UN SCORE for Eastern Ukraine

Mitigating negative population trends

The UN SCORE for Eastern Ukraine (USE) is a sophisticated analytical tool designed to improve the understanding of societal dynamics in the five eastern oblasts of Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia. USE helps to identify strategic entry points for policies and programs that contribute to strengthening social cohesion.

USE is based on the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) Index methodology, originally developed in Cyprus by the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development and UNDP. The SCORE Index has since been implemented across several countries in Europe and elsewhere to assist international and national stakeholders in the design of evidence-based solutions that can strengthen social cohesion and reconciliation efforts.

USE is jointly implemented by three UN entities – UNDP, UNICEF, and IOM. The first USE wave was conducted in 2017 and was funded by the UN, with a major contribution from the EU.

The USE process began with a series of consultations with authorities and civil society representatives in Kyiv and in each of the five oblasts in order to develop a conceptual model of what constitutes social cohesion in eastern Ukraine (Figure 1). The first USE wave, which was completed in October 2017, captured the views of some 10,000 people residing in the five oblasts in the east of Ukraine. Specifically, it comprised a face-to-face general population survey of 5,300 respondents; a school survey of 3,300 pupils in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts; 72 in-depth interviews; and a face-to-face survey of 1,500 people residing in the non-government controlled areas who commute to the government-controlled areas across the five checkpoints in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. The results presented in this brief are shown at the oblast level in Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts, and at the sub-oblast level in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts to allow for a more granular analysis. For more information on USE and the results of the first wave please visit use.scoreforpeace.org.
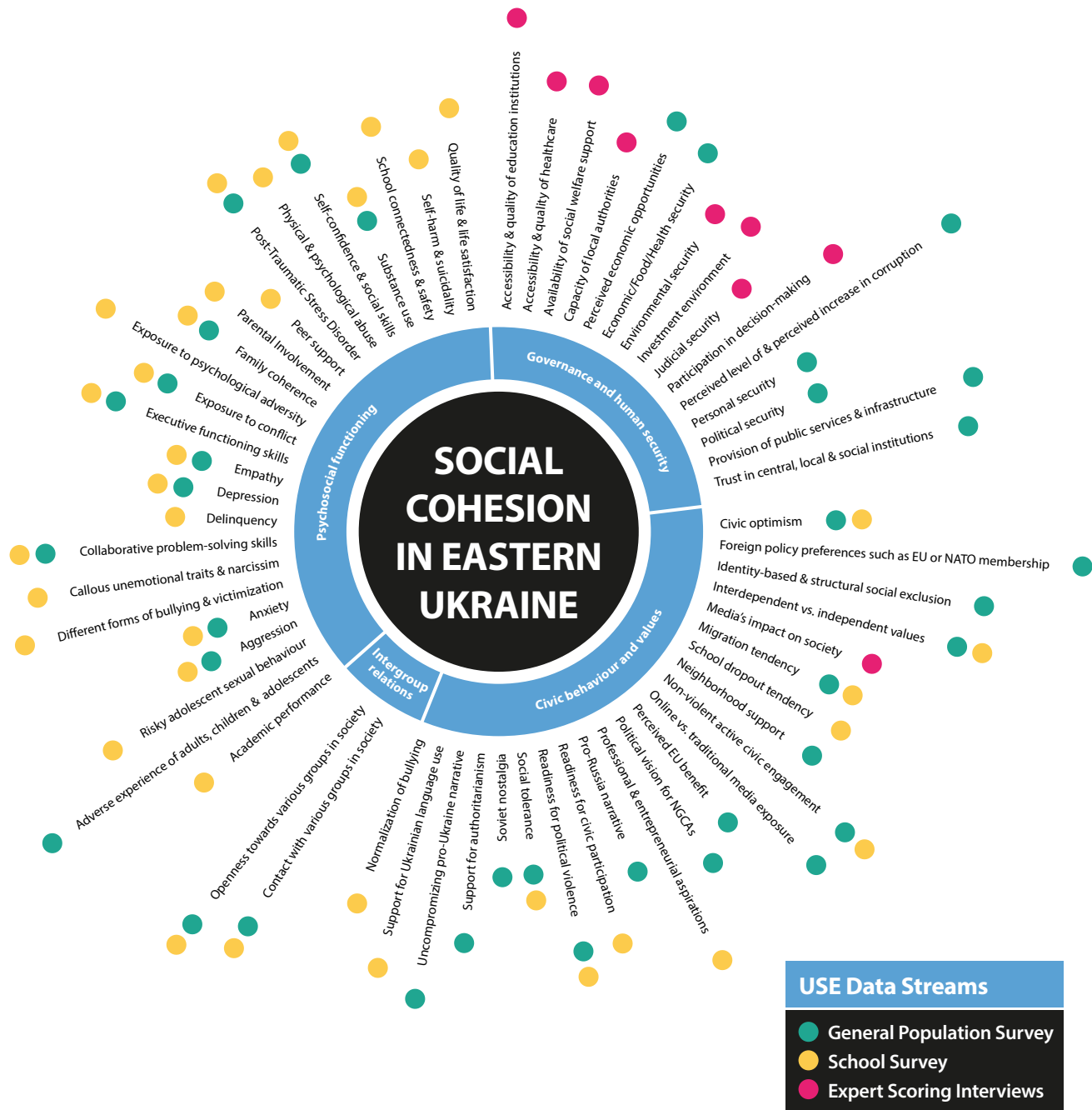
UN SCORE for Eastern Ukraine

