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**The Standoff
Continues**

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INDEPENDENCE. COMMUNITY. TRUST

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February 21, 2014

Bloodlust

At Least 75 Killed In Week Of Carnage Ukraine Spins Out Of Control As Death Toll Mounts



Protesters clash with police after gaining ground near Kyiv's Independence Square on Feb. 20. After protesters pushed police back some 200 meters, officers fired on the crowd. At least 49 people were slain, including three police officers, bringing the death toll to at least 75 people since Feb. 18. Both sides blamed each other for the violence which came hours after a truce agreed to by President Viktor Yanukovich and opposition leaders. Western leaders harshly criticized Yanukovich for the bloodletting and promised sanctions. See stories on pages 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, 13(AFP)

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Protesters take police hostages in conflict

BY DARYNA SHEVCHENKO
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They came to help police in their standoff with demonstrators, but ended up getting captured by those very protesters. Now they are prisoners of a war whose casualties are growing by the day with no end in sight.

As journalists on the morning of Feb. 20 were escorted into the state-owned Energy Company of Ukraine building near Kyiv City Hall, where the newly captured police officers are being held, the prisoners stood up as if they were getting ready for an inspection.

Some 60 police officers were captured by protesters on Feb. 20 during violent clashes that killed at least 49 people. Most of the fatalities were protesters shot to death by police, but at least three were police officers killed in the clashes.

Both sides blamed each other for igniting the deadly conflict on Feb. 20.

President Viktor Yanukovich accused the protesters of attacking police positions on Kyiv's Independence Square. Protesters accuse police of starting the conflict by throwing Molotov cocktails and improvised explosive devices at them.

Whatever happened on the ground, the truth is that both sides were too close to each other and were spoiling for a fight.

The captured police officers came from other parts of Ukraine – Dnipropetrovsk, Kryvyi Rih, Crimea and Luhansk. Some were seasoned veterans, others looked like inexperienced teenagers. None were given weapons except rubber truncheons.

The commander of a Crimean unit Tymur Tsoi said the officers that he brought were staying in October Palace when the protesters came. "They asked us to leave the building and so we did," he confirmed. Others soon followed.

The police from Dnipropetrovsk arrived at 4 a.m. on Feb. 20 and were awakened with an order by a commander to leave the building and to prepare to enforce police lines. That is when protesters attacked and captured them.



Anti-government protesters escort captured police officers during clashes in the center of Kyiv on Feb. 20. (AFP)

"I am not sure what was going on, I was sleeping," said unit commander Vasyl Tur. "We got surrounded right away, the others were running and me and my greenhorns were left out."

They were escorted to the EuroMaidan stage, where some of them received medical care after being struck by protesters.

Then they were marched to the Energy Company building on Khreshchatyk Street.

The police captured by protesters were not armed.

"Police have only a standard set of protection – bulletproof vests, protective gear for legs and arms, helmets, rubber truncheons and handcuffs," Tsoi said. "We have firearms, but didn't take them with us."

Tsoi said the use of firearms requires separate written permission which was not forthcoming. He said their only orders were to protect buildings where high-ranking officials are located.

"Police were just holding up the cordons," Tsoi said. "And yes, if you

want to call it that, we were used as a live shield."

Mykhailo Dashko, 21, stood closer to the wall, his uniform burned.

"A Molotov cocktail hit me a couple of days ago, I wasn't hurt, it's just the clothing," he said.

Dashko is from a Crimean unit that arrived a month ago. Earlier the unit was located on Hrushevskoho Street, where four protesters died in January.

"It was fine there, food was always delivered on time," the police officer said. But they were hungry on Feb. 20, with no food for 24 hours. So captivity came with some benefits. "We only received food here, some apples and water and they said they are bringing cheese and milk," he said.

Dashko's tour of duty was supposed to end on Feb. 23. "It is soon, but I don't even know what day is it now, what do you think, will they let me go home?" he asked.

Police officer Maksym Prytys, 19, had a face covered with bruises and small cuts, one of the few injured

during the Ukrainian House takeover. "We went out and were attacked just within two to three minutes, some started kicking me. I didn't see who or how. I was covering my head with the shield," he said.

Tur, the commander of the Dnipropetrovsk unit, encouraged officers to talk to journalists. "Hey! Why are you scared! Tell them everything. What do we have to lose?" he asked.

The fate of the police-turned-prisoners is unclear. The Interior Ministry reserved the right to use force to free them.

Tsoi said that the prisoners' fate will likely rest on negotiations between politicians and protesters.

Oleksiy Kabatskiy, 21, a captured police officer from Luhansk was taken with six officers from his unit. He wants to quit. "Now I just want to go home and work a normal job. I don't want to pick any sides," he said.

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Death, fire, smoke and soot darken Ukraine's prospects

BY CHRISTOPHER J. MILLER
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As police bullets and tear gas rained down on protesters at Independence Square just after dawn on Feb. 20, the bloody body of one of the first victims of the violence was laid out with a candle memorial near the western barricade on Khreshchatyk Street.

A priest prayed over the body. A woman wept. A man, shaking his clenched fists in the air, shouted: "They are killing our heroes!"

Another man draped a Ukrainian flag on the man and then placed a sign above his head with a warning for Ukraine's president: "Yanukovich, you're next."

Central Kyiv became a war zone just after breakfast time on Feb. 20, shattering a truce reached the night before by embattled President Viktor Yanukovich and opposition leaders. Either police and protesters weren't listening, or they had different orders.

It remained unclear late on Feb. 20 who drew first blood on the country's bloodiest day in its post-Soviet history.

Police told the Kyiv Post that the protesters attacked first, while several protesters at the scene said that the police started the fight when they threw an explosive at protesters, injuring several of them.

Amid the violence, several Yanukovich loyalists said they would leave the president's ruling Party of Regions, including Volodymyr Makeyenko, the Kyiv City State Administration head appointed by the president.

The slain protester laid to rest on Khreshchatyk Street died of two gunshot wounds to the back, a medic at the scene told the Kyiv Post, showing an armored vest that the man had worn with two bullet holes. "Large caliber," he said, referring to the size of the bullet.

As the violence raged on at Institutka Street, protesters armed with improvised weapons, Molotov cocktails, stones and shields pushed police from their positions near Globus shopping mall and October Palace, reclaiming the positions they lost to police on Feb. 18 and expanding them in each direction. Following a barrage of Molotov cocktails, two police vehicles nearby became engulfed in flames. Several protesters were seen firing at police with live rounds from hunting rifles.

Police retaliated while retreating deeper into the government district of the city by heaving improvised explosive devices packed with nails and shooting shotguns and automatic rifles at protesters. From perches atop nearby buildings, several police snipers aimed and fired at protesters with great precision.

Dr. Olha Bohomolets told the Kyiv Post later in the day at Ukraina hotel, where the bodies of 12 dead protesters had been taken, that all had been shot in the head, neck, heart and lungs. They were not wearing armored vests, she said.

Police, she said, "did not allow doctors to treat them (protesters) immediately."

"We may have been able to save the lives of some of them," she added.

At 8:30 a.m. atop Independence Square was a gruesome mix of suit and oil and blood. Acrid black smoke billowed up from burning tires set alight



Protesters catch fire as they run from a burning barricade during clashes with police on Feb. 20 in Kyiv. (AFP)

A medic holds the armored vest of a protester shot and killed by two bullets that penetrated his protective gear. (Christopher J. Miller)



to create a smokescreen from police. The bells of St. Michael's Monastery rang out, echoing throughout the square.

There, thousands of protesters, their faces stained black, gave and obeyed orders to make more Molotov cocktails and crush more paving stones for a human chain to pass to the men fighting on the front lines.

Following each burst of gunfire, protesters could be seen toppling over. Some writhed and screamed in pain, grasping at the place on their bodies in which a bullet had entered. Smoke rose from the thigh wound of one man who was shot.

Others lay lifeless on the ground. Medics carried those bodies away on stretchers. One man, bleeding from his head, left a trail of blood 50 meters long, from the Independence Monument to a medical tent behind the main stage of the protest camp, where medics pronounced him dead on the scene.

Just after 9 a.m., protesters captured their first police officer, dragging him from Institutka Street to the EuroMaidan protest camp. Minutes later, more than 20 others were hauled

in. Their faces bloody, their uniforms in tatters, protesters stripped them of their body armor and weapons to pass to men at the front lines.

Around 9:30, a group of 60 captured Interior Ministry officers were marched single-file down Khreshchatyk Street to the Energy Company of Ukraine building near Kyiv's city hall. Some spat at their captors in defiance and cursed, while the boyish faces of others appeared terrified of what might become of them as prisoners of war.

