

# Ukraine

## Business Guide

Compiled by:

### Embassy of Switzerland in Ukraine

Kyiv, August 2018

#### ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

From Zurich and Geneva flights to various ukrainian cities are provided daily – whereas direct flights are only operated to Kyiv. Starting end of March 2018, Swiss International Airlines has resumed direct flights from Zurich to Kyiv Borispol (KBP) four days a week. [Ukraine International Airlines](#) also operate daily direct flights between Kyiv and Zurich as well as between Kyiv and Geneva. The international airport of Kyiv is located 36 km from the capital. To get from the airport to the city center you can take a taxi, shuttle-bus or bus.

For touristic, private or business visits, visa are not required for Swiss Citizens for a stay up to 90 days within a 180-day period. For longer stays, a [visa type D](#) is required. The same regime is in place for citizens of Lichtenstein, USA, Canada, Japan, all EU-member states as well as for 28 other states. A comprehensive list with visa regulations for all countries is available [here](#) . For further information, you can also contact the [Embassy of Ukraine](#) in Bern.

One-time export or import of cash and (or) traveler's checks not exceeding the equivalent of € 10'000 or under is permitted. However, when entering the country with more than the equivalent of € 3'000.00, a customs declaration must be filled in. A short summary of Ukraine's customs regulations is available [here](#).

As always, please read the [travel advice](#) of the Federal Departement of Foreign Affairs ahead of your trip.

Please note that trips to the Donbas region are not possible due to the ongoing fighting in the eastern part of Ukraine. The same is true for the occupied Crimea, where a special permission is required in

order to travel to the peninsula. Travels without such permission is a punishable offense under Ukrainian law.

### **LANGUAGES USED FOR BUSINESS**

Ukrainian is the official state language. It belongs to the Eastern branch of the Slavic group and is written in Cyrillic script. Russian is very widely used as a second language for informal communication, especially in Kyiv, in the big cities in the East as well as in the South. While many young people are now learning English, most people do not speak it. You cannot count on being understood easily as you make your way around town. Street signs are mostly in Ukrainian and English. It is thus very helpful to learn at least the Ukrainian or Russian alphabet. Another useful advice might be to learn a few stock phrases and how to count from one to ten.

English is the most widely spoken foreign language and might be spoken in hotels, restaurants and in department stores in major cities. German or French are less spoken, documents and catalogues in these languages are therefore of very limited use.

### **PUBLIC HOLIDAYS**

#### 2018

Friday, 24. August	Independence Day
Monday, 15. October	Day of the Defender of Ukraine

#### 2019

Tuesday, 01. January	New Year's Day
Monday, 07. January	Orthodox Christmas Day
Friday, 08. March	International Women's Day
Sunday, 28. April	Orthodox Easter Day
Monday, 29. April	Orthodox Easter Monday
Wednesday, 01. May	Labour Day
Thursday, 09. May	Victory Day
Monday, 17. June	Orthodox Pentecost Monday
Friday, 28. June	Constitution Day
Saturday, 24. August	Independence Day
Monday, 26. August	Independence Day Holiday
Monday, 14. October	Day of the Defender of Ukraine

If public holidays fall on a Saturday or Sunday, the following Monday may also be considered a public holiday as well. It is recommended to check two or three weeks ahead of your planned visit for possible holidays.

The weekend is Saturday and Sunday. Government offices are closed, but some private sector companies may work on Saturday. Supermarkets, shops, and boutiques are open seven days a week.

### **HEALTH AND INOCULATIONS**

For travels to Ukraine, no specific vaccination is needed. Although there are no particular health requirements, it is advised to have appropriate medical insurance when coming to Ukraine. Minor emergencies can be treated by the many pharmacies located throughout the country. For more serious health issues however, the public health system is of limited performance. While medical doctors are normally competent and well trained, public hospitals are badly equipped and hygiene is not up to Western levels. Furthermore, it is common that hospitals demand a deposit in advance before starting the treatment. Medicaments have to be paid by the patient himself as well.

There are some private clinics in Kyiv providing services for foreigners too (English speaking doctors):

[www.medikom.ua](http://www.medikom.ua)

[www.oberig.ua/en](http://www.oberig.ua/en)

[www.boris.kiev.ua](http://www.boris.kiev.ua)

[www.isida.ua](http://www.isida.ua) (obstetric-gynaecological clinic)

[www.eurolab.ua](http://www.eurolab.ua)

[www.dila.com.ua](http://www.dila.com.ua) (clinical trials)

### **TIME ZONES & TIME DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND UKRAINE**

Ukrainian time is 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time - one hour ahead than in Switzerland. Ukraine covers one time zone, with two time changes, which take place in spring and autumn.

