of Internal Policy is responsible for overseeing diversity matters. For example, in 2017 facilitated the organization of the following events:

- 25 March, the Bulgarian community celebrated the traditional holiday "Goodbye to Baba Marta"
- 24 April, the exhibition "Survivors of the Shoah" opened in the Odessa Museum of the Holocaust to memorize the tragic and heroic events, about Jews who survived and made a great contribution to the development of the science, literature, economy worldwide.
- 24 May, which is the Day of Slavic writing and culture, representatives of the Bulgarians of Ukraine held the laying of flowers at the monument to the educators Cyril and Methodius.
- 16 June, a round table was held on the theme: "Afghanistan: the movement for change." The organizers were the International Congress on the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms of Citizens "Shield" in conjunction with the Public National and Cultural Autonomy of the Afghan Diasporas "Justice".

Odessa likes to think of itself as not only multicultural but outwardly tolerant of others, and a place where intercultural hybrids are formed. The sense of humour is one example of this. It emerges almost as the lubricant that allowed different cultures to live together without too much friction. In the case of cuisine, the classic Odessite salad was taken from the Mediterranean but as they don't have lemon and olive oil in Odessa it was adapted to make use of sunflower oil and vinegar.

In most cases, ethnicity as a factor in city life rarely extends beyond cultural and occasionally linguistic matters. However, there are two communities who, by virtue of special circumstance merit further mention and will be discussed below. There is an ongoing question about what is the identity of Odessa in the face of its complex diversity. It is said that in 1990s, after the fall of the Soviet Union, people were suddenly keen to speak out about what had been hidden by the regime, but by now much of this has disappeared. It was only when the violence erupted in Odessa in 2014 when people were obliged to reflect deeply upon what their personal identities were. It is said that at this point most members of most ethnic groups identified very strongly – and perhaps for the first time – as Ukrainian.

The Jewish Community

Prior to the outbreak of World War 2 Jews made up almost half the population of the city and were an essential element in any understanding of Odessa. They helped define its particular characteristics such as linguistic dialect, cuisine, music, sense of humour, skills and trades and general outlook on life. With the invasion by the army of Romania many fled with the retreating Red Army, but most stayed on. They were murdered by the Romanians in a horrific pogrom, often with the passive compliance of their Gentile neighbours. Although a Jewish community has tried to re-establish itself, it will never regain its old position.

However there remains a question about how Ukraine and Odessa acknowledges its Jewish heritage and the brutality of what happened. In contrast to much of Ukraine, Odessa does host a museum of the Holocaust which was started 2009 in two small rooms as a private initiative. Because the Holocaust is not taught in Ukrainian schools, the displays here are often the only opportunity children have to learn of what happened to their city. More than 350 Holocaust survivors are still alive, and they make themselves available to speak to the pupils. In other Ukrainian cities there is no public support for Holocaust memory, and the history of the Jewish community is not considered a part of the Ukrainian history.

We were told that even in Odessa it remains difficult to have a conversation about Jewish history. Even now there is no focus on Jewish history in the university history course, which seems quite inexplicable and unjustifiable.

The Roma community

The Roma are dispersed around the territory of Ukraine. Most of them reside in the Oblasts of Zakarpattia (14,000), Donetsk (4,000), Dnipropetrovsk (4,000), Kharkiv (2,300) and Luhansk (2,200). It is estimated there about 4,000 Roma live in Odessa Oblast.

Odessa City Council has formed a *Working Group on Implementation of the Strategy of Protection and Integration into Ukrainian Society of the Roma National Minority for the Period up to 2020*. The working group is headed by the deputy mayor, the vice-chairman is the head of Odessa Regional Roma Congress, and the secretary is the director of the Internal Policy Department. The working group includes representatives of the executive units of the Odessa City Council, as well as representatives of Roma public associations. It includes representatives of the Main Directorate of Migration Service of Ukraine in the Odessa region, the Main Directorate of Justice in the Odessa region, Administrative services of the Odessa City Council, "Odessa City Center for the Registration of Homeless Citizens", and "Regional Center for the Registration of Homeless Citizens".

To resolve urgent issues, the Working Group regularly convenes consultative meetings of the heads of departments of the Odessa City Council with the chairman of the Odessa Regional Roma Congress Sergey Yermoshkin.