Interior Minister Vitaliy Zakharchenko warned in a statement posted to the ministry's website that his officers were prepared to use force against the "extremists" who captured "fellow law enforcement officers."

"We have the right to use all means provided to us by law, including weapons," he said.

By nightfall, the death count had skyrocketed. Ukraine's Health Ministry said that at least 75 people had been confirmed dead as a result of clashes this week — 26 on Feb. 18-19 and at least 49 on Feb. 20.

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Editorial

Blood & hatred

The failure of the nation's political leadership to prevent the carnage on the streets is the best reason now for early presidential and parliamentary elections. Regrettably, any vote might put into power the same failed political leaders who have brought the nation closer to the brink of political and economic disaster than at any other time in Ukraine's nearly 23 years as an independent nation.

But early elections – combined with a coalition interim government – are the only way now to tamp down what is boiling hatred, aggression and lawless impunity that have overtaken the streets of Kyiv and many other cities in Ukraine.

Public trust in President Viktor Yanukovich, parliament, the courts and police has reached such a critically low point that more murders seem likely. In addition to at least 75 deaths since Feb. 18 alone, including those of 13 police officers, Ukraine is falling into a spiral of hatred, vengeance and bloodlust.

Because political leaders are not trusted, people are willing to die to change their government. They'd like to do it at the ballot box but a violent change is becoming more acceptable for many of them.

Because police are not trusted, people set up roving bands of "self-defense" patrols to take law into their own hands. Since both sides are often armed and wearing masks, regular criminals and rioters are exploiting the chaos to steal and to kill. We're perilously close to a full-blown breakdown of society.

Early on Feb. 19, journalist Vyacheslav Veremiy with Vesti newspaper was gunned down as he took an overnight taxi ride home from work. He was shot right in the city center on Velyka Zhytomyrska Street near the five-star InterContinental Hotel. The dozens of other dead victims all have their own stories.

The nation's oligarchs, who care more about their mostly ill-gotten wealth than the nation, should realize they will have no fortunes to protect if the nation fails. They need to put pressure on Yanukovich to call early presidential and parliamentary elections now.

America followed up this week with visa bans against 20 Ukrainian officials identified as part of a chain-of-command in ordering the violence against anti-government EuroMaidan demonstrators, a string of violence that began on Nov. 30. More sanctions must follow, and U.S. President Barack Obama's warnings on Feb. 19 of more consequences ahead were welcome news.

The Feb. 20 bloodbath took place as the foreign ministers of three European Union nations – France, Germany and Poland – met with Yanukovich. The EU foreign ministers took the welcome step of agreeing to slap financial and visa sanctions against unspecified Ukraine leaders.

Russia took its typically obstructionist approach, with Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev calling Yanukovich a wimp for not ordering the police to more ruthlessly put down the growing revolt. Ukraine is not Belarus, it's not Russia and it's certainly not North Korea. So the West need not fear that Ukraine will retreat into isolationism.

Too many of Ukraine's 45 million people want a civilized and prosperous existence. This yearning is, fortunately, also shared by a slice of Ukraine's top economic and political elite – including the billionaires with London penthouse apartments and luxurious European getaways. The West has more influence on these oligarchs and their bank accounts than they think. The West must simply unite and apply hard sanctions.

Yanukovich was indeed elected for a five-year presidential term in 2010. But in democratic societies, politicians are not allowed to get away with any crime until the next election. As an act of good faith, Yanukovich should allow an independent investigation of suspicions that he ordered police to fire on the crowds and hired "titushky," the slang term for government-hired thugs, to commit violence and create chaos. The same should apply to the opposition and protest leaders, who are not blameless. Chaos and destruction are not governing strategies for any who claim to love Ukraine, as the militant Pravy Sektor and other radical EuroMaidan groups do.

Noted Ukraine analyst Adrian Karatnycky is among those putting hopes on parliament.

"It is clear that Yanukovich has decided to start a blood bath," Karatnycky wrote. "The only thing that can stop him in his tracks is a rapid creation of a new majority in parliament that can speak directly to the military and security forces and force them to resist, desist and defect. Yanukovich's inner circle is now drenched in blood, crimes against humanity. And they will not turn back."

Let's hope he's right about parliament's ability to pull the country back from the abyss. Kyiv city administrative head Volodymyr Makeyenko's defection on Feb. 20 from the ruling Party of Regions, along with the defections of at least 10 other members of parliament from the president's party, are welcome. Let's hope that Karatnycky is wrong, however, about it being too late for Yanukovich and his inner circle to turn back. It's not too late, but there's not much time left to save the nation.



Protesters mourn and inspect the bodies of persons slain during clashes with police in Kyiv on Feb. 20. At least 49 people were killed on Feb. 20 alone, bringing the death toll since Feb. 18 to at least 75 people. (AFP)

Partial list of 75 people killed in Kyiv violence since Feb. 18

1. **Heorhiy Aratunian**, around 50, Rivne
2. **Serhiy Baydovsky**, 22, Lutsk
3. **Valeriy Brezdeniuk**, 50, Vinnytsia
4. **Serhiy Bondarchuk**, 53, Starokostyantyniv, Khmelnytskyi Oblast
5. **Vitaliy Vasylytsov**, 37, Bila Tserkva, Kyiv Oblast
6. **Roman Varenysia**, 35, Yavoriv Rayon, Lviv Oblast
7. **Vyacheslav Veremiy**, 32, Kyiv
8. **Nazar Voytovych**, 17
9. **Ustym Holodniuk**, 20, Zbarazh, Ternopil Oblast
10. **Roman Tochny**, 45, Khodoriv, Lviv Oblast
11. **Eduard Hrynevych**, 29, Volyn Oblast
12. **Anatoliy Zhalovaha**, 34, Lviv
13. **Volodymyr Zakharov**, 57,
14. **Antonina Dvorianets**, 62, Brovary, Kyiv Oblast
15. **Andriy Dygdalovych**
16. **Serhiy Didych**, 44, Horodenka, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast
17. **Mykola Dziaviysky**, 56, Shepetivka, Khmelnytskyi Oblast
18. **Anatoliy Zherebnev**, Rudky, Lviv Oblast
19. **Oleksandr Kapinos**, 29, Kremenets, Ternopil Oblast
20. **Serhiy Kemsy**, 34, Kerch, Crimea
21. **Volodymyr Kishchuk**, 58, Zaporizhia Oblast
22. **Andriy Korchak**, Stryj, Lviv Oblast
23. **Ihor Kostenko**, 22, Lviv
24. **Vitaliy Kotsiuba**, 22, Lviv
25. **Ivan Kreman**, Kremenchuk, Poltava Oblast
26. **Volodymyr Kulchytsky**, 65, Kyiv
27. **Vasyl Moisey**, 21, Kivertsiv, Volyn Oblast
28. **Andriy Movchan**
29. **Volodymyr Naumov**, 43, Dobropillia Rayon, Donetsk Oblast
30. **Valeriy Opanasiuk**, Rivne
31. **Yuriy Parashchuk**, 48, Kharkiv
32. **Yuriy Paskhalin**, 30, Cherkasy Oblast
33. **Oleksandr Plekhanov**, 23
34. **Andriy Sayenko**, 42, Fastiv, Kyiv Oblast
35. **Ihor Serdiuk**, 40, Poltava Oblast
36. **Viktor Chmilenko**, 53, Bobrynets Rayon, Kirovohrad Oblast
37. **Vitaliy Smolynsky**, Uman Rayon, Cherkasy Oblast
38. **Bohdan Solchanyk**, 29, Staryi Sambir, Lviv Oblast
39. **Igor Tkachuk**, 39, Russia
40. **Ivan Tur**, Horodok, Lviv Oblast
41. **Oleh Ushnevych**, 32, Drogobych, Lviv Oblast
42. **Zurab Khurtsiya**, 54
43. **Vlad Chaplynsky**, Obukhiv, Kyiv Oblast
44. **Andriy Chernenko**, 35
45. **Oleksandr Tsariok**, Vasylkiv Rayon, Kyiv Oblast
46. **Serhiy Shapoval**, 45 (or 46), Kyiv
47. **Yosyp Shylyng**, 61 (or 62)

Source: Human Rights Information Center in Kyiv
(AFP photo is of Independence Square monument in Kyiv)



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Kyiv takes death holiday



BRIAN BONNER

The Kyiv Post newspaper really wanted today's issue to be different. Our small, dedicated and overworked team has been living and breathing EuroMaidan so much since November that readers started to complain. Give us something else to read, many told us. So this week, we planned to publish several stories that had nothing to do with the nation's deepening and ongoing political crisis and the anti-government protests.

But then we scrapped those plans and those stories. Somehow light feature stories about musicians or movies didn't fit the mood.

