

A FOREIGNER'S IMPRESSION OF UKRAINE

My name is Andrew, I am from Great Britain but have for the last year and a half been working here in Nikolaev as an English teacher. It is fair to say that for many British people Ukraine is not the 'first choice' destination for foreign travel, let alone a small city like Nikolaev. However, in my short time here I have grown very fond of this place, both Nikolaev and Ukraine in general. Impressions of Nikolaev from locals have often been mixed, and I often get asked why I chose to live in this town. So in this short article I thought it would be good to give you an idea of Ukraine from a foreigner's perspective. Why I came here, impressions of other places in Ukraine and of course the funny and challenging moments for me.

Why Ukraine and why Nikolaev?

This is a question I am often asked, and to be honest it is a question I sometimes find difficult to answer. The truthful answer is I don't really know why. When I first arrived in October 2015, stories about the political situation in Ukraine were still in the news in the UK and therefore you would think this might deter people from visiting. But as for me, I wanted to go somewhere unusual. I had just finished a master's degree at university and wanted to live abroad for some time to gain new experiences and knowledge of the world. I chose Ukraine because it is a place that people in the UK know so little about and I wanted to see it as something more than just a headline in the news. So having decided on Ukraine I needed to find a reason to come here. From some research I noted that there were many opportunities to teach English. So I took a course to train as an English teacher, and at the same time I sent many emails to schools all over Ukraine. One of my first replies came from a school here, in Nikolaev, and after a brief email exchange and an interview I was offered a job here. So, having never heard of this city a few months before, I found myself packing my bags and setting off to Nikolaev.

First Impressions of Ukraine

When I got off the plane for the first time in Kiev, the first thing that I noticed, that anyone who travels would notice, is the language. Though I had tried my best to learn a little Russian before I arrived, it was very daunting to be surrounded by a foreign language. Luckily I was met by an acquaintance at the airport therefore I didn't have to navigate my way to Nikolaev from Kiev all on my own, though I did try to say the occasional 'спасибо', which often amused the people around me (I have learned a few more words since then). Once I arrived in Nikolaev the first few days were spent trying to adapt to my new surroundings. One question students often ask me is how to translate 'маршрутка' in English. The truth is, there is no translation; 'Маршрутка' is very Ukrainian. My first experience with this type of transport was a very unusual experience for me. I was told that we were going to travel by bus to a place in the city. In England a bus is a big vehicle that carries many people. So imagine my surprise when I was dragged by my acquaintance onto a small van. Once I was on board (and I had reassured myself that this was the bus and I wasn't being kidnapped) I took a seat. Then when we were travelling the lady behind me passed me some money...did she think I was the conductor? My acquaintance then told me that I should pass the money to the driver. If I was on my own, I think I would have been very confused. Despite this interesting first experience I have used this form of transport many times and can use them without problem, but at first it was a very strange experience.

Nikolaev and other cities

Since I arrived I have spent most of my time in Nikolaev. I am very glad that I found this place. In the UK I come from a small city called Lancaster (it is about 1 hour drive from Manchester). For me small cities are better and Nikolaev reminds me a lot of my hometown in this respect. There are all the advantages of a big city: shops, bars, parks etc. but it can also be quiet and everything feels close. However, I have also visited Kherson, Odessa and of course Kiev. My favourite of these was Kiev. I think the city is so picturesque and it is fascinating to look on the

river Dniپر from the top of the hill. Summer or winter (I have seen it in both) this city is great. As for Kherson and Odessa I have mixed feelings. I thought Odessa was a very beautiful city but I had some awkward moments with taxi drivers and hotels when I visited. Maybe if I spoke better Russian and understood the Odessa sense of humour my trips could be more successful in the future. I still haven't visited any part of western Ukraine but this is something I would like to do in the future. To see Lviv and also the Carpathian mountains is on my list.

Finally...

Ukraine may not be the number one destination for English travellers at the moment but it is my view that many more Englishmen should travel here. Of course it can be difficult at first, especially if you don't understand that language and don't have anyone to help you navigate the 'маршрутка' but there are many beautiful places and interesting features of this country, which can often be very different from life in the UK. I am very glad that I have chosen to come here and believe me; I don't intend to leave anytime soon.

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I. Steblina

BERUFLICHE PERSPEKTIVEN FÜR JUNGE UKRAINER IN DEUTSCHLAND

Стаття присвячена питанню перспектив роботи для молодих українців у Німеччині.

Ключові слова: професійні перспективи, робота в Німеччині, молоді фахівці з України.

This article is devoted to question of professional perspectives for young Ukrainians in Germany.

Key words: professional perspectives, job positions in Germany, young specialists from Ukraine.

Deutschland sucht überall in Europa nach Fachkräften und Spezialisten in verschiedenen Berufen. Die Geschäfte der Firmen laufen seit Jahren sehr gut, die Konjunktur boomt, die Arbeitnehmer haben gute Verdienstmöglichkeiten und beste berufliche Perspektiven. In Deutschland zu arbeiten/leben ist für junge Akademiker/Facharbeiter eine gute Chance, sich wissenschaftlich zu verbessern und ein gutes Gehalt zu verdienen. Inzwischen leben weit über 150.000 Ukrainer in Deutschland, zum Teil als Studenten, aber auch viele als Spezialisten in kleinen und großen Unternehmen. Natürlich müssen einige Voraussetzungen erfüllt werden, um in einem fremden Land zu leben und zu arbeiten. Zum einen ist die ausreichende Kenntnis der deutschen Sprache wichtig. In der Zusammenarbeit mit den Kollegen müssen sich die ausländischen Fachkräfte verständigen können. Zum anderen werden von den Firmen Teamfähigkeit, Flexibilität und hohes Arbeitsengagement verlangt.

Ein vorbereitender Sprachkurs im Heimatland und die Unterstützung bei der Wohnungssuche erleichtern Ihnen die Eingliederung schon vor dem ersten Arbeitstag. Nach dem Start sichern vor allem das Kennenlernen und Verstehen der jeweils anderen Kultur den langfristigen Erfolg. Sie bekommen einen Paten, der Sie bei allen wichtigen Dingen berät und zur Seite steht. Die Berater der **Weider AG** unterstützen Sie ebenfalls mit Rat und Tat. Wir freuen uns über Menschen mit Ehrgeiz, Neugier und dem festen Willen, Grenzen zu überwinden. Deshalb machen wir Ihnen das Ankommen leicht.

Welche Zielgruppen haben in Deutschland gute Chancen für eine Arbeitsstelle? Fachkräfte mit 3–5 Jahren Berufspraxis, aber auch Hochschulabsolventen kurz nach dem Studium sind für die Firmen interessant.

Seitdem die Hürden für die Einstellung von ausländischen Mitarbeitern in den letzten Jahren stark gesenkt wurden, finden immer mehr junge, aber auch gestandene Fachkräfte aus EU-Ländern und Osteuropa den Weg nach Deutschland. Mit Spaniern, Italienern und Griechen etc. und natürlich