During 2016-2017 the Head of the Monitoring and Analytical Unit of the Department together with the Chairman of the Odessa Regional Roma Congress took part in:

- a working meeting with the Council of Europe's mission on ensuring the rights of national minorities
- the meeting of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights with representatives of local and state units, which was conducted to study the situation in the context and possible assistance to Ukraine on the protection of the rights of Roma national minorities
- the national training seminar "Supporting regional and national participation of Roma youth with an emphasis on youth policy", which was supported by the Council of Europe Youth Department and co-operation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine;
- a seminar of the European Center for National Minorities "Integration and nationwide dialogue - theory and experience".

At the moment the Odessa City Council in cooperation with the Odessa Regional Roma Congress are working to find suitable premises to establish a Center for Roma Culture.

Sergey Yermoshkin has developed a course (36 hours of lectures), as well as methodological materials on the history of Roma for the heads of departments of Odessa City Council.

Regional authorities in Odessa are making efforts to recruit Roma mediators and teaching assistants from the community and to promote attendance by Roma children in schools. Particular efforts have reportedly been made to enroll Roma children in pre-school education. This has helped to alleviate the language problems faced by Roma children in schools in Ukraine, who often speak Romani at home. However these efforts appear still to be of an ad hoc nature and lack sustained financial support. There appears to be no comprehensive strategy to address the situation, nor an adequate awareness of the severity of the problems in accessing education faced by Roma children.

5. Governance and Democratic Participation

There are four levels of governance in Ukraine - local, district (raion), regional (oblast) and national – although the government is engaged in a major programme of decentralisation and devolution of powers and resources.

Fiscal decentralization has set new rules for the allocation of taxes to local budgets. A total of 60 percent of personal income tax, 100 percent of state duty, and 100 percent of the fees for administrative services are now paid into local budgets. In a radical change, local administrations have gained the right to levy a local property tax and a local excise tax on alcohol, tobacco, and fuel. They are also allowed to borrow larger sums than before from the central government and banks to finance their spending projects. Fiscal decentralization has brought opportunities and fresh challenges. In 2016, the budgets of the 159 communities amalgamated in 2015 increased by 49% on the previous year, to 132 billion hryvnia (\$4.9 billion). Ukraine's 2017 budget foresees a 23 percent increase in local budgets.

A significant paradox of the decentralization reforms is that while most of the Ukrainian public supports it, the majority of those same people hold a paternalistic outlook and expect the central government to take care of them. Polls show that only 32 percent of citizens are ready to engage in local-level decision-making, and just 15 percent believe that they can influence the situation in their own municipality.¹¹

The Mayor of Odessa is Gennadiy Leonidovich Trukhanov of the Trust Business Party, who was re-elected for a second term in 2015¹². Meanwhile the Governor of the Odessa Oblast is Maksym Volodymyrovych Stepanov, a government appointee.

Mayor Trukhanov is a particularly strong advocate of decentralisation and democratic participation, both nationally and within his own city. He has pioneered a Participatory Budgeting project. Ordinary citizens, NGOs and companies, and any legal entity can apply for financial support and the general public are invited to vote for those they believe should receive public money. There is budget of 100M Hryvna and so far there have been 148 proposals with a total 300MH. Only Odessa residents can vote and citizens must register, and their ID will be checked. More than 10 000 people have registered so far. The project proposals are checked by the business department, then other city departments, then sent to a committee of NGOs, citizens and officials. Some of the projects are eliminated at this stage on technical criteria.

The city has developed an IT platform for participatory budgeting, which is also able to cater for petitions, and other public platform for policy priorities.¹³ They have done adverts in TV, the press, and social media, and each department's networks were invited to information meetings.

¹¹ Decentralization Reform In Ukraine: Prospects And Challenges (2016) by Oleksii Sydorчук, analyst of the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation.

http://www.old.dif.org.ua/modules/pages/files/1449069764_3870.pdf

¹² The Trust Business- Ukrainian political party, territorially referring to Odessa region.