If there's such a thing as a death holiday, Ukraine is having one now.

Since Feb. 18, at least 75 people, according to the Health Ministry, have been killed in violence. Most of them were protesters. But at least 13 of these victims were police officers. All were human beings with families, loved ones and political views. Nearly 50 were killed alone on Feb. 20.

Laughing, drinking or having fun seem out of place.

The streets in central Kyiv are filled with people, but the city still looks like a ghost town of closed businesses.

In the blocks surrounding the Kyiv Post's offices on Pushkinska Street, in the heart of the center, it was hard to find a working business. Not the restaurants, nor the jewelers, nor the pharmacies, nor the malls, nor the clothing stores were open. A scattered street kiosk here or there was working, but not even those workers looked happy.

Some business owners felt the need to explain the reason for their closing. Some put up signs on the front doors citing "technical reasons" or declaring a "sanitary day."

But many others simply put the "closed" sign out, abandoning any pretense of normal times. There was no real need to explain.

Businesses are closed for any number of reasons: their employees couldn't get to work because the metro wasn't working, Kyiv city officials asked them to close because of the threat of violence between police and protesters or the coming of the long-rumored final police crackdown, or because they feared that anti-government protesters would take over their stores – a realistic fear since the demonstrators control several buildings in central Kyiv.

A friend of mine and former Kyiv Post colleague, Stefan Korshak, said that he had evacuat-



An Orthodox Christian priest blesses a protester shot dead on Feb. 20 by a police sniper. Two hotels on Kyiv's Independence Square and the central post office became a makeshift morgue for many of the estimated 49 fatal victims of the day's violence, bringing to at least 75 the number of people killed since Feb. 18 in Kyiv. (Anastasia Vlasova)

ed his wife and two children to the countryside. "Partly, this was because of the violence in the center. But also partly, this was because there are no dance or aikido classes to distract our little monsters, er, children for the upcoming long weekend, and it's not at all clear school will start on Monday (Feb. 24)."

Banks closed early. Big lines appeared at automatic tellers too. "As for gasoline, it is on sale but long lines for that too. This was the case in the city and in the countryside," Korshak said. "As to violence, despite what happened today, in our neighborhood things were quiet, very much like a weekend."

It looked like "many people are bailing out of Kyiv" to the countryside or another city, if they could, the same way as the Korshak family.

My friend is an astute observer, and he sized up the situation this way: "Here is a popular TV station owned by Ukraine's richest man, the metals magnate Rinat Akhmetov. It is called

Ukraine TV. Akhmetov used to be a close ally of President Viktor Yanukovich, but recently he's taken to making public statements about the unacceptability of violence and the importance good ties with the European Union, even at the expense of Russia," Korshak said. "Cynics have suggested this is because steel sells for much more in Europe than Russia. The point is, these days, the news reporting on Ukraine TV is surprisingly even-handed and even critical of the government. It wasn't before. And that means that in the Donbas (eastern Ukraine's Donetsk Oblast, Yanukovich's political base), where there was an information blockade like (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's Russia, the region's biggest and most popular TV station is now airing images of dead and bloody protesters followed by Berkut (riot-control police) shooting Kalashnikovs. If those images continue, people are going to get angry at the government even in the Donbas

- and the government already is running low on loyal regions and cops willing to stand up to irate citizens. Heck, the fake Kyiv mayor that Yanukovich appointed (Volodymyr Makeyenko), because he made the previous mayor a scapegoat for shooting protesters in January, quit Yanukovich's party today as well. The regime is cracking, you can see it."

In the meantime, the city with closed businesses and full morgues and hospitals is in the midst of urban warfare, with protesters building higher barricades in the center, and expanding their perimeter, as politicians continue to dither.

If the Yanukovich regime indeed cracks and breaks up, fewer people will be sad with each passing day and each increase in the death toll. Greed, intolerance and extremism are indeed evil and destructive traits.

Kyiv Post chief editor Brian Bonner can be reached at bribonner@gmail.com.

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Kharkiv's Turboatom may finally get sold this year

BY EVAN OSTRYZNIUK
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Kharkiv's prized state-owned turbine producer Turboatom is slated for privatization this year. A strategic asset that produces nuclear, hydroelectric and thermoelectric power stations, the State Property Fund wants to sell its 75 percent stake worth up to \$800 million.

The crown jewel in the state's privatization portfolio has long been coveted by Russian investors.

And there's good reason why. Turboatom nearly doubled its net profit in 2013, earning some \$73 million.

But given the State Property Fund's track record of selling state-owned assets at rock-bottom prices to insiders, or at times to a single bidder, it's unclear who will get the treasured company.

On top of Turboatom's impressive financials, Turboatom plans to increase revenue to Hr 2 billion this year, up from Hr 1.9 billion in 2013.

But the company needs technological upgrades and better management, both of which the state is not able to adequately provide.

Since this year's budget was first proposed in mid-December, the company has been on and off the privatization list several times. Yet on Jan. 20, the State Privatization Fund finally confirmed that it would be put on the market.

Turboatom's sale still needs approval from the Cabinet of Ministers. Also, a new government may be in place by December given the current political instability, and it might not view the deal as favorable to the nation's interests.

According to analyst Yaroslav Yarosh, one group led by Presidential Administration head Andriy Klyuyev, who owns a portfolio of energy assets, wants to sell the turbine manufacturer to a Russian company in order to "cement economic relations with Moscow."

A second group under current Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Boyko prefers the status quo, since Turboatom plays a key role in several domestic renovation projects. Both Klyuyev and Boyko are considered candidates as the nation's next prime minister.

Any sale of the state's share in Turboatom will depend on demand. So far the company appears to have few takers. The Russian nuclear power giant Rosatom looks to be the most likely candidate. The company's foreign unit press secretary Yulia Shaida told the Kyiv Post that Rosatom "will participate



Acting Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Boyko (center), who opposes the privatization of Turboatom, visited the plant on Feb. 6. (Courtesy)

→ Turbine maker seen as most valuable asset on state privatization schedule for 2014

in the auction for its privatization."

Local energy analyst Yuri Korolchuk of the Institute of Energy Strategy said that Rosatom "has ambitious plans to build 40 reactors around the world... and could use Turboatom turbines."

Ukraine-born Russian businessman Konstantin Grigorishin is also considered to be a candidate for purchasing the asset, though analysts doubt he can compete with Rosatom. He owns 15 percent of Turboatom through his Energy Standard company. He report-

edly wanted to buy the company in 2008 when he had a favorable relationship with then-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, but the sale was blocked by ex-President Viktor Yushchenko.

Another potential Russian buyer is heavy machinery producer Siloviye Mashiny, which has a 5 percent stake in Turboatom.

Other potential foreign buyers are unlikely because of Ukraine's poor record of protecting investor rights and non-transparent conditions for

privatization.

But since Turboatom's market is concentrated mostly in the Commonwealth of Independent States, Korolchuk observed, Russia might be the only taker.

Turboatom sells 49 percent of its output abroad, including to Russia, Kazakhstan, Finland, India and Cuba. Of the 11 large turbines it produced last year, seven remained in Ukraine, three were installed in Russia and one went to Kazakhstan. According to company chief executive officer Viktor Subbotin, new orders include steam and condenser turbines for several Russian nuclear power plants.

"Its products are genuinely in demand in the former Soviet Union," Eavex Capital analyst Dmytro Churin stated. "And substituting them would be expensive. (The company) is highly specialized, making it difficult to compete."

The risk of not selling to a Russian

company has a sinister side as well. "Rosatom and Russian companies can create stiff competition for Turboatom if another company buys it or if it remains public. Turboatom could be gradually squeezed out of its markets," Korolchuk said.

Aside from Turboatom, other major assets being put up for sale this year, according to the Jan. 20 approved list, include rail car builder Azovmash, chemical factories Sumykhimprom and Odesa Portside Plant, and minority stakes in Zasyadko Coal Mine, Donetskboblenergo and Donbasenergo. The Cabinet of Ministers expects privatization proceeds to reach \$2 billion this year. The approved budget deficit for this year, meanwhile, is \$6.7 billion.

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Naftogaz warns 11 oblasts of gas cuts over unpaid \$3 billion bill

BY MARK RACHKEVYCH
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Naftogaz, Ukraine's state-owned oil and gas monopoly, has threatened 11 oblasts with gas supply cuts for falling drastically behind on their bills totaling some \$3 billion, which, coincidentally, is the rough equivalent of what Russia's Gazprom said Ukraine owed it.

Naftogaz said on Feb. 13 it will imminently reduce gas deliveries to a "technical minimum." Company spokesperson Olena Yurieva said that means enough will be given for pipes to not freeze.