### **ELECTRICITY SUPPLY**

Ukraine has throughout the country the same 220 watt current and double round-pin sockets like Europe. Power failures are very rare (mostly in the winter season) and of short duration.

### **METHODS OF PAYMENT**

The Ukrainian national currency is Hryvnia (UAH). The exchange rate is approx. CHF 1 = UAH 28 (August, 2018) [USD 1 = 28 UAH; EUR 1 = 32 UAH]

Visa, Master Card, American Express are accepted in major boutiques, hotels, restaurants and in department stores. Credit card fraud is not excluded, it is therefore recommended to use a credit card only in trustworthy establishments and to check, as far as possible, how it is handled. Personal cheques will normally not be accepted.

In daily life, cash plays a major role in Ukraine and it is still the most widely used payment method. Many taxis have no possibility to accept electronic payments and cashless payments are completely inconceivable in public transport.

You will find ATMs on the streets, in big supermarkets, at banks and commercial centers, providing cash (UAH) 24 hours a day. Important: some banks can set temporary limits on ATM withdrawals (3000 – 5000 UAH/day).

US Dollars and Euros can easily be exchanged in many exchange offices located throughout the city. Other currencies such as Swiss Francs can be exchanged in major Ukrainian banks or some exchange offices. You might be asked for an ID (passport). You should never change money on the street; there is usually little difference in rates but you will likely be cheated.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Ukraine has an extensive train, bus, subway, and airport transportation system. Most of the cities also have aboveground trolleys and small shuttle buses called “marshrutkas.” The tickets for public transportation cost depending on the city 6 to 8 Hryvnia (UAH).

### **BY AIR**

Flights are the most common way of travelling to and from Ukraine. Starting end of March 2018, Swiss International Airlines has resumed direct flights from Zurich to Kyiv. [Ukraine International Airlines](#) also operate daily direct flights between Kyiv and Zurich as well as between Kyiv and Geneva. Flight connections to other Ukrainian cities are usually with stopovers.

The international airport of Kyiv – Borispol (KBP) is the main air-gate to the country. In Kyiv, besides Borispol airport, international flights are also operated to and from Kyiv-Zhulyany airport.

Ukraine International Airlines and other airlines provide [several domestic flights](#) between Kyiv, Lviv, Chernivtsi, Dnipro, Kharkiv, Kherson, Ivano-Frankivsk, Odesa, Zaporizhzhia.

### **BY ROAD**

Visitors can rent a car through the hotel or at a car rental company. An average car depending of the model costs € 40 - 120 per day ([www.hertz.ua](http://www.hertz.ua), [www.avis.com.ua](http://www.avis.com.ua), [www.sixt.com](http://www.sixt.com), [www.europcar.com](http://www.europcar.com)). Most companies offer chauffeur service (which is recommended since roads and general driving conditions are not always in line with European standards). An average trip by UBER taxi in Kyiv will cost 100-150 UAH (4-6 CHF).

### **BY RAIL**

International railway connections are established with Poland, Russia, Belarus, Moldova, Baltic States, Bulgaria, Romania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Austria, and Germany.

Within the country, the railway system is well functioning with express trains connecting larger cities. Intercity trains are like any similar train in Western countries and the same rules apply, except you need to show your passport when tickets are checked. Tickets and timetables are available on the [website](#) of the national railway company.

## **BY SEA**

A connection by ship is operated between Ukraine and Turkey.

## **HOTELS**

There are a few 5-star hotels in the big cities and a variety of 4-star, and 3-star hotels. Hotel rates for a single room vary from 130 – 250 CHF in a four-star hotel, resp. between 250 - 450 CHF in a five-star hotel.

Hotel apartments do exist and are often preferred by foreign or local visitors coming for longer stays.

To find the accommodation that would meet your requirements, you may consult the usual booking websites like <http://www.hotels-kiiev.com/> or [www.booking.com](http://www.booking.com).

Several real estate agencies ([www.joneseast8.com.ua](http://www.joneseast8.com.ua), [www.teren.kiev.ua](http://www.teren.kiev.ua), [www.blagovest.ua](http://www.blagovest.ua), [www.dtz.com](http://www.dtz.com)) are specialized in leasing apartments to expatriates. Similar to office prices, accommodation prices vary considerably according to location and level of refurbishment.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Ukraine's country code is +380. The list of region codes is available [here](#).