The political party is overseen by Gennady Trukhanov, a public and political figure in Ukraine, and mayor of Odessa for many years. Previously, the party was aligned with the Party of the Regions but its rhetoric has changed in 2014-2015. Now the Party claims to be a liberal party. www.rbc.ua/rus/tag/doveray-delam-011022015

¹³ See the *Socially Active Citizen* website which has been established by the City Council <https://citizen.odessa.ua/>

The Petitions facility is being tested now. They have a petition to create bicycle path and it will be considered by the Mayor if supported by more than one thousand votes.

Finally the city is pioneering an E-administration service. For example, you can make a 15 minute application and then, in 20 days, you can receive a new biometrical passport.

6. Education and training

Education is the biggest department of the city with 300 institutions, 16,000 employees and 120,000 pupils. In the last two years they have opened a further 7 kindergardens. All national minorities are represented amongst the pupils and teachers. Only 5 schools are strictly mono-national, 7 have different languages side by side, and the others learn Ukrainian and Russian (optional). All schools celebrate the holidays of national minorities. All teachers celebrate 'Teachers Day' on first Sunday of October, and the theme last year was national minorities. Teachers used songs, dances, essays etc. of their national origins to enable each other to discover the city's diversity. Aside from this, national origin is not recorded anywhere within the system, although outside of the school system, in extra-mural activities, it is also well developed through many creativity classes.

Out of school education is always developing – there is a centre for childhood creativity, a centre for military and patriotic education, and 'Viktoria' a leisure camp for poor children by the sea. 5000 children have the chance to go there each year, and families do not have to pay. Children study English, learn arts etc. This year 140 from the eastern conflict zone were admitted.

A Bulgarian language school is about to be opened, complementing one for Greek, Polish and Hebrew. There are two private Jewish schools, as well as public schools where some subjects are taught in Hebrew.

There are 3000 refugee children in Odessa's school system. Chinese and other foreign children are concentrated around the railway station area and now two local schools offer Chinese language. Afghans, Arabs and Tatars are also well-represented groups. There are no special Ukrainian language reception classes offered, but parents can chose optional classes in Ukrainian, Russian and other languages.

The CoE team visited the Children's Health and Sports Complex "Zhemchuzhinka" (Small Pearl). This is a place where orphans, or children whose parents are incapable of giving care, are accommodated – from babies to teenagers. During the crisis years after the fall of the Soviet Union, Odessa experienced extreme social breakdown and, being a temperate seaside resort, also attracted many derelict people from elsewhere in Ukraine, and AIDS, drug abuse and alcoholism were rife. This placed enormous strain upon the social services and for a period there were many homeless children living in (and beneath) the city. The creation of the centre was a personal initiative of the Mayor, for which he was able to attract substantial external investment. Thus the Zhemchuzhinka centre is extremely well equipped and staffed and offers a quality of life to the children that would seem to be unrivalled in Ukraine or elsewhere. Such is the degree of welfare, education and citizenship-socialisation they receive that, by the time they graduate into normal life, they probably have the potential to be leaders of the future. Even when they leave the protective environment of Zhemchuzhinka the city provides apartments in the city to enable them to make a good start in society.

7. Employment and business

The City has based its economic development model on what it calls the '5 Ts': Tourism - Trade – Transport - Technologies – Trust.

Within the context of Ukraine the economy of Odessa is in quite a robust state. Unemployment is only 1.4% which is second only to Kyiv. But the city does have a problem with finding the right type and quality of skills for its labour market, so there is a need for extra training provision.

Because trade has been its historic *raison d'être*, Odessa has a large cadre of experienced and well-connected business entrepreneurs. They have been able to win many contracts with foreign governments and companies. The workforce is also very well educated, with 50,000 working in IT, and local IT companies working on behalf of major partners abroad.

There will be 5T Forum which many businessmen will attend to bring new investment and ideas. One of the City's aims is to be the sport and cultural capital of Ukraine to complement its dominance in the tourism industry. At the moment most tourists who visit are Ukrainian, but they wish to diversify their offer to other nationalities. They are branding the City as being 'open for 365 days a year'. They acknowledge there are some issues in the tourism industry. Some of the hotel chains operate illegally by paying too little tax. Private apartments are also springing up to offer unfair competition to legal hotels.

Some of the business in Odessa is in the shadow economy. The average salary of an IT specialist (who works via Internet for a foreign company outside of Ukraine from Odessa) is US\$1-5 000 dollars a month. Construction workers receive between \$700 and 1000\$. But the salaries of public officials are much lower, creating a rather unbalanced labour market. It is claimed that outsiders fail to appreciate the true scale of the Ukrainian economy because they do not factor in this shadow economy.

