



DRIVERS OF MIGRATION TENDENCY

IN DONETSK
AND LUHANSK
OBLASTS



INTRODUCTION

Migration is a fundamental freedom and driver of development but also a symptom of socio-political and economic problems and changes occurring in society.

Migration is a generic term that refers to the movement of people from one locality to another. It can be driven by a multitude of reasons from economic to education, environmental to socio-political. It can be internal within a country or region or external across international borders. It can be a positive and empowering experience or could lead to greater vulnerability and marginalization. On the other hand, migration tendency, as measured by SCORE¹, refers to the extent to which one is inclined to leave one's region in search for more or better opportunities irrespective of their destination (internal or external). Migration tendency reflects inclination (one's willingness to leave), motivations (when benefits of going prevail the associated fears or other reasons to stay), and environment (consideration of people around about making a better life somewhere else) that might affect migration behaviour of the sampled population and migration dynamics in a locality.

Migration plays an essential role in human development. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) recognize the positive potential of migra-

tion, which can spark social and economic mobility, innovation and multi-cultural exchange.² Although migration is linked to our freedom of movement, continuous waves of brain-drain (i.e. substantial loss of human capital through emigration of individuals who are at the peak of their productivity economically and professionally for better living conditions) can lead to community depopulation, economic downturn and hence weaken social cohesion. It is crucial to measure migration tendencies to unveil important trends and focus the attention of decision-makers on addressing potential problems that might affect local development.

This brief is based on the SCORE 2019 survey, which targeted 8,000+ respondents living in the government-controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. It unpacks migration tendencies and its drivers to understand what motivates people to stay and invest in their place of residence as constructive and productive citizens. The paper also proposes evidence-based recommendations to help develop effective policies and programs that can foster life satisfaction, sustainable development and social cohesion in the region.

1 Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) for Eastern Ukraine 2019 is a project funded by USAID, implemented by the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development (SeeD) and in partnership with the UN Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme. SCORE is an analytical tool designed to improve the understanding of societal dynamics and to identify strategic entry points for policies and programs that contribute to strengthening social cohesion. SCORE for Eastern Ukraine 2019 has more than 200 indicators, each measured through multiple questionnaire items. For more information, please visit use.scoreforpeace.org.

2 SDG 10.7 — Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

DIAGNOSING MIGRATION TENDENCIES IN DONETSK AND LUHANSK OBLASTS

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS: HIGHER MOBILITY AMONG EDUCATED YOUTH

- Where 0 means that no one is thinking about leaving their place of residence, and 10 means that everyone is planning to leave their locality, the average score for migration tendencies in Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts is 3.8. This score reveals a decrease compared to 2018 scores³ but still points to a moderate tendency to leave.
- Although no significant differences were observed between rural and urban populations, the differences between the following socio-demographic groups are noteworthy:

Men express significantly stronger migration tendencies compared to women (4.1 and 3.6, respectively). This could be due to multiple reasons from gender stereotypes (such as men are the bread-winners or single women should not stray too far away from family) to differences in access and mobility in the labour market.

The tendency to migrate is most pronounced among under 35-year-olds (5.5), and naturally, decrease as people get older; partly because those with

strong migration tendencies do actually leave, and because people's mobility and willingness to leave decrease as their socio-economic roots deepen in a location. Migration tendencies for people who are 60 years old or above are as low as 2.1.

The tendency to migrate is also significantly higher among higher income groups. In other words, those who have the economic means are more likely to migrate. For example, the migration tendency score for people who express that they do not even have money for food are 3.0, compared to 4.8 among those who have enough money for expensive goods such as a car.

Education increase economic opportunities and professional ambitions, which in turn increase people's mobility or willingness to move. As such, those with higher levels of education (e.g. university and above) have stronger migration tendencies (4.2) than those with secondary level (3.5) or with vocational/technical level (3.7) education. People with better proficiency in English also show a higher inclination to leave.

³ Due to the minor change in the wording of the questionnaire items and scaling, migration tendency was measured slightly different in 2018 and 2019, yet 2 out of 3 questions, which described the phenomenon, remained the same. The difference between directly comparable items of the indicator on the overall sample from both years show 0.4 points decrease (3.8 in 2019 and 4.2 in 2018). However, further analysis of the panel respondents who participated in both years reveal a bigger decrease of 0.8 points (4.1 in 2019 vs 4.9 in 2018).