Energy experts disagreed on how much room temperatures will drop as a result. Oleksandr Todiyshuk, head of international energy club Q-club, told Kommersant that temperatures could drop to as low as 10 C, whereas Dmytro Marunich of the Energy Strategies Institute told the Kyiv Post temperatures won't be less than 18 C.

Curiously, Naftogaz forgot to mention its largest debtors are located in Kyiv, and in Donetsk, Luhansk, Dnipropetrovsk and Kharkiv where President Viktor Yanukovich's political base lies. Their combined debt is \$1.8 billion as of Jan. 1, according to investment house Dragon Capital. After Kyiv, Donetsk was the largest debtor, owing some \$500 million to Naftogaz. The 11 municipal heating companies that Naftogaz mentioned were in Vinnytsya, Zhytomyr, Zaporizhzhya, Lviv, Chernihiv, Cherkasy, Kherson, Sumy, Odesa, Volyn

and Kirovohrad.

Some of the oblasts Naftogaz fingered have rebelled against President Viktor Yanukovich. Militant activists have seized government buildings in Zhytomyr, Lviv and Volyn while Chernihiv, Cherkasy and Sumy have witnessed large-scale anti-government protests. So-called national councils have been created in these regions to rival local governing councils that protesters say are not doing their jobs, according to lawmaker Taras Stetskiy.

Local courts have ruled that they are illegal.

Acting Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Boiko specifically mentioned the delinquent oblasts where national councils operate in an interview with TSN TV.

"Overall, the bill has increased in those oblasts where so-called national councils hold power," said Boiko. "We really have seen arrears rise for gas in those specific regions."

But when asked to comment on why the eastern oblasts weren't mentioned in the Naftogaz news release, Yurieva of Naftogaz said she "just publishes what other departments give me...I don't know who the largest debtors in eastern Ukraine are."

A separate Kyiv Post inquiry emailed to Naftogaz wasn't answered.

However, Marunich of the Energy Strategies Institute downplayed any political undertones in Naftogaz's news release.

Although Naftogaz this week paid \$1.5 billion to Gazprom, mainly with



A company official inside one of Kyivenergo's thermal energy plants that belongs to Rinat Akhmetov, the nation's richest billionaire, speaks on a phone. The city's municipal heating company owes more than \$500 million to Naftogaz for unpaid gas. (Ukrainian photo).

proceeds from a domestic bond issuance that the nation's central bank scooped up, it still owes another \$1.8 billion. Ukraine presumably was going to pay the difference with a \$2 billion eurobond issuance that Russia promised to buy, but Dmitry Peskov, Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman, said on Feb. 20 that political turmoil in Ukraine first must calm down.

Marunich mentioned Naftogaz is always due money from municipal heating companies, a trend that has existed for seven to eight years.

What complicates the matter is that each region has its own gas price which is lower than the cost and ranges 20-30 percent, and sometimes higher. The state covers the difference via sub-

sidies sent to local governments, which often is delayed, said Marunich.

"In fact, households usually pay their gas bills, as do industrial consumers who can be easily cut off by gas distribution companies...it is usually local governments who don't pay the difference owed to Naftogaz," said Marunich.

Payment to Naftogaz got sloppier, said the energy expert, after 2011 when the state wrote off the state-owned company's debt. The move impacted "payment discipline," said Marunich.

Specifically, according to Dragon Capital analyst Dennis Sakva, the government wrote off Hr 4.9 billion in debt of municipal heating companies, and Hr 7.4 billion that regional gas distributing companies had to Naftogaz

as well as wrote off Naftogaz's debts to the state budget.

Naftogaz is the nation's largest employer with nearly 180,000 employees. Global auditing consultancy Deloitte ranks it the third most money-making energy and resources company in Central Europe. According to a recent Deloitte report on energy companies, Naftogaz had 9.45 billion euros in revenues in 2012. However, the company's net loss for the first nine months of last year reached 956.7 million euros, exceeding 2012 net losses for the same period by 2.4 times. Naftogaz is a financial headache for the state and constantly needs capital injections from the government to stay afloat.

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Largest Naftogaz debtors by region as of Feb. 1

Consumer	Debt before Naftogaz (hryvnia)
City of Kyiv	5.03 billion
Donetsk Oblast	4.64 billion
Dnipropetrovsk Oblast	3.76 billion
Kharkiv Oblast	2.95 billion
Luhansk Oblast	2.88 billion

Source: Dragon Capital



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World in Ukraine

Editor's Note: World in Ukraine takes a look at Ukraine's bilateral relations with different nations. To sponsor this news feature, please contact the Kyiv Post's sales team at advertising@kyivpost.com or call 591-7788.

In partnership with FREY WILLE Ukraine

Insurance industry shows growing Austrian presence

BY EVAN OSTRYZNIUK
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In January, Austria's largest insurance corporation, Vienna Insurance Group, became the biggest market player in Ukraine by completing its purchase of top-20 domestic insurer Universalna for \$20-\$30 million. This is the fifth purchase of a local insurance company by VIG since it entered the Ukrainian market in 2005 and solidifies Austria as an insurance powerhouse in Ukraine.

The recent acquisition was no accident, analysts said, as Universalna is viewed as a valuable asset.

"The purchase of Universalna by VIG is an opportunity to significantly increase its market share, as well as obtain a clear asset that has long been operated by Western standards," Dmytro Churin of Eavex Capital told the Kyiv Post. "The shareholders of Universalna included the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, whose conduct of transparent business has always been a fundamental criterion."

Vienna Insurance Group's purchase is all the more remarkable considering the overall poor state of the domestic financial industry, Churin added. No company representative was available for comment.

Even before the merger of Universalna and VIG, Austrian firms were the largest foreign capital investors in the Ukrainian insurance market with a 15.6 percent share. Only offshore-registered companies have a larger share with 40 percent, according to the National Financial

Largest insurance companies as of Oct. 1, 2013

Rank	Name	Country	net written premiums (Hr million)*
1	AXA Insurance	France	551
2	VIG (Ukrainian Insurance Group, Knyazha, Globus)	Austria	435.7
3	Providna	Russia	418.1
4	Alfa Insurance	Russia	372.1
5	INGO Ukraine	Russia	353.8
6	Oranta	Kazakhstan	341.2
7	Arsenal Insurance	Russia	323
8	UNIQA	Austria	286.5
9	European Insurance Alliance	Russia	271.4
10	ASKA	Russia	258.6
15	Universalna	Ukraine	168.5

* many Russian insurers are registered offshore
Source: forinsurer.com

The addition of Universalna to Vienna Insurance Group's collection of companies will make it the largest insurance group by net written premiums.

Services Committee. VIG is now represented by five companies: Ukrainian Insurance Group (No. 6), Knyazha (No. 21), Globus (No. 29), and Jupiter (not ranked).

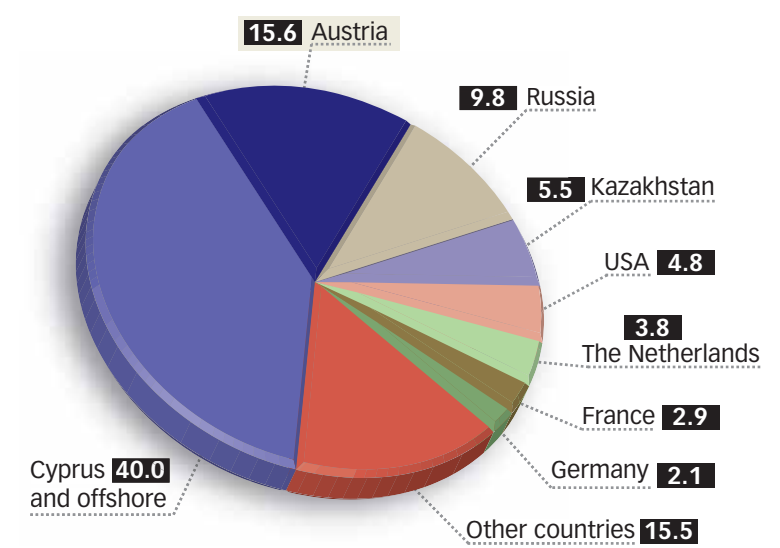
The other largest Austrian insurer on the market is Uniqa. Austrian Ecco Insurance and Grawe Ukraine are also doing business in the country. VIG and Uniqa provide a full range of insurance services while Ecco Insurance and Grawe specialize in life and health insurance.

The expansion of a major Western financial group in Ukraine is a strong signal of confidence that the insurance industry is a sound investment. Despite the ongoing recession and shrinking of

capital markets, credit worthiness agency Fitch Ratings in February declared that the insurance market of Ukraine has good growth prospects should private income levels rise.