The shadier side of trade is also exemplified by the enormous and notorious Seventh-Kilometer Market – a place which has been described as 'part third-world bazaar, part post-Soviet Wal-Mart, a place of unadulterated and largely unregulated capitalism'.

The City provides a special office of the Unemployment Department for foreigners, which provides language tuition and extra labour market support. Recognition of qualifications is particularly difficult for foreigners in Odessa. They usually have to go to Kyiv to have their qualifications validated.

There is a programme to support SMEs, offering a co-working centre with office, computers etc. The co-working space is run by a business centre which is a private organisation and which had won the Council's tender. It offers educational programmes, eg for large families which want to start family businesses. Another of them is for citizens from Donbass and Lugansk that have moved to Odessa. It also has a programme for socially responsible business.

The Impact Hub (social innovation businesses incubator) was opened in 2013. Programmes offer support for NGOs and micro-businesses offering space, technology, methodological support on project management, strategy, social entrepreneurship. For example, there is the 'Impact Academy' which hosts lectures by former ministers and other high-profile professionals; 'Idea Boost' - a competition for projects from all over Ukraine which will be incubated in Odessa; 'Youth development' – a hub volunteer service. One project is to visit smaller cities and work with the locals on development projects they could not realise on their own. Another axis of work is the

development of urban renewal projects, eg. a green theatre which is about rehabilitating an abandoned open air auditorium and is now reused as a place for concerts, food trucks, meetings etc.

For 2 years they have been operating a business incubator project for IDPs from the east. It offers 30-100 000 Hryvna per project. A requirement is that businesses should be registered, and pay taxes, and then they are given help to buy equipment. 160 people have so far passed through the project. The first 40 entrepreneurs who won projects after the incubation project, were so grateful, that they decided to give a present to the city - a % of their profits to schools and charities. But even 50% of those who did not win support, still started up their business, because they were able to tap into a very strong network in the city.

Odessa has launched a 'Strategy 2050'. Frustrated with the short-termism of politics which rarely plans beyond the next election, Odessa is arranging a series of summits with leaders of various sectors of the economy and public life to build a long term plan of city development.

Finally we visited a residential centre for vulnerable men, which is run by the social employment department on a personal initiative of the Mayor. The clients are given the chance to reconnect with normal life. Many work in black economy at the city market, but this is seen as an acceptable stepping stone for returning to the labour market.

8. Language and multilingualism

When Odessa was founded its principal language was Russian, and this has remained the lingua franca, although Ukrainian is now more in evidence. Prior to the Holocaust Yiddish and Hebrew would also have been widely spoken.

The department for national minority languages and literatures operates on the basis of the Odesa Regional Institute for Advanced Training of Teachers. Its staff monitor the measures and dynamics in the area of commencement or development of teaching of regional or national minority languages.

Russian has been recognised as a regional language in nine Oblasts of Ukraine including Odessa. There is also recognition for Gaguz with special education available for 776 pupils of general educational establishments in the Raions of Bolhrad, Kiliia and Reni. The competition of creative works in the Gaguz language "Native Language! Native Language! Bringing Us Together, First Mother's Words, First Lullaby" in which 65 pupils of general educational establishments in which the Gaguz language is studied have participated has been held in order to popularise the Gaguz language in the Oblast of Odesa. Bulgarian was recognised as a regional language in the Oblast of Odesa by the district council of Bolhrad.

9. Public space, neighbourhoods and ethnic mixing

Odessa is a city built on a grand scale with wide boulevards, spacious parks and an active beach culture on its fringes. Odessites like to live life out in the open and there is an active café culture. However, the infrastructure of the city has been allowed to decline over many years and, whilst there is now a campaign to restore it to its former glory, it will take time and vast investment.

The Mayor has identified public realm investment as an important way of achieving many of the city's ambitions. For example, he has cemented relationships with the Turkish and the Greek governments by offering them each the chance to build a national-themed park adjacent to the

iconic Potemkin Stairs. He thinks this juxtaposition of rival cultures in a harmonious public setting exemplifies the way Odessites see the world.