MAIN DRIVERS OF MIGRATION TENDENCY: PURSUING PERSONAL AMBITIONS

- Migration tendency is higher among young people under 35 years old with higher entrepreneurship mentality⁴ and intension to start a business. While young potential entrepreneurs report higher migration tendencies, entrepreneurship indicators do not contribute to a higher migration tendency among people above 35 years old.
- People who tend to perceive key public institutions (including police, courts, and local authorities) as corrupted have higher migration tendencies, particularly among people under 35 years old.

MAIN MITIGATING FACTORS OF MIGRATION TENDENCY: CIVIC SATISFACTION

- Sense of belonging, satisfaction with and the pride in a locality are the biggest mitigating factors against migration for all age groups. People who believe their locality is a good place to live and work, raise a family and have sufficient access to leisure activities express much less willingness to leave their place of residence.
- Trust in institutions and the perception that all people who live in Ukraine are considered as an integral part of Ukrainian society despite their ethnic and cultural background (also known as pluralistic Ukrainian identity in SCORE) is a mitigating factor for people above 35 years old. These two indicators do not have a significant influence on the migration tendencies of younger age groups.

KEY MESSAGES:

- Young, educated professionals are more likely to leave, which means the migration tendencies are, in fact, latent with brain-drain dynamics. If not addressed, Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts may [continue to] experience a significant loss of human and economic capital.
- Interventions aimed at reducing negative migration trends (i.e. brain drain, community depopulation) should focus on nurturing a positive environment for young entrepreneurs (e.g. micro-financing, innovation hubs) and improving civic life satisfaction (e.g. environmentally friendly cities where people want to start a family and have access to different leisure activities) especially prioritizing people in Kostiantynivka and Kramatorsk (see Figure 2), where migration tendencies are the highest.

⁴ The extent to which one possess a set of skills necessary for entrepreneurship such as risks taking, problem solving, self-motivation and drive.

EXPLORING MIGRATION TENDENCIES IN DONETSK AND LUHANSK OBLASTS

In SCORE, migration tendency was measured based on the three questions that are designed to determine a person’s willingness to leave their place of residence. Figure 1 below shows that 3 in 10 people living in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts have expressed their desire to leave their locality at some point in the future.

The average score for migration tendency in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts is 3.8 (see Figure 2), where 0 indicates that no one is thinking about leaving, and 10 indicates that everyone wishes to leave.

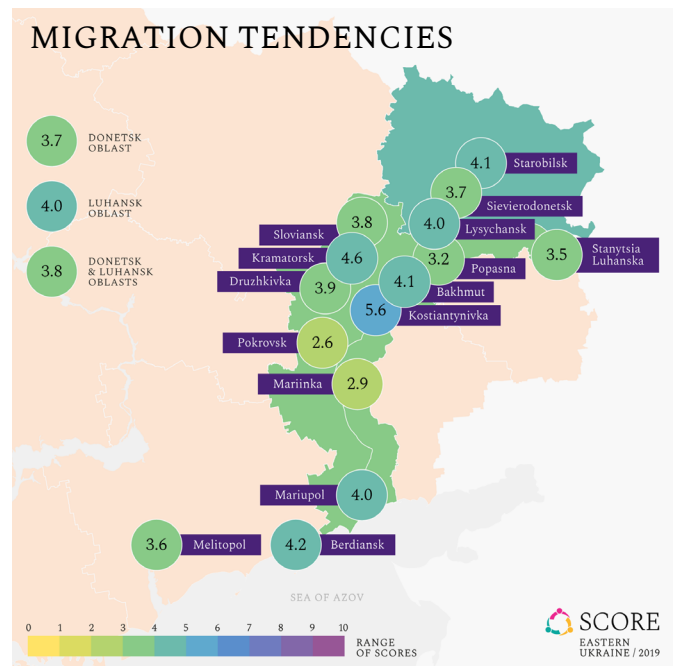
Figure 1 MIGRATION TENDENCY BROKEN DOWN INTO QUESTIONS AND PERCENTAGES, %

One in three people are hoping to leave their locality in the future

	At some point in the future, I hope to leave this locality	My friends often talk about making a better life somewhere else	I often find myself comparing the benefits of emigrating
Strongly disagree	44	27	41
Somewhat disagree	23	18	23
Somewhat agree	18	35	22
Strongly agree	11	18	11
Difficult to answer	4	2	3

Figure 2 MIGRATION TENDENCIES HEATMAP

Migration tendencies are significantly different across different towns



Although migration tendencies have decreased in comparison with 2018, in some localities scores are still high. Even though there are no significant differences between rural and urban populations on the regional level, we observe a lot of variance across towns/cities in the region. The highest migration tendency is observed in Kostiantynivka (5.6) followed by Kramatorsk (4.6).