Figure 1: USE conceptual model for social cohesion in eastern Ukraine

SOCIAL COHESION IN EASTERN UKRAINE

Psychosocial functioning

Governance and human security

Civic behaviour and values

Intergroup relations

Accessibility & quality of education institutions
Accessibility & quality of healthcare
Availability of social welfare support
Capacity of local authorities
Perceived economic opportunities
Economic/Food/Health security
Environmental security
Investment security
Judicial security
Participation in decision-making
Perceived level of & perceived increase in corruption
Personal security
Political security
Provision of public services & infrastructure
Trust in central, local & social institutions

Civic optimism
Foreign policy preferences such as EU or NATO membership
Identity-based & structural social exclusion
Interdependent vs. independent values
Media's impact on society
Migration tendency
School dropout tendency
Neighbourhood support
Non-violent active civic engagement
Online vs. traditional media exposure
Perceived EU benefit
Political vision for NGCAs
Professional & entrepreneurial aspirations
Readiness for political violence
Readiness for civic participation
Pro-Russia narrative
Uncompromizing pro-Ukraine narrative
Soviet nostalgia
Social tolerance
Support for authoritarianism
Support for Ukrainian language use
Normalization of bullying

Contact with various groups in society
Openness towards various groups in society
Adverse experience of adults, children & adolescents
Academic performance
Risky adolescent sexual behaviour
Aggression
Anxiety
Different forms of bullying & victimization
Callous unemotional traits & narcissim
Collaborative problem-solving skills
Delinquency
Depression
Empathy
Executive functioning skills
Exposure to conflict
Exposure to psychological adversity
Family coherence
Parental Involvement
Peer support
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
Physical & psychological abuse
Self-confidence & social skills
Substance use
School connectedness & safety
Self-harm & suicidality
Quality of life & life satisfaction

USE Data Streams
- General Population Survey
- School Survey
- Expert Scoring Interviews

USE Outcome 2:
Mitigating negative population trends

This brief outlines the key findings from USE outcome 2: mitigating negative population trends. This outcome is assessed by measuring migration tendency (here referring to movement both within Ukraine and abroad).[1] Migration reflects the mobility of the population and freedom of movement, and is thus a neutral or even a positive phenomenon. Large-scale migration, however, may disrupt social dynamics, affect the local economy and lead to brain-drain of a region if a large share of the working age population is leaving.

The results indicate that residents in eastern Ukraine are ambivalent about migrating, as the average score for migration tendency is 4.2 (Figure 2), where 0 indicates that no one is thinking about leaving, and 10 indicates that everyone wishes to leave. While migration tendency scores are similar across all five oblasts, some differences appear at the cluster level in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. In Luhansk oblast, eastern Luhansk has the highest migration tendency (4.9), and also happens to have a large share of rural population. In Donetsk oblast, southern Donetsk has the lowest migration tendency (3.6), which may be explained by the large city of Mariupol offering more employment opportunities than what is available in other parts of the oblast.