The most recent figures issued by the Ukrainian Federation of Insurers confirm the growth trend. For the first nine months of 2013, net written premiums, one of the main industry indicators, was up 8.7 percent year-on-year at Hr 16.2 billion and the number of contracts concluded rose by 11.9 percent to 28 million. Gross assets, meanwhile, soared by 26 percent to reach Hr 65.8 billion. UFI projects that the industry will grow by four percent overall in 2014, led by health and

Foreign capital in the Ukrainian insurance market 2013, %



Source: Natscomfinuposluh

Not counting Cyprus and other offshore tax havens, Austria is a big player in Ukraine's insurance industry.

non-property related insurance.

Vehicle and property insurance are by far the most popular contracts struck, taking 57 percent of net written premiums for the first nine months of 2013. Life insurance saw the biggest growth year-on-year at 40 percent, although this segment remains small at just 10 percent of the market.

Ukrainians are woefully underinsured. The average Ukrainian only spends \$68 per year on insurance com-

pared thrice to that in Russia and an estimated \$4,000 in the UK and U.S., according to UFI. It reports that only 5 percent of the population has voluntary health insurance. Meanwhile, the size of the market in neighboring Poland is more than three times larger than in Ukraine at 6.1 billion euros, according to Lloyd's.

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Raiffeisen Bank Aval CEO Volodymyr Lavrenchuk said his personal contract is signed with the Ukrainian unit, meaning he will keep managing the bank if it changes ownership.

Raiffeisen wants to say goodbye to Ukraine

BY IVAN VERSTYUK
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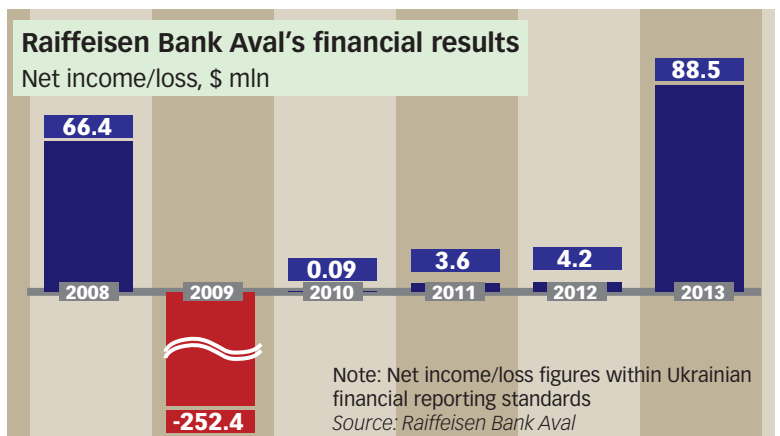
Although Raiffeisen Bank has had success in Ukraine, the Austrian company still wants to unload its subsidiary in the nation and exit the market. Its 2013 net profit of \$88.5 million and developed retail banking system are evidently not enough to convince the parent company to stay put.

The impending exit has

dampened the mood of customers and investors alike whose pessimism only increased with the news of yet another Western bank leaving. Not surprisingly, foreign direct investments to Ukraine last year shrank to a paltry \$2.9 billion, down 31 percent from the previous year.

Official confirmation of the move came on Feb. 10, when Raiffeisen Bank International chief executive officer Karl Sevelde told Austrian newspaper Die Press that the bank had selected a number of interested parties to conduct due diligence of its Ukrainian unit, which does business as Raiffeisen Bank Aval.

A key reason to sell relates to the European Central Bank's financial health measures of raising capital requirements, meaning that Raiffeisen and others have had to keep more money at home. On top of that, the bank has to reimburse \$2.4 billion to



Note: Net income/loss figures within Ukrainian financial reporting standards
Source: Raiffeisen Bank Aval

Austria's central bank for the bailout package it received during the financial crisis of 2008-2009.

Closer to Ukraine, risks have increased in the sector with huge profits being offset by bad loans in portfolios, Kinto asset management

company's head of research Volodymyr Ovcharenko told the Kyiv Post. A highly unstable currency market has only compounded the macroeconomic situation making it difficult for banks to make money on additional loan issuances.

A top bank wants out of Ukraine

→8 “The chief executives of all Western banks in Ukraine complain about the local court system as sometimes it is really difficult to get the loans repaid,” ICU investment boutique analyst Mykhaylo Demkiv added.

German Deutsche Bank and Swiss UBS have been helping Raiffeisen to find a bidder since 2013. Alfa Bank, one of the biggest Russian commercial banks, and multimillionaire Mykola Lagun's Delta Bank, a major player on Ukraine's banking market, are among the potential candidates for acquiring Raiffeisen Bank Aval. Its head Volodymyr Lavrenchuk told the Kyiv Post that he is not negotiating with potential buyers.

The price tag is the main issue.

Raiffeisen acquired a 93 percent stake in Bank Aval for \$1 billion in 2005. It currently has 96.4 percent of the shares, with the remaining 3.6 percent free-floating on the Ukrainian Exchange. Analysts stress Raiffeisen doesn't want to let go of its subsidiary at less than the original price. The selling position contrasts with other Western banks that have exited the local market at all costs, such as Italy's Intesa San Paolo banking group. It sold its Pravex Bank to billionaire Dmytro Firtash in January for \$101 million after acquiring it for \$690 million in 2008.

But the asking price depends on the size of its assets and quality of its loan portfolio. Raiffeisen Bank Aval had assets worth \$5.27 billion at the end of 2013, according to the entity's balance sheet based on Ukrainian financial reporting standards. It is the fourth biggest bank in the country, according to the Association of Ukrainian Banks' data. Raiffeisen Bank Aval's loan portfolio reached \$3.27 billion last year, 9 percent of which were bad loans, according to local standards, but more than 30 percent in terms of international standards.

Some 8 percent of its 200,000 clients are large companies engaged in agriculture, retail, telecommunication

Raiffeisen Bank Aval's key financial indicators

Assets	\$5.27 billion
Book value	\$0.85 billion
Loan portfolio	\$3.27 billion
Deposits of private and corporate clients	\$3.2 billion
Earnings in 2013	\$0.089 billion
P/E ratio based on share price at UX	4.7
P/E ratio according to Dragon Capital	3.8
Number of clients	200,000+

Sources: Dragon Capital, Raiffeisen Bank Aval, Ukrainian Exchange

and transportation. Market researcher GFK-Ukraine says that the bank services 32 percent of Ukrainian corporate clients.

Since 2009, more than 15 Western banks have left the Ukrainian market. The local banking system was considered more stable when more global banking brands conducted business here. They brought high standards of risk management, audit, corporate culture and client approach to the Ukrainian banking sector. Moreover, they have access to much cheaper European capital through their parent banks, which also makes loans for their Ukrainian clients slightly cheaper.

“Due to the unattractive investment climate, the trend of foreign capital leaving the Ukrainian banking sector will continue,” Raiffeisen Bank Aval's CEO Volodymyr Lavrenchuk foresees.

Big global corporate clients are inclined to receive services in Ukraine from the same banks they deal with in more developed countries. This may become an impetus for other Western banks still doing business in Ukraine, like Unicredit, BNP Paribas, Credit Agricole, to stay and weather the storm, experts noted.

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Expats to watch

Lover of ‘holubtsi’ from Austria runs seeds business in Ukraine

BY MARK RACHKEVYCH
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Austrian Gebhard Rogenhofer's passion for farming shows through in the way he speaks of Ukraine's enormous potential for feeding itself and other countries. As the longtime general director of Syngenta in Ukraine, a Swiss-based marketer of seeds and pesticides, he believes intensive farming is the only way for boosting harvests.

Although the country is blessed with near-perfect farming conditions that include bountiful soil and a favorable climate, Rogenhofer said intensive farming – as opposed to extensive – will build Ukraine's “power” resulting in “more income and better work places and conditions in rural areas,” which will lead to more exports “to feed the world and consequently more income for the state.”

As part of his business, he sells sunflower, corn, sugar beet, oilseed rape and vegetable seeds – all cash crops – and crop protection products.

He is in the right place. Ukraine has had four grain harvests since 1990 that went above 50 million tons, with last year's 57-million-ton harvest breaking the all-time record. So, with domestic consumption averaging 25-27 million of tons, experts believe Ukraine could contribute to feeding the planet's exponentially growing population.

“If the correct technology is used, Ukraine can double the harvest (to more than 100 million tons) in those crops and consequently more than double the export of commodities... so Ukraine consequently is key for mitigating global food risk,” said Rogenhofer.

As a rising farming powerhouse,

Gebhard Rogenhofer

Age: 50

Position: General director of TOV Syngenta Ukraine

Nationality: Austrian

Secret to succeeding in Ukraine: “People make all the difference since they are the most important capital of every company. So I built a great team in Ukraine and am proud and honored to work with them everyday.”