These two towns which have become important transport destinations and face intensive population flows since the conflict, which leads to increased mobility of the local population as well as increasing the pressure on the local infrastructure.

Unsurprisingly, migration tendencies are linked to age and mobility (i.e. labour market access, education and income). Young people aged 18–35

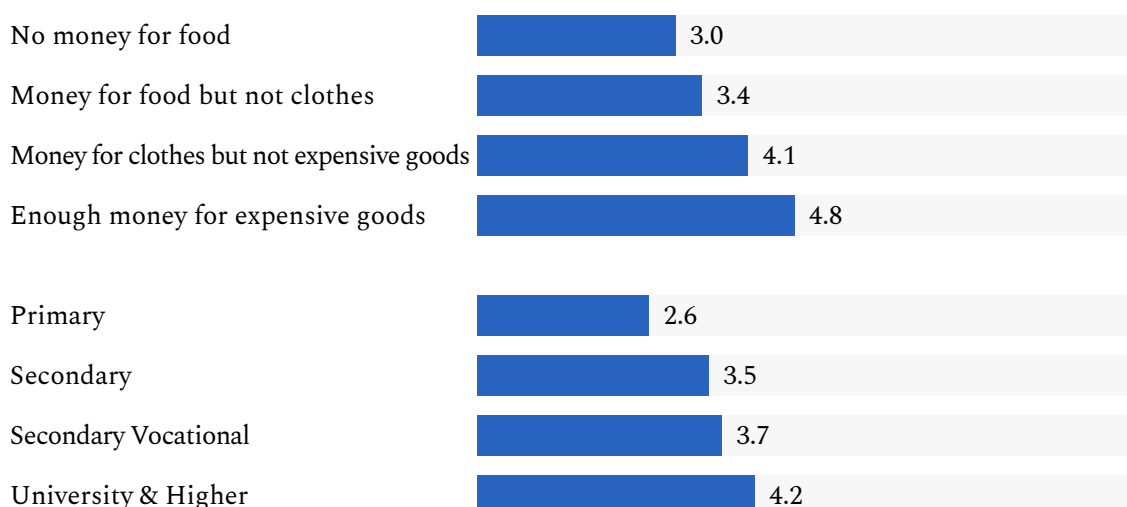
express significantly stronger migration tendencies than other age groups, so do people with higher education and income levels, as these increase their mobility (see Figure 4).

Investigating the drivers and mitigators of migration tendency is essential for our understanding of the phenomenon and its dynamics, and crucial for citizens to stay and invest in their locality, contributing to the local economy and developing society. Advanced statistical toolkits such as modelling can reveal the underlying indicators that have a positive or negative influence on people’s decision to migrate (or not) from Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts.

Figure 3 MIGRATION TENDENCY ACROSS AGE, SCORES, 0–10



Figure 4 MIGRATION TENDENCY ACROSS INCOME AND EDUCATION LEVELS, SCORES, 0–10



MITIGATING FACTORS OF MIGRATION TENDENCY: CIVIC SATISFACTION

Guided by the socio-demographic findings discussed above and especially considering that young people are significantly more likely to migrate, we conducted further analysis (i.e. linear regressions) to identify the factors that strengthen or reduce migration tendencies for two main age groups; people aged between 18–35 and 36–59 years old. Table 1 below lists the SCORE indicators that have mitigating effect (i.e. reduce) on migration tendencies for the two age groups; and reveal that the two strongest mitigating factors are common across both age

groups. It is important to note that while these mitigating factors may be present or absent on different levels for each locality, and should be read together with the heatmaps to tailor the strategies for the needs of different localities. Designing policies and programmes that help improve these factors would have a direct positive impact on people’s motivations to stay and invest in their localities.