He would like this to be a model to other cities, and he in turn hopes it will attract other national governments to invest in other Odessa parks, for example Azerbaijan, Armenia and Italy.

10. Interfaith Dialogue

The CoE team met people from a wide variety of religious denominations during its visit. The Baptist bishop said to us that Odessa was so mixed that it represented a denomination all of its own: 'We all pray together and celebrate each other's special days'. He cited the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther and the Reformation, which he claimed had been celebrated more in Odessa than in many German cities. Responsibility for this is attributed to the Mayor who established an organizing committee to coordinate the celebration in Odessa of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Thus in March the "Week of Protestantism" was held in Odessa's Kirche, with conferences, concerts, round tables, evenings of organ music, etc. In April, the action "Clean Heart - Clean City" was held and, during this action, representatives of the committee organized clean-up work in Park areas of the city.

In the 'European Christmas' project all confessions were encouraged to collaborate. Funding was offered to encourage mixing.

The City Council acknowledges it needs to do more research to understand and evaluate the diversity of religious activity that goes on. They admit that have been surprised by just how many different confessions they have in the city.

There has been a Muslim Association in Odessa since 2011 and mainly represents people of Chechen and Azeri origin. More recently it has been working with arrivals from Syria and Afghanistan.

11. Health and Welfare

The City Council has a very active Social Services department and considers it to be at the heart of its plan to be an inclusive and intercultural city. There is support for the lone elderly and rehabilitation for the disabled and sick. There are 2 centres for the homeless and one for reinsertion of vulnerable people into labour market, and a centre for homeless parents with kids.

The distinctive feature of the Odessa approach is the emphasis upon cultural communication rather than financial support alone. They believe that by helping people to participate in cultural events and social groups and connecting them to co-ethnics, it will prevent them from becoming socially isolated. Because of this they organise lots of events for kids who come from unstable families.

They are now changing their concept, not just giving support once but following clients along their way in order to study how the person lives and what are their cultural roots. For example, many people of the Roma diaspora have no documents which makes it difficult for them to access the social system. They have found it is better to integrate them socially and culturally rather than just to offer monetary welfare. They organise meetings of Belarusian, Bulgarian, Korean and other nationalities, so that citizens can become familiar with the different cultures of the city. Museum

visits, and other excursions are offered for people who are under social protection regimes. Also a series of meetings about religious tolerance has been held.

They call this the concept of 'integrative social support' or a 'whole family' approach to helping kids. 25 institutions are collaborating with it. The special needs of individuals and families are assessed and then they provide individualised support pathways. IDPs in particular have complex and interconnected problems. The department started working on a case management basis in cooperation with all other departments. The social workers had to be trained, by NGOs from Ukraine and abroad, to work with people traumatised by war. The department has developed a network with a large number of departments and organisations (migration service, labour office, sport department, housing etc.). Help is given in information, psychological counselling, medical assistance, financial help, accommodation, legal advice, provision of documents, registering in educational establishment, social integration for former soldiers, and for convicts. They also work with victims of violence, human trafficking, abandoned babies etc.

Assistance is also provided to deal with legal issues, citizenship and human rights. There is now a system of consultation to map the complex interaction of problems and passing people through the system. Reintegration is necessary for the whole families of ex-combatants. Many former soldiers are vulnerable to crime and drugs, and can be victims of human trafficking

There is still a question of how to identify families who need support. They get reports from friends and neighbours to help monitor progress. They work out individual progress plans leading to signing a contract which leads to agreed programmes of collaboration between different departments. They have realised the need to create a monitoring office to ensure everyone sticks to their plan

Compared to other parts of Ukraine the situation in Odessa is now stable as they are receiving adequate funding, and the local politicians are prepared to be flexible and move money across budgets to respond to new demands

Although Odessa is a city which welcomes many newcomers, particularly tourists and business people, it is the Department of Social Services which considers itself the most important gateway and first point of contact for many. They see it as their role to signpost people to the places they need to help them become integrated and active citizens as quickly as possible, with 167 staff providing support for 200,000 + people without work or who need social assistance. Refugees are a relatively new category with over 20,000 households or over 30,000 people, mainly IDPs. They assess their needs and connect them to housing work and social support.

They are unable to say how many foreign refugees they deal with, though they have noticed a growth in Syrian refugees. They must first register at the migrant centre and be granted formal status before becoming eligible for government support.