A demographic breakdown shows that there is no significant difference between men and women with regards to their wish to leave their region. However, younger people and those with higher levels of education clearly have stronger migration tendencies.
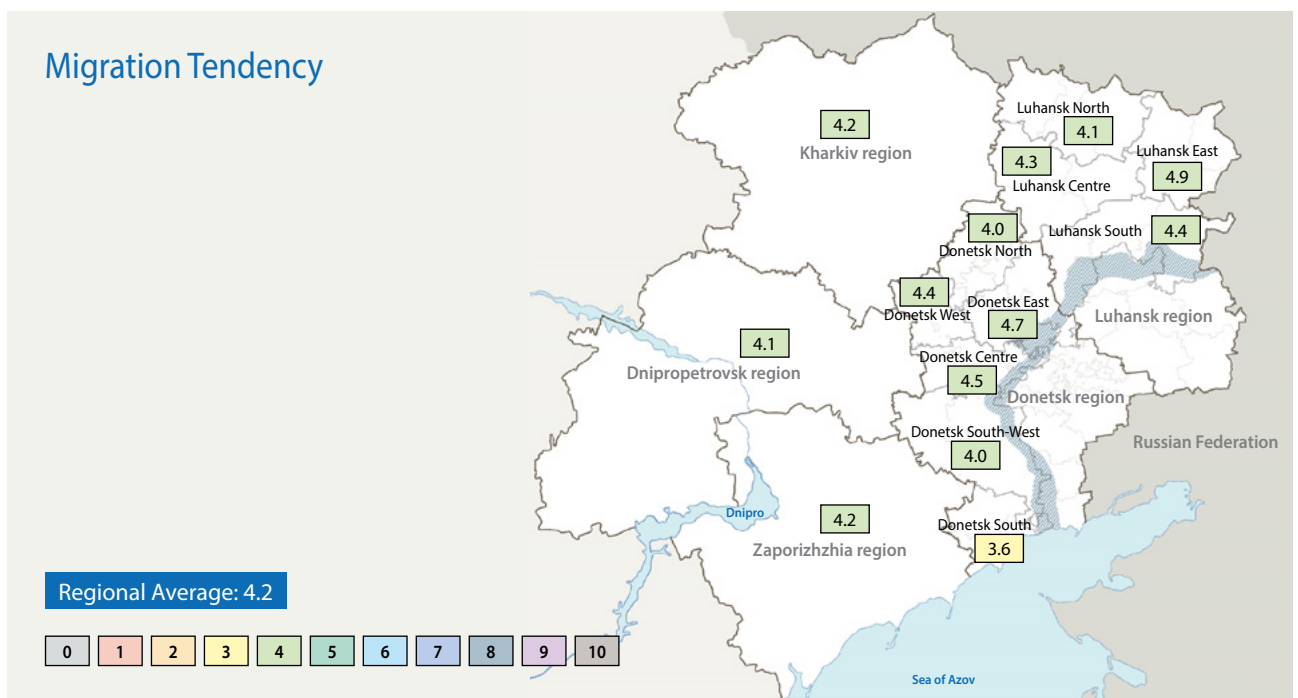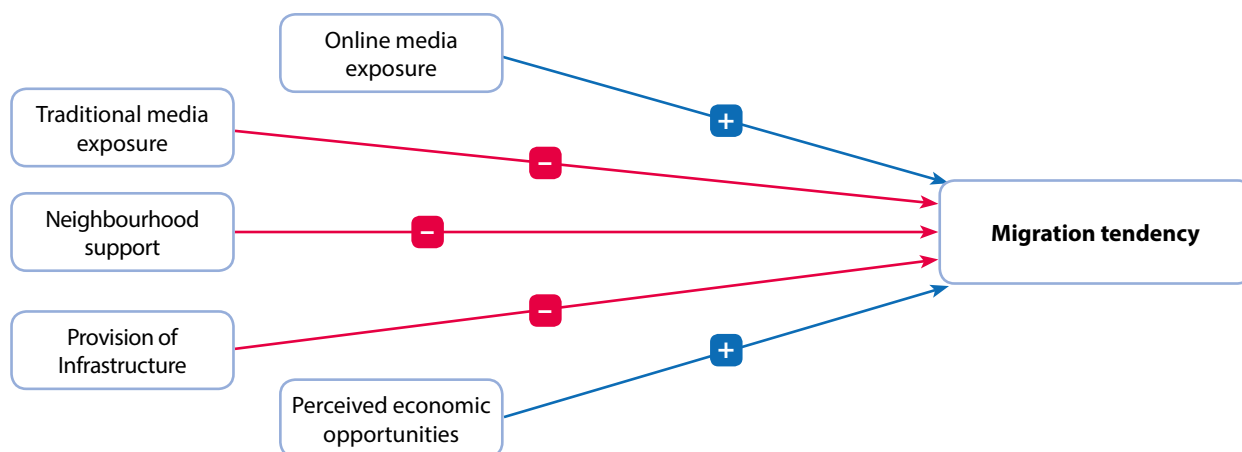