Table 1 MITIGATING FACTORS OF MIGRATION TENDENCY

18–35 YEARS-OLD	36–59 YEARS-OLD
Locality satisfaction (beta-coefficient ⁵ : -0.27)	Locality satisfaction (-0.27)
Sense of belonging to one’s settlement and the region (-0.2)	Sense of belonging to the one’s settlement and the region (-0.15)
	Pluralistic Ukrainian identity (-0.08)
	Trust in institutions (local and central overall) (-0.08)

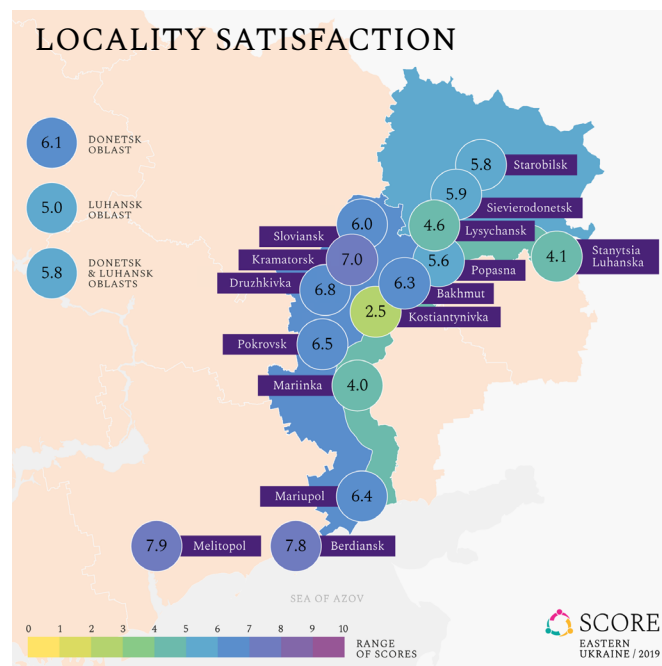
⁵ The beta coefficient is the degree of significant change in the outcome variable for every 1-unit of change in the predictor variable. In other words, one-point change in locality satisfaction would create a -0.27 point-change in migration tendencies.

Locality satisfaction⁶ is the strongest motivating factor for staying for both age groups and has the most significant negative effect on migration tendencies. Locality satisfaction, was a strong mitigating factor in SCORE Eastern Ukraine 2018 study as well⁷. The less satisfied people are with their place of residence, the more likely they want to leave.

Locality satisfaction in the region is significantly lower among young people and rural communities. Locality satisfaction is 5.3 among 18-35-year-olds, and as low as 4.7 in villages. Across the region, 4 out of 10 young urban residents and 6 in 10 young rural residents state that their locality is not a good place to live, work or raise a family.

Figure 5 LOCALITY SATISFACTION HEATMAP

Locality satisfaction was the main mitigating factor for all age groups in SCORE 2018 as well as SCORE 2019 studies



Unsurprisingly, the lack of attachment to the city and region leads a person to consider changing their place of residence. As such, sense of belonging to the city and the region is another strong reason for residents of all ages to stay in their locality.

According to the predictive models⁸, the perception that everyone, despite their ethnic and cultural background, who lives in Ukraine is an integral part of Ukrainian society (pluralistic Ukrainian identity) and trust in institutions are also among the mitigating factors that decrease the willingness to migrate but mainly for those who are older than 35.

6 The degree to which a person is satisfied with their place of residence (in terms of jobs, leisure activities and raising children)

7 According to SCORE Eastern Ukraine 2018 study, Locality satisfaction score for Donetsk oblast was 5.6 and for Luhansk oblast, 5.0

8 Predictive models represent relationships between indicators based on advanced statistical analysis (e.g. regression, network analysis and structural equation modelling). They have predictive power (a directional influence on another indicator) and are used to identify key drivers of change in society. Indicators can be “drivers” or “mitigators” as they positively or negatively predict the other indicators they are linked to.

For example, Kostiantynivka has the highest migration tendency among the surveyed cities in the region and the lowest locality satisfaction. Looking at other drivers, we observe that the city scores among the lowest when it comes to trust in local institutions and pluralistic identity as well. In other words, almost all the mitigating factors need attention to help curb the loss of human capital in Kostiantynivka.

However, some cities like Kramatorsk need more precise approach because the city shows strong migration tendencies but also high locality satisfaction. Looking at other mitigating factors to understand which drivers should be prioritized in Kramatorsk, we can observe that pluralistic Ukrainian identity and trust in institutions require closer attention. This signifies the importance of the geographically-adjusted and well-tailored interventions for mitigating negative migration trends.