12. Media and Communication

The Region of Odesa includes many ethnicities but there are particular concentrations of Moldovans, Bulgarians, Gagauz and Jews, and a significant infrastructure of media agencies has developed to service them.

The weekly television programme "Inter-Odesa" covers activity of a variety of national societies in the Region of Odesa.

The regional radio and TV station “Roden krai” broadcasts in the Bulgarian language. Two newspapers are published in the national minority languages at the expense of the regional budget: “Roden Krai”, an all-Ukrainian state cultural and educational bulletin of the Bulgarians in Ukraine issued weekly since 2001; “Blgarite Vchera, Dnes, Utre”, a regional cultural and educational bulletin of the Bulgarians in Ukraine issued weekly since 2013. Issues of national orientation and activities of national communities are regularly represented in publications of regional printed media: in the newspapers “Odeski Visti”, “Chornomorski Novyny”, “Vechirnia Odesa”, “Odeskyi Visnyk”, “Dumska Ploshcha”, and “Mihratsiia”. The information bulletin of the Council of Representatives of National and Cultural Societies in the Region of Odesa, newspaper “Bahatonatsionalna Odesa”, is published monthly.

Local newspapers publish themed pages in national minority languages. For instance, the Izmail newspaper “Pridunayskiye Vesti” publishes monthly themed pages in the Bulgarian language; the Bolhrad newspaper “Druzhba” publishes the literature page in the Bulgarian; the newspaper “Reniyskiy Vestnik” publishes pages in Ukrainian, Moldavian, Gagauz, Bulgarian and Russian twice a month. During the first six months of 2014 the yearbook “Dunaiskiy Bereh” was established to print works of local authors in the Moldavian, Bulgarian, Ukrainian and Russian languages. These and other publications regularly display materials on the development of national cultures on themed pages “A Word about the Language”, “Native Speech”, in newspapers “Druhar”, “Reniiski Briag”, “Blgarske Slovo”, “V Druzhnoi Semie” (In a United Family) and in the sections “Multinational Region of Odesa”, “National Renaissance”, “Life of National Communities”, “Contacts” and “National Culture”.

The regional radio broadcasts weekly programmes (29 minutes each) “Ana Tarafi”, “Field Flower” in the Gagauz language. The regional television broadcasts weekly (26 minutes each) programmes “Ana Tarafi” in the Gagauz language. The weekly television programme “Inter- Odesa” (lasting 26 minutes) covers activity of national societies in the region.

Radio programmes in the Moldavian language “Actualitati”, “Songs of Native Land”, “Felicitare” are broadcast twice a month and last 29 minutes. The regional television broadcasts weekly programmes (lasting 26 minutes) “Plaiul Natal” (in the Moldavian language), “Kolorit” (in the Bulgarian and Moldavian languages, in turns). The weekly television programme “Inter-Odesa” (lasting 26 minutes) covers activity of national societies in the Region of Odesa.

The newspaper “Lucafarul” of the All-Ukrainian National and Cultural Moldavian Association with the national distribution is published weekly in the Moldavian language at the expense of the regional budget. Local newspapers publish themed pages in national minority languages. For instance, the Izmail newspaper “Pridunayskiye Vesti” publishes monthly themed pages in the Moldavian language; the newspaper “Reniyskiy Vestnik” publishes pages in the Moldavian language twice a month. During the first six months of 2014 the yearbook “Dunaiskii Bereh” was established to print works of local authors in the Moldavian language.

However, as the tables below indicate, the number of broadcast hours of minority media has been generally falling over recent years:¹⁴

Name of state television and radio company	2011		2012		2013		2014	
	Language	Scope of own-produced programmes, hours/year	Language	Scope of own-produced programmes, hours/year	Language	Scope of own-produced programmes, hours/year, % of broadcasting of the duration of total broadcasting per year	Language	Scope of own-produced programmes, hours/year, % of broadcasting of the duration of total broadcasting per year

¹⁴ Council of Europe (2016) *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages: Third periodical report*. Presented to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe in accordance with Article 15 of the Charter