Migration Tendency

Kharkiv region — 4.2

Luhansk North — 4.1

Luhansk Centre — 4.3

Luhansk East — 4.9

Donetsk North — 4.0

Luhansk South — 4.4

Donetsk West — 4.4

Donetsk East — 4.7

Luhansk region

Dnipropetrovsk region — 4.1

Donetsk Centre — 4.5

Donetsk region

Donetsk South-West — 4.0

Russian Federation

Dnipro

Zaporizhzhia region — 4.2

Donetsk South — 3.6

Regional Average: 4.2

0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Sea of Azov

Figure 2: Scores for migration tendency

What impacts on migration tendency?

In order to preempt depopulation and brain-drain, it is important to understand what drives people's wish to want to migrate. The analysis (Figure 3) reveals that the five most significant factors that impact

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[1]   Migration tendency refers to the extent to which one is inclined to leave one's region in search for more or better opportunities.

on an individual's tendency to migrate are: i) online media exposure[2]; ii) traditional media exposure[3]; iii) neighborhood support[4]; iv) provision of infrastructure[5]; and v) perceived economic opportunities.[6]

Figure 3: Factors impacting on migration tendency.
Red arrows indicate a negative association, and blue arrows a positive association

The top two factors that impact on migration tendency are both related to **media exposure**, with users of **online media** more likely to want to migrate and users of **traditional media** less likely to want to migrate. This corresponds with the demographic breakdown of the age factor; younger people predominantly source news from the internet and are more likely to engage on social media, while older people rely on traditional media channels. The average score for online media exposure is 4.3 (Figure 4), where 0 means that no one makes use of online media sources to stay informed about current events, while 10 means that most if not all make use of online sources to stay informed about current events. On the other hand, the average score for traditional media exposure is 6.0 (Figure 5), where 0 means that no one stays informed about current events through traditional media sources, and 10 means that most if not all rely on traditional media sources to stay informed about current events.
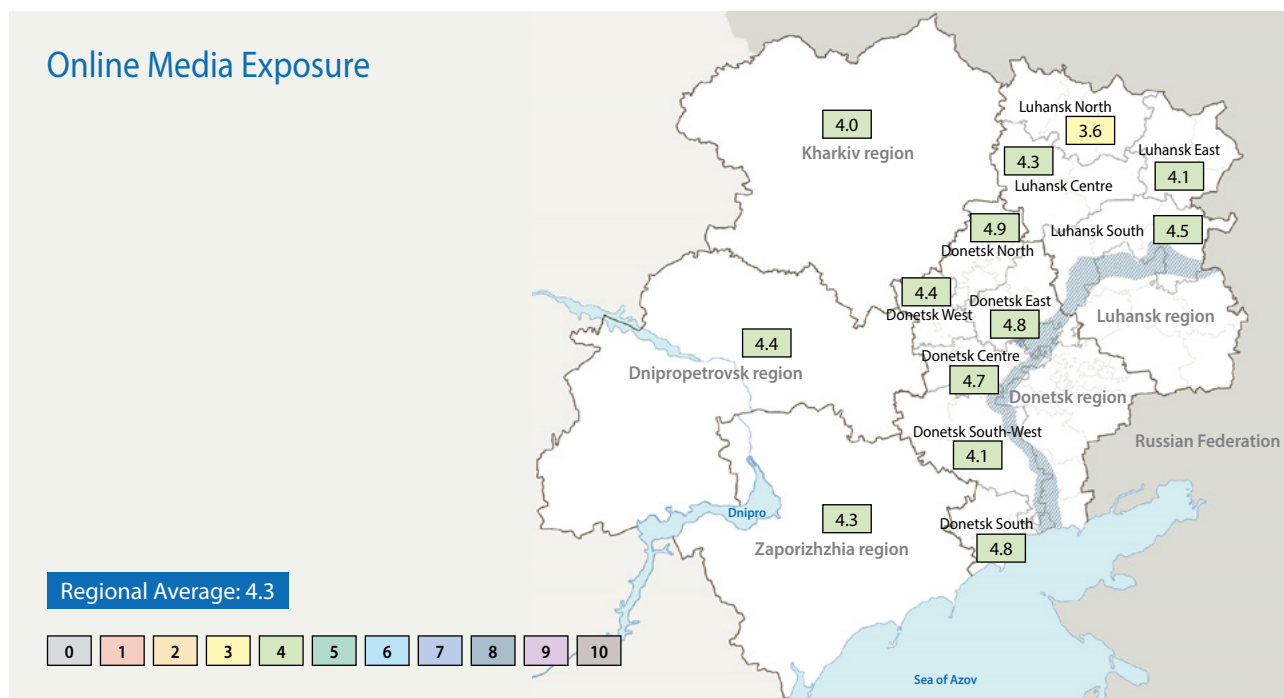
Figure 4: Scores for online media exposure