Figure 6 PLURALISTIC UKRAINIAN IDENTITY

Appreciating pluralism is an attractive value

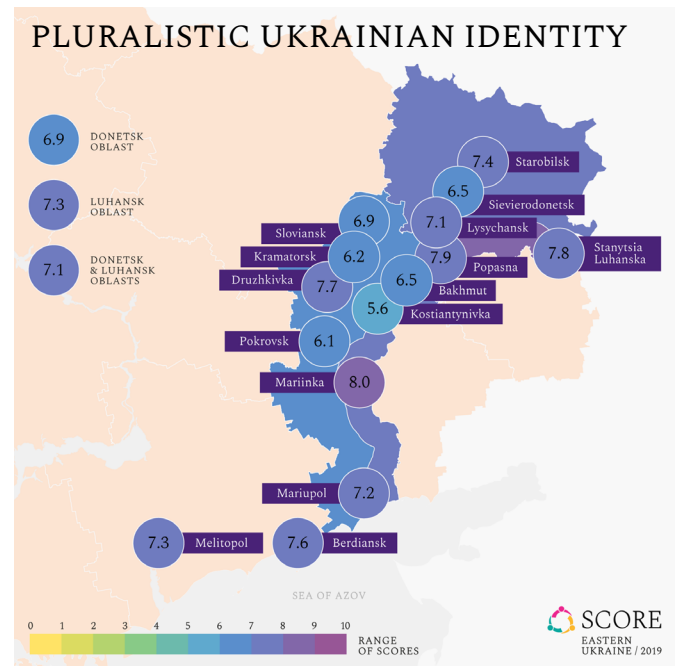
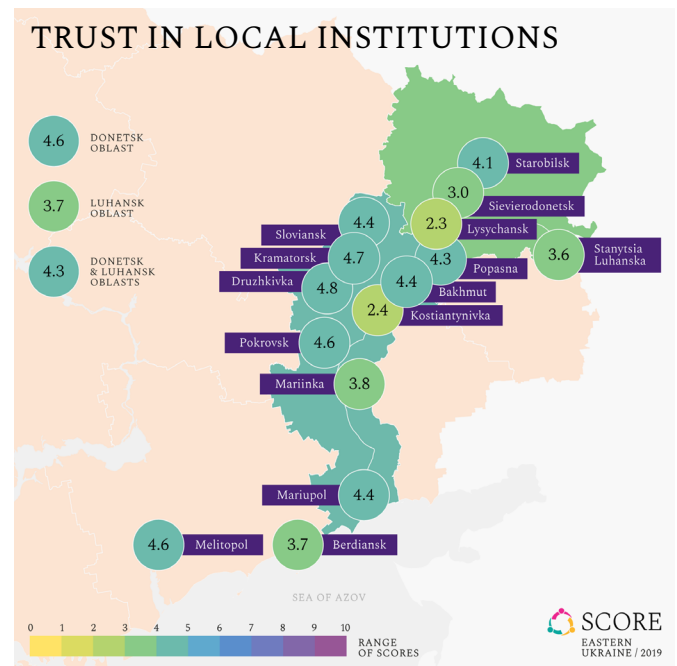


Figure 7 TRUST IN LOCAL INSTITUTIONS HEATMAP

Trust in local institutions fluctuate significantly across towns



DRIVERS OF MIGRATION TENDENCY: ECONOMIC AND PROFESSIONAL AMBITIONS

Table 2 below lists the drivers of migration tendencies. Designing policies and programmes that help address these push factors would have a direct negative impact on people’s motivations to leave in search for better opportunities. Unpacking the drivers of migration tendencies reveal that the region is at risk of losing its human capital (young, educated and with income mobility) and lack the pull factors to attract its former population back (i.e. IDPs).

Perceived level of corruption, which is generally high across the region (6.8) is the strongest

push factor that causes dissatisfaction with one’s locality for all age groups. In places where the perception of corruption is more prevalent, residents are more likely to feel the urge of migrating in search of better life opportunities.