Odessa RSTRC	Moldavian	52	Moldavian	45.6	Moldavian	45.06 (0.78 %)	Moldavian	26.5 (0.3 %)
	Bulgarian	52	Bulgarian	45.6	Bulgarian	45.06 (0.78 %)	Bulgarian	26.0 (0.3 %)
	Gagauz	52	Gagauz	22.53	Gagauz	22.53 (0.51 %)	Gagauz	26.0 (0.3 %)
Odessa RSTRC	Moldavian	24	Moldavian	48	Moldavian	48 (4.4 %)	Moldavian	23.0 (0.3 %)
	Bulgarian	38	Bulgarian	24	Bulgarian	24 (2 %)	Bulgarian	26.0 (0.3 %)
	Gagauz	38	Gagauz	48	Gagauz	48 (4 %)	Gagauz	32.0 (0.4 %)
	others	6			-	-	Russian	13.0 (0.1 %)

13. International outlook

In recognition of its original foundation as a 'window on the world' Odessa maintains many international connections. It has almost 50 sister cities around the world and initiates many bilateral activities. For example 'Cooperate with Regensburg' whereby the two cities collaborate over health and humanitarian aid. Local students make regular visit to the German city to study medicine, and many businesses cooperate in the medical and food industries.

The 'Ambassadors of Odessa' programme celebrates locals who are living and working abroad. They are encouraged to be the advocates of Odessa so they receive a special document of authorisation to act on behalf of the city abroad. For example, an Odessite woman living in Geneva is now developing student exchanges there on a voluntary basis.

'Odessa Visits You' is an initiative whereby city officials travel to different cities to attract investors and also to find emigre Odessites to collaborate with. For example, a person who lives in Estonia is coordinate local tour parties to visit there. Recent visits include:

- 20-23 March 2016 – Geneva (Switzerland);
- 7-8 April 2016 – Vinnytsya (Ukraine);
- 28 April – 7 May 2016 – Regensburg (Germany);
- 1-6 May 2016 – Bremenhaven (Germany);
- 20-22 May 2016 – Rivne (Ukraine);
- 4-5 June 2016 – Chisinau (Moldova);
- 20-21 June 2016 – Kyiv (Ukraine);
- 12-19 July 2016 – Brest та Douarnenez (France);
- 23-30 July 2016 – Erevan (Armenia);
- 21-24 September 2016 – Chernigiv (Ukraine);
- 18-21 March 2017 – Chisinau (Moldova);
- 23-27 March 2017 – Liptovsky Mikulas (Slovakia);
- 28-31 March 2017 – Minsk (Belarus);
- 6-8 May 2017 – Chernigiv (Ukraine).

The International Club of Odessites has branches around the world.

Odessa opened a new air terminal in April but there is still a need to repair the landing strip before it can become fully functional. A new rail connection is opening and there is now a free visa regime to the EU. The port is developing as a cruise ship destination.

Unfortunately the city's 2014 troubles scared away many foreign tourists, so 80% of visitors are currently from Ukraine. Although there are now many fewer from Russia, there is a steady increase from the West and also from China and India, and the Arab Emirates, who can get a special visa at the airport. Last year Odessa presented itself in Beijing and Shanghai for the first time. The Chinese cultural centre 'Confucius' has opened and there is an exchange programme for students. There is now a need to train more local specialists in language and culture.

Tourism has been very seasonal but Odessa has been trying to make itself an all year round destination, with an expansion of educational tourism to its many universities.

Many hotels are developing their conference facilities but the city still lacks a congress hall so it is a priority of the Mayor, to attract big events and conventions. Medical tourism is a traditional strength, although many of the sanatoria need major improvements to attain modern standards.

There is still much work to do in improving infrastructure); and also improving welcoming skills of key staff. For example when the CoE team arrived at Odessa Airport, our luggage was missing. The staff at the lost luggage desk had no foreign language competency, and were brusque to the point of rudeness.

14. Conclusions and Recommendations

Odessa is a city which was founded upon the principles of openness, outwardness and interaction, and it has endeavoured to maintain them, even through very difficult periods of repression, prohibition and communal strife. For much of its history it has seen itself as a city state, with its own unique perspective. This has been partly a survival strategy, to distance itself from the political challenges which tend to originate from the interior; and to open itself to opportunities which have often arrived by sea. It is often the fate of port cities to have this one-foot-in-one foot-out attitude to its hinterland but with Odessa, because of the extreme experiences of its history, it seems even more so. Ironically, as a consequence of the clashes of May 2014, Odessa perhaps now feels more a direct and patriotic connect with Ukraine than ever before.