2   Online media exposure refers to the use of online information sources in order to stay informed about current events.

3   Traditional media exposure refers to the use of traditional information sources, e.g., television and radio in order to stay informed about current events.

4   Neighborhood support relates to the extent to which one feels supported by and can rely on neighbors.

5   Satisfaction with quality and access to infrastructure (such as public transportation, roads, heating, water and waste management).

6   Availability of economic opportunities to make a living in one's region across various sectors and with an acceptable remuneration.
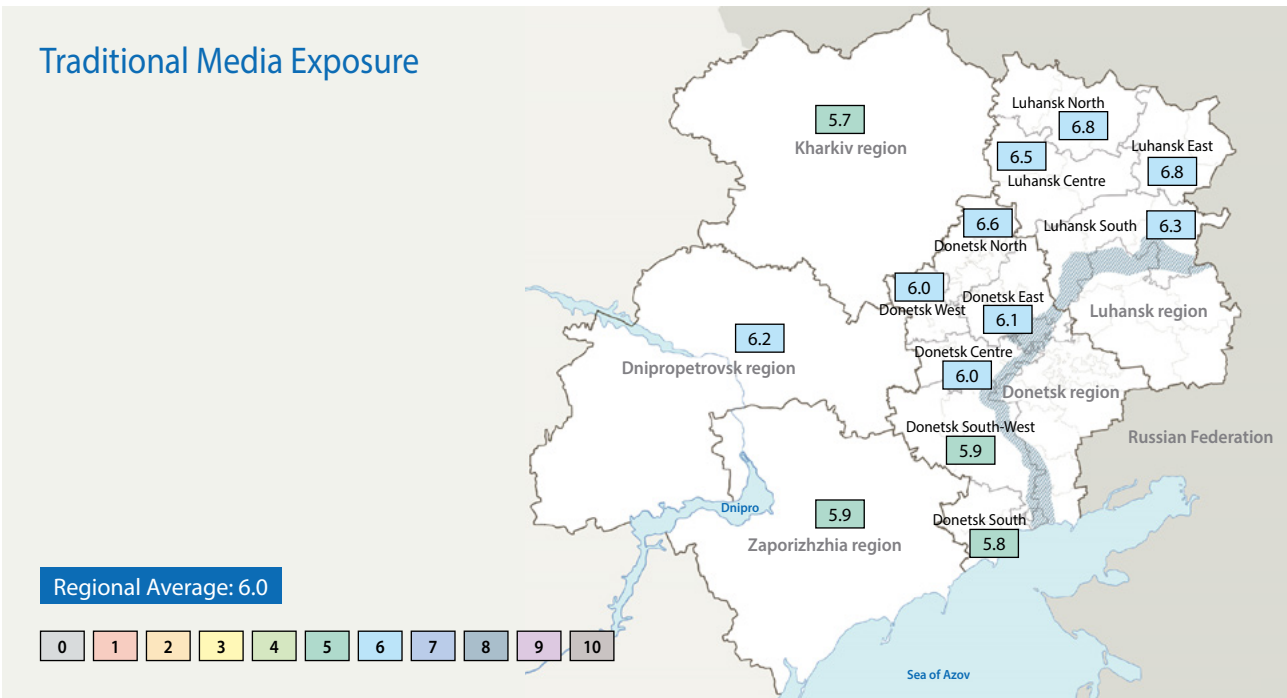
Traditional Media Exposure

Luhansk North 6.8
Luhansk East 6.8
Luhansk Centre 6.5
5.7
Kharkiv region
Donetsk North 6.6
Luhansk South 6.3
Donetsk East 6.1
Donetsk West 6.0
Dnipropetrovsk region 6.2
Luhansk region
Donetsk Centre 6.0
Donetsk region
Russian Federation
Donetsk South-West 5.9
Dnipro
5.9
Zaporizhzhia region
Donetsk South 5.8