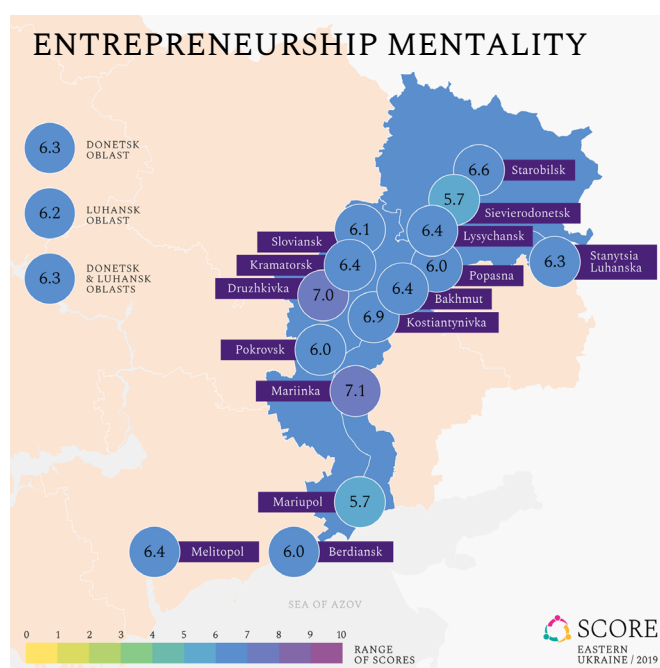
Notably, lack of opportunities coupled with high perceived levels of corruption is driving entrepreneurs of all ages away. Those residents, who are willing to take risks, solve problems and have self-motivation (entrepreneurship mentality) are more likely to leave the region to apply their skills elsewhere.

Table 2 DRIVERS OF MIGRATION TENDENCY

18-35 YEARS-OLD	36-59 YEARS-OLD
Perceived level of corruption (0.12) Entrepreneurship mentality (0.07) Marginalization because of political opinions (0.08) Income level (0.09)	Perceived level of corruption (0.09) Entrepreneurship mentality (0.08) Marginalization because of political opinions (0.08)