Ukraine, said Rogenhofer, will soon join other mega-growers like Brazil, Argentina, the U.S., and Australia.

Consequently he doesn't see Ukraine becoming “dominant,” rather a “building block to feed the world.”

Dividing his time between Kyiv, Moscow and Vienna, Rogenhofer's easy going attitude reciprocates locally.

He has more Ukrainian friends than Austrian and enjoys the local cuisine.

“I fell in love with all forms of *varenyky* (filled dumplings) and many other dishes,” said Rogenhofer, adding that *holubtsi* (cabbage rolls) and its Austrian variant *Krautwickler* “are a cornerstone of both nations.”

Another commonality he says is that both Austrians and Ukrainians are friendly and hospitable “on a very good level...the mentality is similar.”

“There is a saying in Vienna that the East starts there, which is connected to the Slavic mentality because Vienna was once a melting pot of nations during Hapsburg empire... even today...you will find Slavic names in the phone book,” he said.

Incidentally, his first trip here was in 1988, when he visited a sugar beet institute and was exposed to *horilka*, or vodka, for the first time. “The next morning I understood the word...it was better if I had died yesterday,” he recounted.

But his funniest experience in Ukraine came in an episode involving other foreigners.

While at a restaurant with colleagues speaking in Russian, a German couple asked his table what language they were speaking. Responding in German, Rogenhofer said that they were Ukrainians but were speaking in Russian.

When he finished the conversation, the couple complimented him on his German-language skills. “I answered politely: ‘Thank you for the kind compliment and I am fully aware that I have an Austrian accent.’”

Kyiv Post editor Mark Rachkevych can be reached at rachkevych@kyivpost.com.

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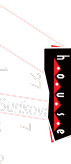
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Austrian jewelry makers thrive in luxury segment

BY ANASTASIA FORINA
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The shine of Austrian jewelry makers keeps sparkling on the local market. Swarovski opened its doors in 2004 and now has eight boutiques in the country, while its rival Frey Wille entered a year later with three shops currently offering enamel jewelry and gold designs.

Imported jewelry accounts for only about 10 percent of Ukraine's market. However, Swarovski and Frey Wille say the Ukrainian market is promising due to the rising demand for their wares among local customers.

Swarovski has no representative office in Ukraine, while half of its boutiques operating under the brand are located in Kyiv. The crystal jewelry maker is also known for home décor items and even flash cards made of synthetic crystals and platinum metals.

"We have a diverse price policy as we have exclusive jewelry and a mass market one," Tetyana Tabachuk, manager of a Swarovski boutique in Kyiv explains. "At least, Swarovski wasn't hit much by the leap in prices during the (2008-2009) crisis as happened to gold."

A Swarovski pen can cost as much as Hr 370. Jewelry ranges from Hr 2,000 to Hr 6,000, while home décor items can be as expensive as Hr 18,000.

The two-year warranty Swarovski provides its clients is also part of the company's marketing strategy, Tabachuk says. "The client can approach any Swarovski boutique and we will replace the (damaged) jewelry," she says.

Moreover, Swarovski holds twice-a-year sales: in January and July with price discounts of up to 50 percent.

Established in 1895, Swarovski sells



A customer examines a piece of jewelry at one of Frey Wille's two boutiques in Kyiv. The enamel jewelry maker headquartered in Vienna plans to expand into Kharkiv and Donetsk, the country's second and fourth largest cities, respectively. (Anastasia Vlasova)

brand accessories through more than 2,350 retail outlets worldwide. The company's 2012 turnover was \$3.2 billion.

Two of Frey Wille's shops are in Kyiv and one is in Odesa. It is best known for colored enamel, a mixture of minerals and glass, and a design that resembles the works of the world's most prominent artists like Austrian Gustav Klimt and Friedensreich

Hundertwasser, French Claude Monet, Czech Alphonse Mucha, and Russian traditional art.

When asked about its financial performance, Frey Wille Ukraine general manager Oksana Fandul says the company's in-country business is profitable. Confirmation of this is its expansion plans to Kharkiv and Donetsk, Fandul adds.

The range of Frey Wille's jewel-

ry includes female watches, earrings, rings and necklaces made of enamel encased in 18-karat gold or rolled gold as well as palatines and scarves made of silk. They also have ties, collar buttons, and pens for men. Prices range from Hr 3,000 to Hr 10,000 for a piece encased with rolled gold while one with 18 karats of gold may cost from Hr 10,000 to Hr 40,000. The price for men's accessories ranges from Hr

Austria at a glance:

Area: 83,871 square kilometers
Population: 8 million (2013)
Government type: Federal Republic
Head of government: Chancellor Werner Faymann (since December 2008)
GDP (PPP): \$399.6 billion (2013)
GDP (PPP) per capita: \$39,970 (2012)
Main industries: construction, machinery, vehicles and parts, food, metals, chemicals, lumber and wood processing, paper and paperboard, communications equipment, tourism

Ukrainian-Austrian relations:

Trade: \$1.95 billion (2013)
Exports from Austria to Ukraine: Chemical products, machinery and vehicles, processed goods, food and animals
Exports from Ukraine to Austria: Raw materials, processed goods, machinery and vehicles
Austrian investment in Ukraine: \$3.26 billion (as of December 2013)
Ukraine's investment in Austria: \$5.7 million (as of July 2013)
More than 150 Austrian companies have representative offices in Ukraine. Around 20 Austrian companies have production facilities in Ukraine.
Source: State Statistics Service, Austrian Embassy in Ukraine, CIA Factbook

1,700 to Hr 14,500.

The Viennese company was founded in 1951. Today it has 102 boutiques around the globe with a presence in the most luxurious cities like Monaco, Paris, Dubai, among others.

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Austria backs sanctions against officials responsible for violence

BY EVAN OSTRYZNIUK
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On Feb. 19, Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz stated that the European Union should enact targeted sanctions against Ukrainian officials, which usually involves the freezing of bank accounts. A number of Ukrainian incumbent and former government officials have assets in Austria.

"Europe must not look away when people are being shot in their own backyard," Kurz said. "Violence must not go unpunished."

At the same time, Austria's State Secretary for Finance Sonja Stessl also proposed freezing the Austrian bank accounts of Ukrainian oligarchs supporting those behind the violence on Kyiv's streets where more than 60 died this week in clashes between militant anti-government activists and police.

"That would be a political signal to support Ukraine's democratic movement," Stessl said in a written statement

to Austria Press Agency. The finance ministry is in charge of sanctions, according to the body's spokesperson.

Statements on introducing sanctions came from Austria during a visit to Kyiv by European foreign ministers from France, Germany and Poland to discuss with President Viktor Yanukovich the political crisis in Ukraine.

Kurz has been consistently outspoken about his support for the EuroMaidan protests. In the wake of the first death recorded on EuroMaidan on Jan. 22, Kurz officially expressed his sympathy with the demonstrators and chastised the government: "That young demonstrators had to pay with their lives in order to spread democracy and their dissatisfaction with the government's refusal to engage in dialogue is frightening. These incidents should be promptly investigated and those responsible for them must be brought to justice."

A number of politicians close to Yanukovich have property and assets in Austria, including the son of for-

mer Prime Minister Mykola Azarov and Presidential Administration head Andriy Klyuyev. Azarov flew to Vienna within days of his Jan. 28 resignation, where his son resides. During an interview with the Kyiv Post, Serhiy Klyuyev, the younger brother of Andriy Klyuyev, said that while he owns assets in Austria, no sanctions have been enacted against him so far.

More evidence that Austrian feelings are hardening against members of the Ukrainian government might have appeared on the flight tracking site www.flightradar24, which showed that on Feb. 19 private jets Canadair CL601 Challenger and Gulfstream G200 Galaxy en route from Kyiv to Vienna were not allowed to enter Austrian airspace and subsequently were forced to return to Kyiv. Such jets are often used by Ukrainian businessmen and officials for their needs.

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Austria's Minister for Foreign Affairs Sebastian Kurz (L) speaks with European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton (R) during a Foreign Affairs Council meeting at the EU Headquarters in Brussels on Jan. 20. (AFP)



This picture grabbed on AFP TV shows government soldiers firing onto demonstrators in Kyiv on Feb. 20. Ukraine's brittle truce shattered on Feb. 20 in fierce clashes between baton-wielding protesters and riot police that claimed at least 27 lives just as European Union envoys were holding crisis talks with the embattled president. Bodies of anti-government demonstrators lay amid smouldering debris after masked protesters hurling Molotov cocktails and stones forced gun-toting police from Kiev's iconic Independence Square – the epicentre of the ex-Soviet country's three-month-old crisis. (AFP)

West slaps on sanctions as Ukraine's politicians fail

BY KATYA GORCHINSKAYA
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With each escalation of government violence in the EuroMaidan demonstrations, the West has threatened sanctions. This week, with at least 75 people killed in clashes between police and anti-government protesters, the European Union and United States followed through on those threats as Ukraine's politicians failed to end the nation's crisis.