The city, and its political leadership, now give a strong sense that Odessa wants to move on again and follow its destiny as a city with a place in international affairs and trade. The city feels impatient to be allowed the freedoms and powers within the national system to take its own decisions and to achieve its ambitions. Joining the ICC network therefore seems like a logical step.

But whilst Odessa has all the ruthless pragmatism of any trading port, it is also a city with soul. It has generated its own identity and mythology as a city of sharp but big-hearted chancers, but what was less expected was the numerous expressions of municipal empathy and compassion that we observed. Odessa seems determined that it will be judged, not only upon the achievements of its most successful citizens, but by the way it embraces the most vulnerable in society. It seems like the city is not only welcoming to tourists and business travellers who bring trade and investment, but also to those who have few resources or serious needs. The City Council portrays itself as an investor in people, even though it may take many years for that investment to be reciprocated.

Particularly through the way it has grown and maintained its network of ex-patriate Odessites abroad, and its web of sister cities, Odessa has much valuable expertise to bring the ICC network. Also, with its expertise in the staging of large events, it offers the opportunity for hosting ICC gatherings, for example a thematic seminar on tourism and Interculturality; or an experience-sharing event on developing entrepreneurship with IDPs and refugees. Odessa in turn can use the 120+ cities in the network to extend its branding and message. It can look to the possibilities of sharing costs and efforts on promotion city-marketing for example. Perhaps the City Council could begin by staging a meeting within the context of the ICC Milestone Event in Lisbon in November.

We would make the following recommendations:

- There is a need to identify and record good practice (through the index and direct reporting)
- Odessa should develop an intercultural strategy and action plan - together with its citizens.
- Odessa should be represented in ICC events to present its achievements and challenges.
- Odessa could lead an ICC working group on the topic of diversity advantage in tourism and social enterprise.
- Odessa should make connections with other cities who have been experimenting with participative budgeting to share experience. It would be interesting to assess how citizens of diverse backgrounds participate in the project - and perhaps how it could be made a criterion for awarding projects to make them intercultural.
- The City Council should explore the question of how the new minorities arriving in the city, feel about the special privileges which are accorded to older established communities under the national minority model? How can a level playing field be ensured in the longer term?
- Odessa's model of offering a cultural and intercultural basis to its integrated welfare service is very interesting. It would be a good topic on which to base a thematic seminar. The City Council is encouraged to undertake and disseminate an evaluation of the effectiveness of this work.

Programme

Day 1 – June 29, 2017

10:00 – 12:00 Meeting with Alona Dyachenko – local coordinator of the Intercultural Cities Network of Ukraine, Deputy Director of the Department of Culture and Tourism of the Odessa City Council (14 Ekaterininskaya street)

12:00 – 13:00 Lunch
The Small Hall of the Odessa City Council, 1 Dumskaya square

14:00 – 14:05 Opening speech of Gennadiy Trukhanov – Odessa City Mayor

14:05 – 14:10 Opening speech of Irena Guidikova – Chief manager of Intercultural Cities programme Council of Europe

14:10 – 14:15 Signing of the Statement of intent between the Council of Europe and the city of Odessa as a member of the Intercultural Cities Network of Ukraine

14:15 – 15:00 Speech of Phil Wood – the expert of Intercultural cities programme Council of Europe

15:00 – 16:00 Discussion of the main principles and rules of the Intercultural cities programme, questions and answers

16:00 – 17:30 Visit to the Department of Labor and Social Policy of the Odessa City Council (7 Leo Tolstoy street)

17:30 – 19:00 Visit to the Department of the Internal Policy of the Odessa City Council (52 Uspenskaya street)

19:00 – 20:30 Dinner

Day 2 – June 30, 2017

10:00 – 11:00 Visit to the Department of Education and Science of the Odessa City Council (134 Kanatnaya street)

11:00 – 13:00 Visit to the Odessa city children's health and sports complex «Victoria» (93, Dacha Kovalevskogo street)

13:00 - 14:30 Lunch

14:30 Summing-up with the Deputy Mayor

15.30 Visit to Department of Economic Development

16.30 Visit to Impact Hub Odessa

17.00 Close