Figure 8 ENTREPRENEURSHIP MENTALITY HEATMAP

Entrepreneurship mentality is strong across the region

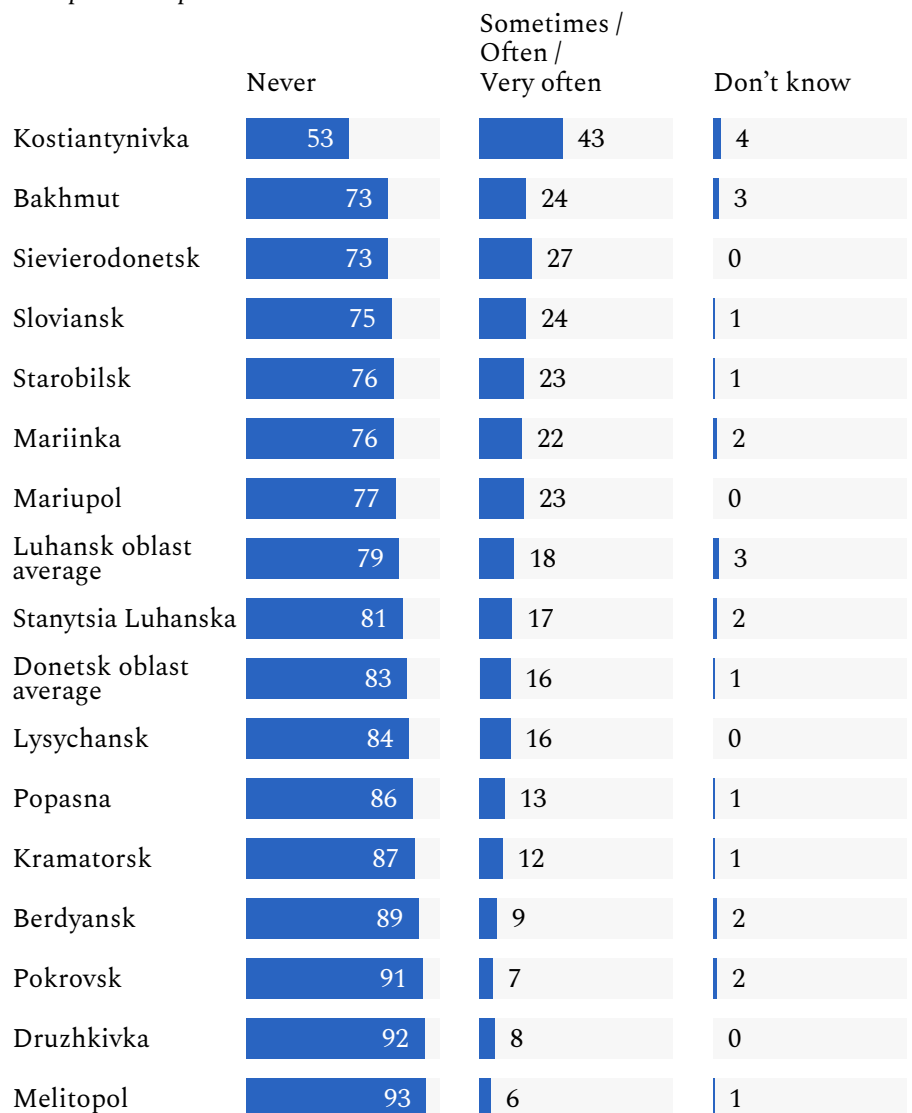


Feeling marginalized because of one's political opinions is another significant driver for migration tendency for both age groups. People who do not feel treated fairly because of their opinions are also less likely to feel locality satisfaction and sense of belonging, and thus would look to move where their views and values would be more accepted. Marginalization is significantly higher in Kostiantynivka. Where 0 means that no one feels marginalized in society due to their political opinions, and 10 implies everyone feels extremely marginalized, the score in Kostiantynivka is 2.2, compared to a regional average of 0.8 (overall Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts' average).

Figure 9 FEELING MARGINALIZED BECAUSE OF ONE'S POLITICAL OPINIONS, %

43% of citizens in Kostiantynivka feel marginalized till some extent because of their political preferences, compared to 16% in Donetsk oblast average

How often are you, members of your family are treated unfairly because of your/their political opinions?



INDICATORS THAT DID NOT INFLUENCE MIGRATION TENDENCY

It should be highlighted that SCORE’s “migration tendencies” measure, not actual migration behaviour but people’s inclination to migrate away from their locality either within the country or abroad. As such, drivers or mitigators are indicators that have a significant positive or negative effect on migration tendencies and hence their decision-making about staying and investing in their locality vs leaving and looking for

better opportunities elsewhere. These drivers or mitigators do not necessarily have an effect on people’s choice regarding where to migrate. The following table illustrates the impact of different indicators on migration tendencies and also lists those that did not have a statistically significant effect.

Table 3 SUMMARIZING TABLE OF THE INDICATORS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE MIGRATION TENDENCY

Indicators that INCREASE migration tendencies (positive effect)	Indicators that DECREASE migration tendencies (negative effect)	Indicators that have NO influence on migration tendencies (zero effect)
Perceived level of corruption	Locality satisfaction	Personal and economic security ⁹
Entrepreneurship mentality	Sense of belonging to the city and the region	Accountability of authorities
Marginalization because of political opinions	Pluralistic Ukrainian identity (only for 36–59-year olds)	Civic engagement
Income level (only for 18–35-year-olds)	Trust in institutions (only for 36–59-year-olds)	Intergroup relations
		Exposure to adversity ¹⁰
		Wellbeing

⁹ It is interesting to see that economic security does not have a statistically significant effect on migration tendencies, but income levels have a significant influence on under 35 year olds, who also have stronger entrepreneurship mentality, which means they both have mobility and ambition to leave, irrespective of their economic security levels.

¹⁰ Exposure to adversity (personally or a family member), including adversities related to the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine

KEY FINDINGS *and* RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY FINDINGS

For all age groups, locality satisfaction and sense of belonging are the two of the strongest factors that motivate people to stay and invest in their localities. 3 in 10 people are thinking about leaving their locality in Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts. However, this is higher among 18–35-year-olds, 52% of whom agreed with the statement that “at some point in the future I hope to leave this locality”.

Those who demonstrate an entrepreneurship mentality and express the intention to start a business have the strongest desire to leave to realize their dreams and ambitions elsewhere. High levels of migration tendencies, especially among young entrepreneurs, can lead to negative population trends such as economic down-turn and community depopulation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Young people aged under 35 should be prioritized as the primary target groups of programmes aimed at increasing locality satisfaction. These could include efforts to improve leisure activities for young families, local civic initiatives that build community cooperation and sense of belonging, “citta slow” programmes, support for artisan cooperatives, neighbourhood watchdogs.

Such activities should capitalize on the sense of pride in local traditions, culture and cuisine as analysis revealed it as a strong feeling among people whose migration tendency is low.

These efforts could be further reinforced by involving youth in the design of such activities and evaluation processes to help tailor activities and increase civic participation.

Design stimulative programmes for small and medium-sized businesses and young entrepreneurs. These could include micro-financing, innovation hubs, shared office spaces, legal support, branding and marketing training, cooperative initiatives and support with developing business/feasibility/risk assessments.

Additionally, it is important to invest in public transport to improve mobility for rural areas to make town and raion centres become more accessible.