Three European foreign ministers shuttled between President Viktor Yanukovich, who was barricaded in his office behind walls of concrete blocks, and the political opposition in an attempt to broker a political deal to stop the violence and set up early elections in Ukraine.

The EU on the same day gave the ministers additional ammunition in their talks by introducing sanctions against an unspecified number of Ukrainian officials, including travel bans, asset freezes and other financial penalties. Earlier, the United States approved similar sanctions against 20 Ukrainian officials blamed for ordering the violence.

The ministers from Germany, France and Poland said they were in for a night of "tough negotiations" in Ukraine as they went into the president's office for the second time late in the evening. Their first meeting lasted for five hours, they said, and was interrupted by Yanukovich, who had telephone conversations with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Although few details are available, European diplomats said a road map was discussed and drafted for exiting the crisis that involves a power-sharing



People queue to get their money from a bank machine in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv on Feb. 20 as a result of the financial panic caused with clashes between anti-government opposition and police in Kyiv. (AFP)

agreement. Early elections were also on the agenda, and Reuters quoted Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk as saying the president agreed to hold them at the end of this year.

Laurent Fabius, the French foreign minister, said that "we tried to consider various options for stopping violence, in particular formation of the new government and holding an election... We hope to find a solution to this situation, but now the situation is very difficult," Fabius said.

But leaders of the opposition were not happy with Yanukovich's stance. "When we have a result – we will tell

them about it," said Vitali Klitschko, leader of Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reform. "So far, there is no result."

Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski tweeted before going into the second meeting with the president: "After talks with the opposition, on the way back to the president to help negotiations. Progress made but important differences remain." In the meantime, at an emergency meeting in Brussels, foreign ministers decided to impose visa bans and asset freezes on those responsible for violence, and halt export of riot gear."

Member of parliament and millionaire businessman Petro Poroshenko, one of the opposition leaders and a former Ukrainian foreign minister, hailed the decision on sanctions.

"I had no doubt that Europe will find strength to give a sign that criminals will be punished," Poroshenko said in Ukraine's parliament, which convened to approve a memorandum to condemn violence and order law enforcers to pull the troops from the streets.

The memorandum is yet to be signed by Verkhovna Rada speaker Volodymyr

Rybak and Yanukovich and has little legal force. But the cross-party vote of 236 parliament members, including 34 members of the pro-presidential Party of Regions, indicated that a new fragile majority may be emerging in the Rada that could pose a challenge to the president.

The Kremlin criticized EU and US sanctions as blackmail that would not help solve the crisis. Russian President Vladimir Putin also sent an envoy to Kyiv.

But one European diplomat suggested that the EU's sanctions may have been helpful in negotiations with Yanukovich.

"One of the arguments might be that there is no list of people who fall under sanctions per se, so one of the arguments the ministers may be using is that some people close to the president, such as his elder son Oleksandr, might end up on the list," the diplomat said.

Others doubted, however, that sanctions would have any positive effect on Ukraine's top government officials, saying many of them no longer keep money in Western banks. If the destination of private jets flying out of Kyiv's Zhuliany airport on Feb. 20 is anything to go by, those skeptics may be right.

Anna Babinets, an investigative journalist, said that 20 private planes left the airport this day. "They are flying to Donetsk, Moscow, Bilbek (a military airport in Sevastopol). They are taking out families and a lot of money," she said, adding that her information came from an airport worker.

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Editor's Note: The Kyiv Post cut its lifestyle section because of the bloodshed that has killed at least 75 people in Kyiv this week. We have heard from readers who want to read about more than Ukraine's political crisis and we agree. We hope for peace soon. Please send any story ideas to news@kyivpost.com or ls@kyivpost.com.

Killings drain joy out of life in Kyiv

BY OLENA GONCHAROVA
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After deadly violence flared this week, killing at least 67 people, Kyiv transformed. All of a sudden, life became serious – deadly serious.

City authorities called on all businesses near Independence Square, the epicenter of the standoff between police and protesters, to close until it is safe – whenever that is.

Public transport wasn't allowed to the city center, and the entire subway system shut down for two days until the late afternoon on Feb. 20, due to what the government called the possibility of terrorist attacks, but what many suspected was a way to keep civilians from reinforcing EuroMaidan.

This week changed the lives of even those who have tried to ignore the anti-government EuroMaidan protests. More, instead, became gripped with dread and panic.

Stocking up on food

The panic brought Kyivans to the grocery stores.

"I saw a young woman who was standing in the middle of Velyka Kyshenia supermarket, holding seven baguettes and shouting to her mom that there was 'no more bread,'" Oksana Romaniuk told the Kyiv Post. "A neighbor saw me coming from the grocery store and asked hysterically if they had any vodka left there."

Food wasn't the only thing hard to find in Kyiv.

"I was buying cigarettes today in a kiosk, and a saleswoman asked if I wanted one carton or two," Romaniuk said.

Eating out became problematic too. McDonald's restaurants were open in limited areas on Feb. 19-20, while many other restaurants simply closed in the wider part of the center, not just around Independence Square, but also around European Square and Lva Tolstoho square, including popular chains.

Coffee van vendor Evhen Lishchyn, who sets up shop near Palats Sportu metro station, said people were frustrated and tired on the morning of Feb. 19, after 26 deaths. "But they enjoyed their cups of coffee as usual," Lishchyn said. "The other cafes are closed because they are afraid of thugs."

His plan is to continue selling coffee, no matter what.

No public transport

Getting around Kyiv was complicated for the past several days as public transport wasn't allowed to the city center and the metro stayed closed on Feb. 18 until late Feb. 20. Police also stopped cars en route to the protest center this week.

The unprecedented situation has drained the joy out of life for many



People wait in line to buy bread in Kyiv on Feb. 20. The lines were seen in many grocery stores in Kyiv after the violent clashes between police and protesters took place on the morning of Feb. 20 inspired panic and many Kyivans rushed to the stores to stock provisions. (UNIAN)

Kyivans.

University student Olha Milyanovych remembered seeing people and cars moving in a jumble on Peremohy Avenue in Kyiv on the night of Feb. 18. Many had to hike to their destinations.

"It took me two hours to get from the city center to my apartment in Holosiyivsky district," Milyanovych said. "The streets were covered with people. Many had to ask for directions. Many believed the metro was mined."

Native Kyivan Natalya Lytvyn looked desperate as she was walking along Khreshchatyk Street, watching the black smoke of burning tires rising above Independence Square on Feb. 19. She doesn't remember the Kyiv metro closing before.

"It's a bad sign," Lytvyn said, adding that the situation in Kyiv looks "medieval."

Public transport drivers said the morning of Feb. 19 was an extremely difficult time for passengers.

One of the drivers of trolley bus No. 5, whose final stop is the Lva Tolstoho metro station, told the Kyiv Post that up to 200 people were waiting for transport at each bus stop during morning hours. "With the metro shut down, there's no other way than to use (above-ground) public transport. It's a real war there in the center," said the driver.

Entertainment on hold

Those looking for an escape through entertainment have had fewer choices. Almost every concert was cancelled in Kyiv due to the clashes.

The German Shadow Theater Helianthus was unlucky twice. Their Kyiv show was supposed to take place in December, but was postponed until Feb. 21-22. After violence erupted earlier in the week, the show was canceled for good.

The same happened to the show of the new age composer Kitaro that was scheduled for Feb. 26. The Golden

Globe winner's manager cancelled the show for safety concerns. For the same reasons, Belgian band Vaya Con Dios cancelled the show in Kyiv. The Feb. 20 Dynamo Kyiv – Valencia Europa League match was moved to Cyprus.

The intrigue stays on for the Depeche Mode concert, one of the most anticipated shows of the year in Kyiv. It is scheduled to take place on Feb. 28. A week before the show, the concert organizers said they were monitoring the situation in Kyiv daily.

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Lebanese restaurant In Mood offers its trademark tea with honey for Hr 25. (Facebook)

Food Critic: In Mood fuses Lebanese and European cuisine

BY NATALIYA TRACH
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In Mood is where the Middle East and West merge. Opened just two months ago, the eatery's interior is up to the conception – there is a weird combination of oriental and occidental decorative elements. Plenty of candles, dark purple velvet sofas and small embroidered satin pillows evokes an Asian fairytale that doesn't blend with the soft-rock radio music playing, or the piano standing in the corner and the hanging chandeliers.