Calling nationwide requires dialing "0", waiting for a dial tone (optional on digital exchanges), and then the region code followed by the local number. For instance to call Kiev from Odessa, users would need to dial 0 48 XXX XX XX. Same convention was adopted for mobile operators.

For local calls, users would still be able to dial the local number without a "0" and the area code. Mobile users have to dial full "0"-prefixed number, although operators may implement local dialing in cities.

## **CELL PHONES**

It is very easy to buy a local SIM card in any mobile shop. The biggest providers in Ukraine are Kyivstar, Vodafone Ukraine and Lifecell – all providing services to more or less similar conditions.

## **BUSINESS HOURS**

The regular business week in Ukraine is from Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., with a one-hour break for lunch.

Banks are usually open from Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (payments until 4:00/5:00 p.m.)

Opening hours for shops are usually, Monday to Saturday, 8:00/9:00 a.m. to 9:00/10:00 p.m. and on Sundays from 09:00/10:00 a.m. to 8:00/9:00 p.m.

Many shops, in particular big department store centers, however are open longer hours (also on Sundays).

## **ADDRESSES AND OPENING HOURS OF THE UKRAINIAN EMBASSY IN SWITZERLAND**

### Embassy of Ukraine in Switzerland

Feldegweg 5,  
3005 Bern, Schweiz  
Phone: + 41 31 352 23 16  
Fax: + 41 31 351 64 16  
E-mail: [emb\\_ch@mfa.gov.ua](mailto:emb_ch@mfa.gov.ua)  
<https://switzerland.mfa.gov.ua>

### Working Hours:

Monday - Friday: 08.30 - 18.00  
(lunch break: 12.30 - 14.00)

Opening Hours of the Consular Section  
can be found [here](#).

## **ADDRESSES OF THE SWISS EMBASSY AND CONSULATES**

### Embassy of Switzerland in Ukraine

vul. Kozyatynska, 12  
01015 Kyiv  
Phone: + 38 044 281 61 28  
Phone/Visa: + 38 044 590 44 85  
Fax: + 38 044 280 14 48  
Out-of hours emergency contact number: + 38 067 5027808  
E-mail: [kyiv@eda.admin.ch](mailto:kyiv@eda.admin.ch)  
**E-Mail/Visa:** [kie.visa@eda.admin.ch](mailto:kie.visa@eda.admin.ch)  
[www.eda.admin.ch/kyiv](http://www.eda.admin.ch/kyiv)

## **TIPS FOR INITIATING BUSINESS CONTACTS**

For establishing initial business contacts with a Ukrainian partner, it is advisable to have references from another company. The same is true for the other way round: make sure you obtain references regarding reliability, financial stability and legal grounds for operating activities.

In Ukraine, personal contacts are of particular significance and they strongly influence business decisions. Therefore, it is highly important to establish such contacts through informal dining, tennis, golf, going out together, etc.

Swiss firms planning to export their goods and services to Ukraine need to have patience and perseverance. Since the process from the initial contact to decision-making is usually rather lengthy, it is recommended to follow up on its first contact by sending a reminder, or to call the person in charge.

The representatives of Swiss companies are encouraged to get in contact with the Embassy regarding their first trips to Ukraine. Further, the Embassy of Switzerland in Ukraine hosts regular Swiss Business Meetings. Representatives of Swiss companies are welcome to join these information and networking events upon invitation (please contact the Embassy).

## **BUSINESS PRACTICES**

Of high importance for your success will be to find a reliable translator who is trustworthy, both professionally and in terms of his or her business awareness.

Keep in mind that in Ukraine a lot will rather depend on your initial choice of a reliable partner, which, in practice, may turn out to be a much more important guarantee for fulfillment of the terms of a contract than your beforehand agreed framework of provisions.

It is highly advisable when trading with Ukraine to be very careful with respect to payment conditions and to require partial pre-payment or bank guarantee every time you are not 100 percent sure about your partner's reliability.

## **SPECIAL FEATURES ON THE MARKET**

While the Ukrainian market holds many opportunities for Swiss companies in various sectors, some specific risks of doing business in Ukraine must be taken into account:

Despite improving economic and political conditions in Ukraine, the judiciary system is still inefficient and law enforcement is weak, which can be a major risk to businesses. Furthermore, companies may face high levels of bureaucracy in order to get necessary documents etc. for doing business.

For further information, please check <https://www.s-ge.com/en/publication/country-information/ukraine-market-information> (list of basic addresses, legal provisions, etc.) published on the website.

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