Regional Average: 6.0

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Sea of Azov

Figure 5: Scores for traditional media exposure

The third most significant indicator that has a strong influence on migration tendency is **neighborhood support.** A demographic breakdown of the data shows that the highest levels of neighborhood support are found among the older population (i.e. 60 years and above) and the part of the population that is struggling the most financially (i.e. those who do not have enough money even for food). Luhansk oblast has the highest overall score for neighborhood support (5.6), with eastern Luhansk oblast showing particularly high scores.
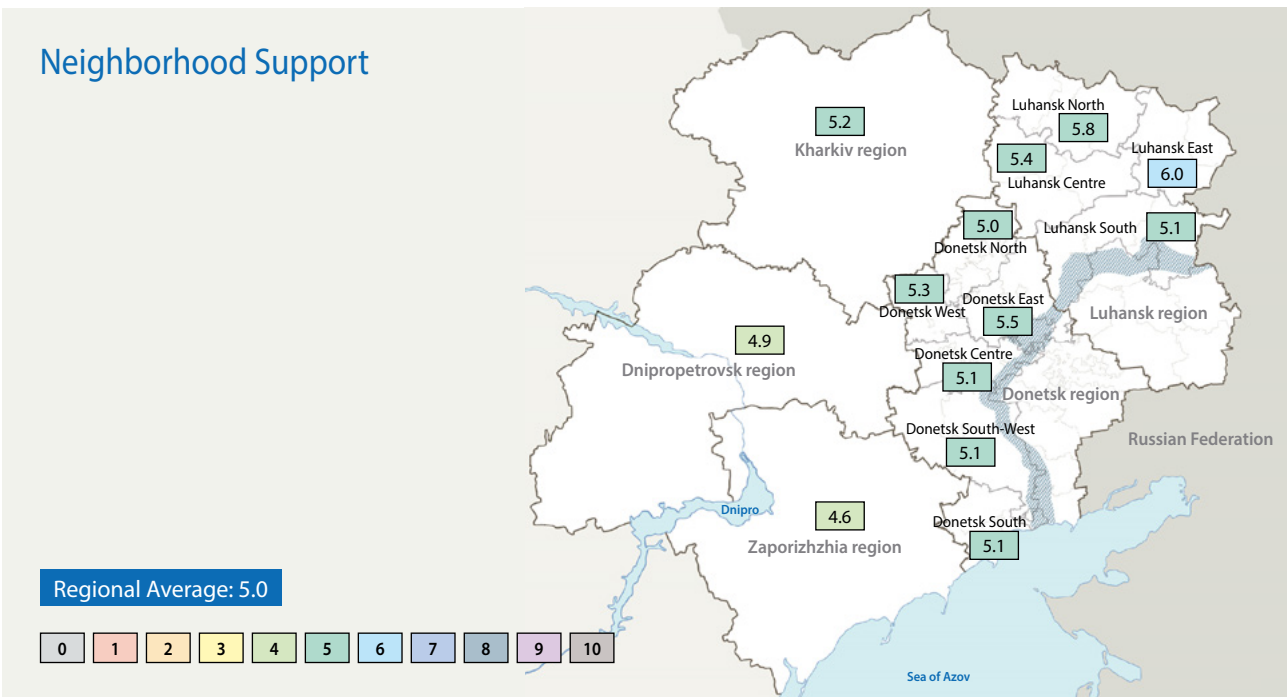
Neighborhood Support

Luhansk North 5.8
Luhansk East 6.0
Luhansk Centre 5.4
5.2
Kharkiv region
Donetsk North 5.0
Luhansk South 5.1
Donetsk West 5.3
Donetsk East 5.5
Dnipropetrovsk region 4.9
Luhansk region
Donetsk Centre 5.1
Donetsk region
Russian Federation
Donetsk South-West 5.1
Dnipro
4.6
Zaporizhzhia region
Donetsk South 5.1

Regional Average: 5.0

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Sea of Azov

Figure 6: Scores for neighborhood support

The analysis also shows that one's tendency to consider leaving the region is affected by levels of satisfaction with the **provision of infrastructure** (Figure 7). The lower the score for provision of infrastructure, the more likely a person is to exhibit migration tendency. There are significant regional level differences in the provision of infrastructure. The Luhansk oblast average stands at 4.0, which is significantly lower than the

regional average (5.1) and the average for Donetsk oblast (5.2). Once again, areas in Luhansk oblast that have a large share of the rural population stand out.
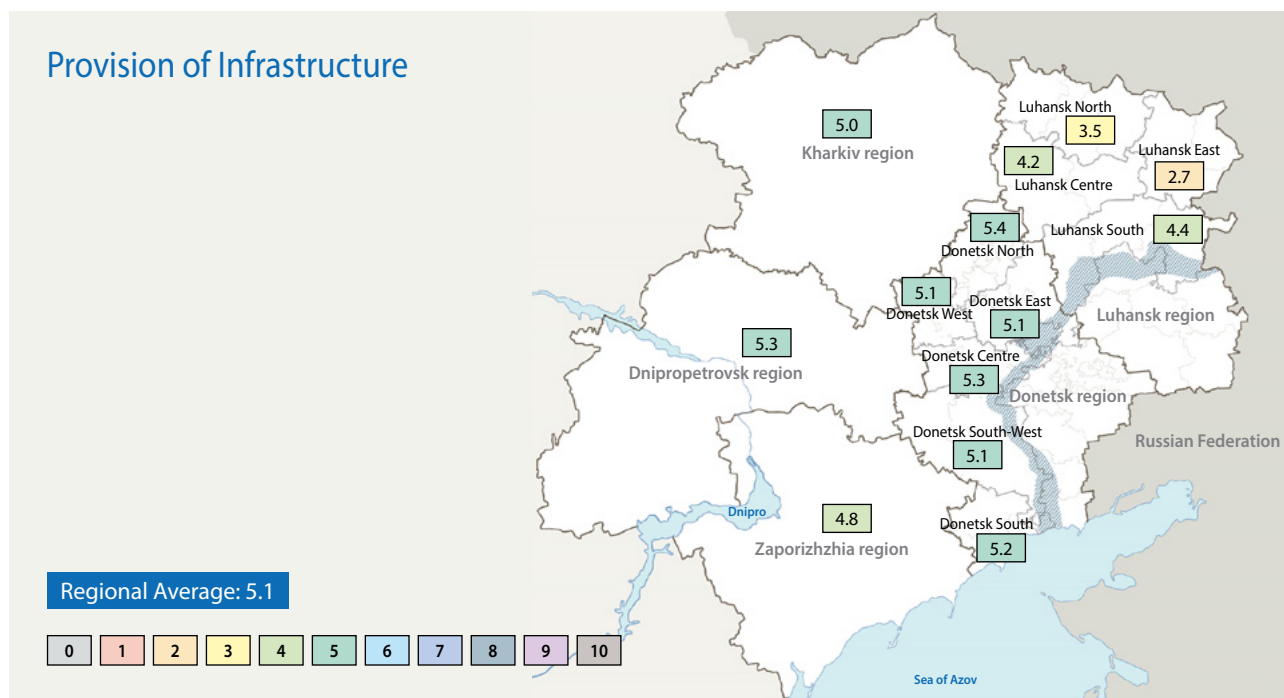

Figure 7: Scores for provision of infrastructure

The final factor with a significant impact on migration tendency is the **perception of economic opportunities** (Figure 8), with lower perceptions of economic opportunities likely to indicate higher levels of migration tendency. Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts scored the lowest in terms of perceived economic opportunities, with an average of 3.0 and 1.9, respectively, compared to the regional average of 4.2. Once again, residents in rural areas exhibit much more pessimistic views on economic opportunities than those in urban areas. Not surprisingly, the unemployed also do not share a positive economic outlook, while people who have higher incomes and education tend to have better expectations. Additionally, the younger the person the more positively she or he assesses the outlooks for economic opportunities, with students representing the most optimistic group.
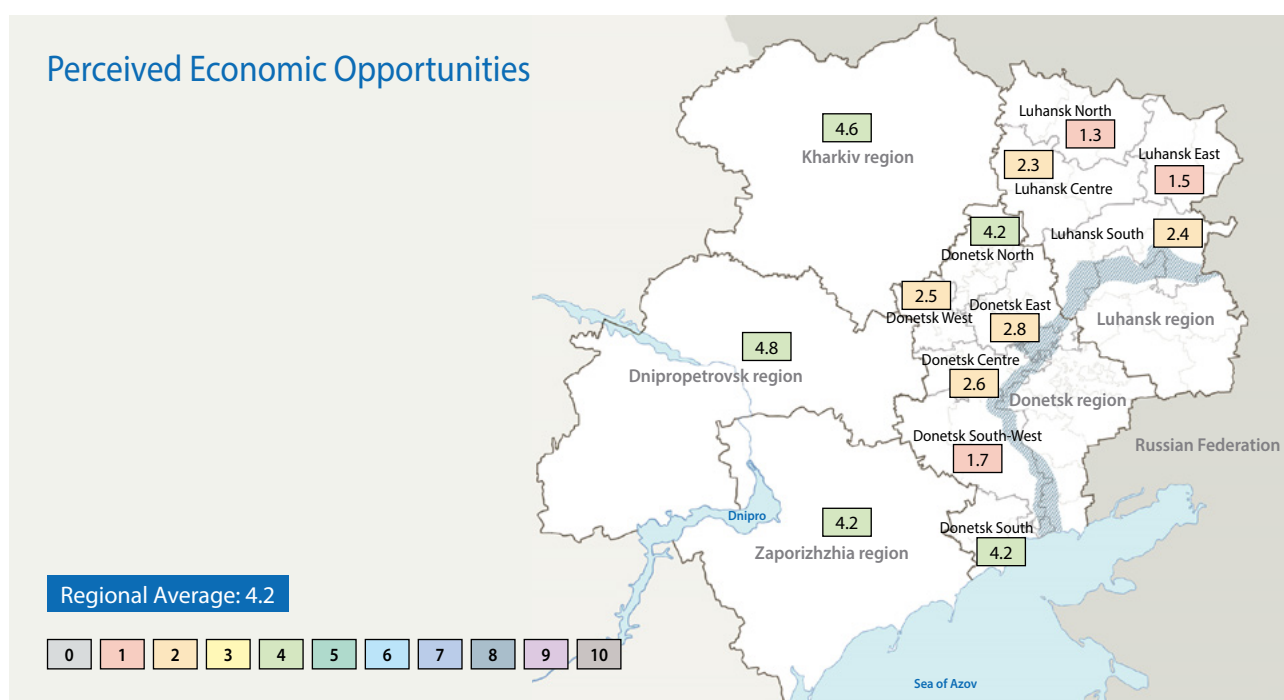

Figure 8: Scores for perceived economic opportunities

Conclusion

The analysis of what impacts on migration tendency reveals both intuitive and less obvious factors. As illustrated by the demographic breakdown, it is the younger and the rural populations that are the most inclined to want to migrate. The age factor is, moreover, closely linked to media consumption. While it is unsurprising that the younger population relies more on online media than on traditional media, this finding points to the need of active use of social media to convey not only information but also messages that help to reinforce cohesion and promote constructive discussion on what sort of future Ukrainian citizens wish to have.

The factor most strongly influencing people's wish to stay in their communities in neighborhood support, meaning that that people who feel close to and believe that they can rely on their neighbors are less likely to want to leave their communities. While migration tendency is stronger in rural than in urban areas, a strong sense of neighborhood support is significantly more present in the rural areas. An entry point for mitigating negative population trends is thus to build on the strengths of neighborhood support in mobilizing communities among commonly identified issue. Such issues would need to be, first and foremost, of local relevance (e.g., related to amalgamation of hromadas, development of local infrastructure, etc.), and then at a sub-regional and regional level to connect issues of common concern that can support regional development strategies.

Availability of economic opportunities is another particularly important a factor, even if it is not the strongest one. The fact that the younger population displays the strongest migration tendency may not be particularly surprising, as this is representative of a global phenomenon, but it is very important to note that the younger population (aged 18-25) in eastern Ukraine, especially students, also displays the greatest optimism with regards to the availability of economic opportunities in their regions. Civic optimism is also stronger among the younger population, further underscoring an important underlying dynamic that could form the basis of renewal and regeneration of the regions in eastern Ukraine. Thus, one of the more pertinent conclusions would be to the need to develop economic policies and initiatives on the basis of a shared longer-term vision of regional development. Such a vision would need to, in the first instance, address various long-standing (not only conflict-induced) problems associated with the traditional backbone industries in eastern Ukraine, including structural unemployment, modernization of technology, environmentally-friendly solutions, etc. For more information about specific sectors and services of specific relevance to each of the five regions in eastern Ukraine, please consult use.scoreforpeace.org.