In Mood's tiny dining room can seat up to 50 guests. Located on 19 Nyzhniy Val, one of Podil district's main arteries, it doesn't appear to be a local favorite, yet. On Saturday evening you might be its only diner.

Whether by design or chance, slowness is the main feature of the restaurant and it might be explained with the roots of its Lebanese owner who is the chef. It still lacks printed menus and the wait for a server to take your order is 15 minutes. Be ready to also spend another hour waiting for the ordered dishes to be served.

But the joint's shortcomings are quickly forgotten when sipping the fantastic ginger and lemon tea (Hr 25), which is served in a glass teapot. A big portion of honey is offered to sweeten it.

The tea is perfectly combined with hummus (Hr 45) – a creamy sauce made of chickpeas served with lavash, a traditional Asian and Caucasian unleavened bread. The delicacy alone is worth a visit to In Mood.

When it comes to appetizers, Fatoush salad (Hr 45) is a good choice. It includes cucumbers, lettuce and tomatoes and is served with a lemon dressing combined with pomegranate seeds that make it savory.

The average price for main course dishes is Hr 70. Naknek sausages (Hr 65) are served with lemon sauce. Cherry sauce is combined with Sudzhuk sausages (Hr 65). Barbecue chicken (Hr 69) is served with fried potatoes.

Portions are quite large, and one might find it hard to finish a three-course meal.

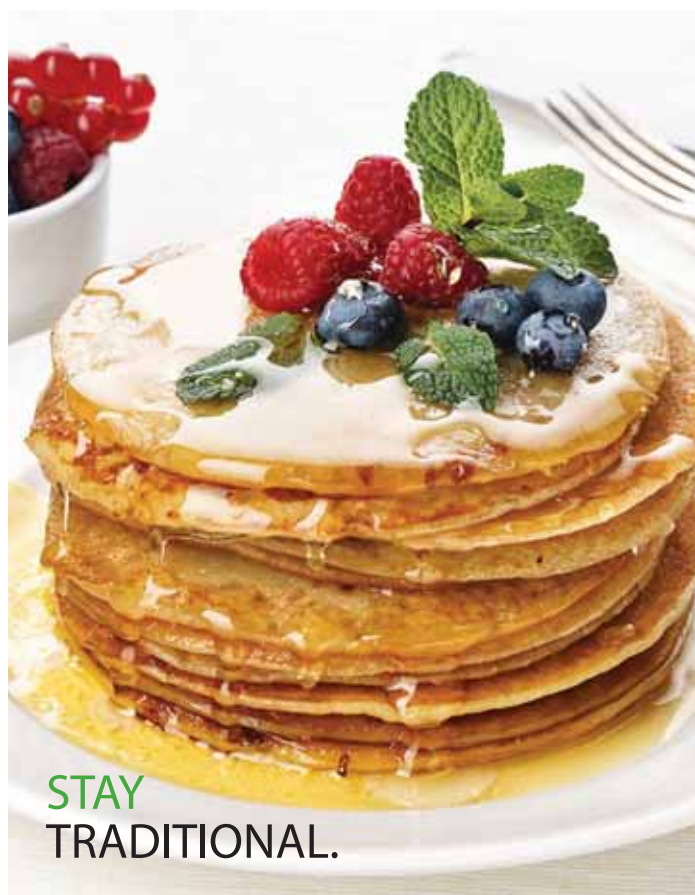
The chef cooks three types of pakhlava (Hr 40), a popular Mediterranean confection made of puff paste. However, at the end of the day it turned out to be not particularly fresh. It's better to choose tiramisu, panna-cotta or crème brulee – all classical European desserts – that are also available there. A check for a dinner of two could be up to Hr 400, excluding hot drinks.

The restaurant, with its drowsy atmosphere and infrequent visitors, might be an ideal place for couples in love that want privacy.

Kyiv Post staff writer Nataliya Trach can be reached at trach@kyivpost.com

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Serhiy Klyuyev condemns violence, but remains loyal to Yanukovych

BY ANASTASIA FORINA
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Serhiy Klyuyev, the younger brother of President Viktor Yanukovych's chief of staff Andriy Klyuyev, was calm despite the nation's crisis when the Kyiv Post interviewed him in his luxurious office on Feb. 19. It is the same place where Austria-registered Slav AG, owned by the brothers, is located.

"I think that we – the opposition and authorities – should scale back political and personal ambitions and find common ground to shift the situation toward a peaceful course," said the Donetsk native hurriedly as if on cue at the outset of the interview.

However, the multimillionaire Party of Regions lawmaker wasn't so gracious when the Kyiv Post started to inquire about his business activities. He denied that Slav AG is an offshore scheme and that it is used for illicit purposes. "It had very few audits from the taxing authorities," Serhiy Klyuyev said, proudly explaining how transparently the company operates.

The Klyuyev brothers' Austrian firm was registered in 1994. It reportedly owns more than 70 companies in Ukraine. Its most significant asset reportedly is Activ Solar – a solar power station developer in Ukraine that is managed and owned by Serhiy Klyuyev's son-in-law Kaveh Ertefai.

Serhiy Klyuyev denies having any connection to Activ Solar, and the company has denied the Klyuyevs are its end-owners.

Forbes Ukraine estimates the brothers' fortune at \$216 million, though

→ 'We are on the brink of a big cataclysm' – Serhiy Klyuyev

Serhiy Klyuyev says the figure is "exaggerated."

Whatever their net worth, it could be seriously endangered after Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz called on the European Union to the freeze assets of Ukrainian officials deemed responsible for the deaths and violence on Kyiv's streets.

Andriy Klyuyev is viewed as a hawk within Yanukovych's inner circle, but his brother denies he had a role in the bloody violence that engulfed Kyiv's central streets.

France's top diplomat Laurent Fabius also supported sanctions. The U.S. and Canada have gone further by already introducing visa sanctions against several Ukrainian officials responsible for provoking violent clashes in Ukraine.

"I think I haven't done anything illegal to have visa sanctions imposed on me," Serhiy Klyuyev said. "If the EU decides to introduce sanctions, it's its right, but I think that sanctions should be introduced when someone is violating (rules of) public life."

Klyuyev strongly condemned the forceful crackdowns which have resulted in dozens of deaths and clearly separates himself from his combative colleague Oleh Tsariov.

When asked if there are divisions inside the Party of Regions, Serhiy Klyuyev said no, at least that is until Tsariov's name is mentioned. "There are discussions," he adds when Tsariov is brought up.

"The fact that all that (violence) happened is a big tragedy for our country," he continued. "The president has done a lot for the last three weeks for peaceful dialogue – (Mykola) Azarov resigned, we revoked the (draconian) laws (passed on Jan.16), we passed and implemented an amnesty law."

It implied the release of arrested protesters on the condition they vacate occupied government buildings. It came into effect on Feb.17, a day after protesters left Kyiv City Hall. Some of them were released from detention but placed under house arrest and still face court trials.

However, clashes between police officers and protesters resumed on Feb.18 after parliamentary speaker Volodymyr Rybak refused to register a bill to change the constitution and transform Ukraine into a parliamentary republic.

This week there were at least 67 deaths, including 13 police officers, with more than 1,000 injured. Numerous media footage showed snipers and



Pro-presidential Party of Regions lawmaker Serhiy Klyuyev, 44, told the Kyiv Post that although he deplors the violence in Kyiv and other cities that have left dozens dead and more than 1,000 injured, he won't quit the ruling party in parliament. (Pavel Podufalov)

police officers armed with automatic rifles shooting at protesters from building rooftops.

On Feb. 20, Acting Interior Minister Vitali Zakharchenko announced that he signed several orders allowing police officers to use live ammunition should protesters fire at the police or capture them.

"Using firearms is unacceptable either against protesters or police officers. I'm not justifying (the use of) arms; the authorities have to ensure public order in a legal way," Serhiy Klyuyev said.

Meanwhile, as the political crisis deepens and the death toll mounts, at least 17 lawmakers left the Party of Regions parliamentary faction in protest. Notably, Kyiv city manager

Volodymyr Makeyenko quit the party. After announcing the move on Feb. 20, Makeyenko pledged allegiance to the people of Ukraine and ordered Kyiv's subway system to re-open.

Serhiy Klyuyev says he does not plan to quit the Party of Regions, and is hopeful the crisis will be resolved.

"I'm not going to leave the Party of Regions, it's the very first party of which I became a member and it's the biggest party," he stated.

However, he admits that "we're on the brink of a big cataclysm," adding that a financial default may ensue if the political crisis persists.

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Courageous Kyiv Post photographer Anastasia Vlasova goes to the front lines during a Dec. 8 standoff between police and protesters on Hrushevskoho Street in Kyiv. (Pavel Podufalov)

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