

Eastern Europe

Ukraine

second-largest country in Europe

Capital: Kiev

Population: 47,5 million

GDP/capita (2004): 6,300 USD

Unemployment: 3,5% - official 9-10% unofficial

Population below poverty line: 29%

Life expectancy: 67

Death rate: 16/1000 population growth: -0.63%

Birth rate: 10/1000

= vast, fertile plains with huge coal resources => it was 1 of the most powerful countries of the former USSR

· ethnic tension _ every fifth citizen is Russian

· 1986: world's worst nuclear accident – Chernobyl contaminated a huge area affecting people, animals and soils

1991 independence from Russia

Orange Revolution" in the closing months of 2004 forced the authorities to overturn a rigged presidential election

· Kiev: it was invaded by the Mongols, later a part of Polish-Lithuanian Empire (14th century), part of Russian Empire since the 17th century, nowadays centre for communications, culture and education

Ukraine depends on imports of energy, especially natural gas, to meet some 85% of its annual energy requirements.

· *cereals* = ¾ of Ukraine is covered by steppes => wheat, corn, barley, oats and rye = extensive farming _ lack of new technology

· *Donbass Basin* = eastern Ukraine = the largest coalfield in Europe, major industrial area => coal-fired and hydro-electric power plants => iron and steel industry => shipbuilding and heavy machinery _ nowadays many mines and factories are inefficient

highest point: Hora Hoverla 2,061 m

· other large cities: Uzghorod, Donets'k, Kharkiv, Odesa

Moldova

Capital: Chisinau

Population: 4.5 million

GDP/capita (2004): 1,900 USD

Life expectancy: 69

Unemployment: 8%, but 25% of moldovans work abroad

Population below poverty line: 80%

= Moldova was a part of Romania before including into the USSR

- import almost all of its energy supplies from Russia.

The poorest nation in Europe

Moldova became the first former Soviet state to elect a Communist as its president Vladimir VORONIN in 2001

· the most densely populated republic of former Soviet Union

· *Moldovians* = 64.5% of the total population, besides Russians, 13% and Ukrainians 13.8%

agriculture = main source of income (corn, sunflower, tobacco and vines) => foodprocessing industry

· import of oil _ lack of mineral wealth

Belarus

Government type: republic in name, although in fact a dictatorship

Capital: Minsk

Population: 10.3 million

GDP/capita (2001): 6,800 USD

Life expectancy: 68

Unemployment: 2% BUT great number of workers is underemployed

Population below the poverty line: 27%

= poor, rural republic, sparsely populated with very poor natural resources (only rock-salt,

ethnic groups: Belarusian 81.2%, Russian 11.4%, Polish 3.9%, Ukrainian 2.4%

different types of sand _ high-quality glassware)

· large *marshland in the south* = the largest in Europe => alder and aspen trees with elks, lynxes and boars

the economy continues to be hampered by high inflation, persistent trade deficits, and ongoing rocky relations with Russia, Belarus' largest trading partner and energy supplier.

· heavy industries: oil-refining and machinery manufacturing (survival of the former

USSR)

· *Lukashenko* = Belorussian dictator => responsible for many kidnaps and elimination of opposition members

Since his election in July 1995 as the country's first president, has steadily consolidated his power through authoritarian means.

Government restrictions on freedom of speech and the press, peaceful assembly, and religion continue.

· Minsk: industrial centre of the country and also the headquarters of CIS

Estonia

Capital: Tallinn

Population: 1.3 million

GDP/capita (2004): 14,300 USD

Population growth: -0.65%

Unemployment: 10%

Life expectancy: 71

Ethnic groups: Estonian 67.9%, Russian 25.6%, ukrainian, finn,

Since the last Russian troops left in 1994, Estonia has been free to promote economic and political ties with Western Europe. It joined both NATO and the EU in the spring of 2004

the mainland terrain is flat, offshore lie more than 1,500 islands

= land of forests, low hills and lakes, the smallest of the Baltic states

· timber, shipbuilding and food-processing industry

strong electronics and telecommunications sectors and is greatly influenced by developments in Finland, Sweden, and Germany, three major trading partners.

· tensions between native Estonians and Russian population (1/3 of the total)

· Protestants

· other large cities: Virtsu, Tartu

Latvia

Capital: Riga

Population: 2.3 million

Population growth: -0.69%

Life expectancy: 71

Unemployment: 9%

GDP/capita (2004): 11,500 USD

last Russian troops left in 1994, the status of the Russian minority remains of concern to Moscow.

Latvia joined both NATO and the EU in the spring of 2004.

Ethnic groups: Latvian 57.7%, Russian 29.6%, Belarusian 4.1%, Ukrainian 2.7%, Polish 2.5%, Lithuanian 1.4%

= central position among the Baltic states with easy access to the sea => important harbours

· cool, damp (humid) climate => dairy farming and meat production + fishing and timber industry

· Riga: important trading port since the Middle Ages

· other large cities: Jelgava, Daugavpils

Lithuania

Capital: Vilnius

Population: 3.6 million

Population growth rate: 0,3%

Life expectancy: 74

Unemployment: 8%

GDP/capita (2001): 12,500 USD

Ethnic groups: Lithuanian 83.4%, Polish 6.7%, Russian 6.3%

Religion: Roman Catholic 79%

= population concentrates to the interior of the country, not to the coast

· native Lithuanians and Roman Catholics

· very fertile soils (*arable land:* 45.22%) => intensive agriculture

· *amber* = 90% of the world's reserves located in the coast of Lithuania

· other large cities: Kaunas, Klaipėda, Panevėžys