For all age groups, the perceived level of corruption and political marginalization are the strongest factors that strengthen people's inclination to leave and push them away from their localities. In other words, civic life satisfaction (combined with locality satisfaction) is crucial to motivate citizens to invest and grow in their localities. Both perceived level of corruption and political marginalization are significantly higher in Kostiantynivka compared to all than regional, oblast or city scores.

Migration tendencies are highest in Kostiantynivka followed by Kramatorsk, with high scores in migration tendency compared to neighbouring communities.

Given strong individual capacities and skills such as creativity, creating opportunities for the talented and ambitious people in the region through apprenticeships, partnerships with local universities and expo industry and artisan fairs can be instrumental.

Invest in transparency, access to public information and anti-corruption programmes on the local level.

Promote in citizen–local authority dialogue (e.g. municipal citizens' assemblies) to improve citizens' knowledge and understanding of community affairs and reforms' implementation; and local authorities' knowledge and understanding of citizens' needs.

Implementing successful programmes that address the above two recommendations would also help foster vertical social cohesion and hence address feeling treated unfairly due to political opinions as well as promoting a more inviting environment for entrepreneurs.

The above-mentioned recommendations should be contextualized and tailored more specifically for Kostiantynivka and Kramatorsk as the top priority locations, taking into account their growing importance as transport destinations and as host communities for a large number of IDPs. Intervene in Kostiantynivka to deal with drivers of migration: build locality satisfaction by investing in collaborative and creative leisure activities, as well as initiatives increasing trust to local police, and, if possible, mayor.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The team is grateful to DG East, UN RPP and SeeD colleagues, representatives of the central and local authorities and civil society organizations who participated in our consultations and provided us with rich insights. We also extend our appreciation to TNS Kantar Ukraine for their data-collection work in government-controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts.

The views, conclusions and recommendations presented in this document do not necessarily reflect the position of USAID, the UN Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme or its partners.

ABOUT SCORE

The Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (SCORE) for eastern Ukraine is a joint initiative funded by USAID to support the Democratic Governance in the East program (DG East), implemented by the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development (SeeD), and in partnership with the United Nations Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme (UN RPP).

The aim of the SCORE initiative is to assist national and international stakeholders in their peacebuilding efforts. It provides a solid evidence base for developing policies and programs that strengthen national unity and social cohesion, particularly in eastern Ukraine, as well as for monitoring progress of their implementation.

SCORE is an analytical tool implemented on an annual basis and designed to improve the understanding of societal dynamics in Ukraine. SCORE findings presented in this report are based on 8,435 face-to-face interviews conducted in September–November 2019 in government-controlled areas of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts. The quantitative data was further enriched by validation consultations with both stakeholders and citizens.

For more information on SCORE methodology and to see the results for eastern Ukraine, visit use.scoreforpeace.org

ABOUT PARTNERS

The Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development (SeeD) works with international development organisations, governments and civil society leaders to design and implement people-centred and evidence-based strategies for promoting peaceful, inclusive and resilient societies. Working in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia, SeeD provides social transformation policy recommendations that are rooted in citizen engagement strategies and an empirical understanding of the behaviours of individuals, groups and communities. SeeD's approach focuses on understanding the root causes of societal problems by developing an evidence-based theory of change which is empirically tested.

USAID is the world's premier international development agency and a catalytic actor driving development results. USAID has partnered with Ukraine since 1992, providing more than US\$3 billion in assistance. USAID's current strategic priorities include strengthening democracy and good governance, promoting economic development and energy security, improving healthcare systems, and mitigating the effects of the conflict in the east.

USAID's DG East program is a five-year activity to improve trust and confidence between citizens and government in eastern Ukraine, building opportunities for the region to lead Ukraine's democratic transformation. DG East aims to strengthen the connection and trust between citizens and their government in eastern Ukraine by promoting good governance and inclusive civic identity, increasing interaction between citizens and civil society, and increasing collaboration between government and citizens and citizen participation in community development and local decision-making.

The United Nations Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme (UN RPP) has been addressing priority needs in eastern Ukraine since the outbreak of the armed conflict in the spring of 2014. The Programme is intended to support the economic recovery and restoration of critical infrastructure in the conflict-affected communities, support the local governance and decentralisation reform implementation alongside with healthcare reform, and strengthen community security and social cohesion in the government-controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and Zaporizhzhia Oblast along the Azov Sea coastline.

UN RPP is being implemented by four United Nations agencies: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Thirteen international partners support the UN RPP: the European Union, the European Investment Bank, the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine, and the governments of Canada, Denmark, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK.