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Close Combat



BY WILL PONOMARENKO
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AVDIYIVKA, UKRAINE — In the industrial zone of Avdiivka, known as the Promzona, Russia's war on Ukraine is close-up and personal.

On other parts of the front, the two sides are hundreds of meters apart, and the fighting mainly takes the form of artillery duels, or long-range sniping. But in the Promzona, the sides are close enough to exchange insults along with small-arms fire.

Avdiivka, a Ukrainian-controlled frontline city some 600 kilometers southeast of Kyiv that boasted a pre-war population of 35,000 people, is one of the war's hot spots.

more **Combat** on page **3**

A Ukrainian army frontline position in the Avdiivka industrial zone, pictured on May 17. In most places a gray zone of no-man's land separates Ukrainian forces and the Russian-backed fighters who oppose them. But here in Avdiivka, the sides are so close they can shout insults at each other, and close-quarters fighting is the norm. (Volodymyr Petrov)

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Anti-graft group looks to sue over stolen Yanukovich cash

BY JOSH KOVENSKY and

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Transparency International Ukraine may file civil cases on behalf of the Ukrainian people with regard to \$40 billion allegedly stolen by Viktor Yanukovich, the group's head has said.

"That's something we are considering," said Jose Ugaz, Transparency International's global chairman, in an interview with the Kyiv Post on May 22.

Ugaz declined to provide details on what those filings would look like, but said that Ukraine's failure to act on the Yanukovich case is "a scandal for the world."

"It's a shame for Ukraine that after so many years, and it being so obvious that this guy was involved in serious schemes of corruption, that nothing is happening," he said.

Ugaz's trip to Kyiv on May 22-23 for an anti-corruption workshop is his second visit to Ukraine since being elected chair of Transparency International in 2014.

On his last trip, the 57-year old Peruvian attorney met President Petro Poroshenko and Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko, both of whom told him at the time that there was "political will" to tackle corruption. Ugaz said he was dissatisfied with the lack of progress one year on from that meeting.

"In spite of the will of the good people of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau, there is not only a lack of results, but also in recent times there are some messages to civil society that are not coherent with a positive will to fight corruption," Ugaz said, citing a proposed law that would ban multiple law enforcement bodies from investigating the same crime.

Stolen cash

Transparency International has taken a more aggressive stand in recent years, filing its first civil action in Paris on behalf of the people of Equatorial Guinea to seize more than \$106 million from the African country's former vice president, Teodorin Obiang.

That case has established a framework within which it might be possible to file similar civil cases to recover the cash stolen by Yanukovich.

Getting to this point has taken a decade of legal drudgery, with courts initially rejecting the claims made against Obiang.

Transparency International Director Jose Ugaz speaks in Kyiv on May 22. Ugaz, who made his name as chief prosecutor on the investigation that brought down Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori, called the failure to return ex-President Viktor Yanukovich's assets to the state a "scandal." (Oleg Petrasniuk)



"The French court decided that (civil plaintiffs) were not entitled to submit a case because they were not victims," said Transparency International's Lucas Olo Fernandes of the initial result.

The allegations were eventually upheld, with activists relying on reasoning usually put forward by environmental protection groups, which had previously had success in arguing that even if they were not necessarily located in the countries where crimes were being committed, they could still be considered victims and represent the interests of victims in court.

Tip of the iceberg

Ugaz's hints of possible future civil cases come in the wake of an April 20 ruling by a Ukrainian court that saw the return to Ukraine of \$1.5 billion that was believed to have been stolen by associates of Yanukovich. Ukraine's General Prosecutor's office did not provide details of the court decision, raising questions over whether proper procedures were followed in the case.

The Transparency International director said that the release of the funds, which were held at the state-owned Oschadbank before being returned to the Ukrainian Treasury, had essentially been botched.

"Any other country would be proud of the judicial decision, and this would be posted immediately to the open public," he said.

During the Transparency

International workshop where Ugaz spoke, Lutsenko did not answer a question from the Peruvian attorney about how many corruption cases there were into Yanukovich, instead saying that there was one treason case and that the rest would proceed "case-by-case" afterwards.

Ugaz called Yanukovich a "paradigm for grand corruption," adding that he was amazed the former Ukrainian president "is not being investigated for corruption in this country."

"People need to know that this is the money of the Ukrainian state, and that Yanukovich was able to take this and live this luxury life, spending the money of the Ukrainian people," the Transparency director added.

Lutsenko also said that the Ukrainian government may begin to receive a total of \$280 million in funds stolen by former Prime Minister Pavlo Lazarenko.

Lazarenko was arrested by U.S. authorities in 1999, making it nearly 20 years from when his crimes were committed to when the money is set to be returned.

Stolen goods

Exactly what happens to stolen funds that are recovered is a question now being hotly discussed in civil society. In countries such as Ukraine, where corruption is a systemic problem, returning money to the state from which it was stolen is not always a good option.

Such is the situation in the case of Gulnara Karimova, the daughter of the late former Uzbek President Islam Karimov. She is accused of receiving over \$850 million in bribes, partially through the misuse of state institutions. Court proceedings against her are on-going in the United States, with activists optimistic that the cash will at some stage be recovered. That will raise the difficult question of how it should then be used.

"It would be highly problematic if the stolen assets were returned to the government of Uzbekistan," said Kristian Lasslett of the Open Society Justice Initiative.

"It would, in effect, mean the stolen assets would be given to the organizational perpetrator of the original theft. It would also pose a substantial risk the returned assets would be re-stolen by criminal syndicates currently operating through the Uzbek state system."

One model used to overcome this problem has been seen in Kazakhstan, where a foundation was set up in 2008 to distribute recovered assets by issuing grants to civil society organizations. Lasslett believes more such solutions are needed.

If not now, when?

In considering whether to file civil cases on behalf of Ukrainians afflicted by corruption, Transparency International would, in part, take on a role that many believe state organs should play. But Ugaz argued that small movements in the legal system could prove decisive in the long run.

"Everybody knows how this works and who is on the take," said Ugaz. "This is when corruption normalizes, and it goes down to the common citizens, and then everybody is involved in a culture of corruption."

"But, suddenly, something happens, and people start mobilizing," he said, citing the 2013-2014 EuroMaidan Revolution as an example.

"If you ask me how this happens, I don't know. When is this going to happen, I don't know. But it happens," he said. ■

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'Black Brigade' wages urban war in Avdiyivka factory

Combat from page 1

Here, the two armies are locked in a daily struggle for control of the industrial district on the city's southern edge, which sits on strategic high ground. The Promzona has long been the scene of exhausting building-to-building urban war fought in enclosed areas, with blood spilled for every meter of territory lost or taken back from the enemy.

It is also a symbol of Ukraine's tenacious resistance — the Promzona's defenders are sometimes called "Promborgs" by their fellow soldiers — echoing the "cyborg" nickname given to the Ukrainian defenders of Donetsk airport.

The industrial zone consists of a single road, Yasinovsky Lane, flanked by industrial buildings, most of which are in ruins from nearly three years of relentless shelling by Grad rockets, high-caliber artillery, and mortars. The eastern end of the road is controlled by Russian-backed forces. Among the buildings, trucks belonging to the businesses that used to operate here have been reduced to twisted hulks of rusting metal, nestled among shell craters.

The whole of the private housing sector just to the south of the Promzona was abandoned long ago — staying in the open here for too long is extremely dangerous, and the military prevent civilians from getting too close to the killing zone. Fighting has been going on here since the summer of 2014, and no one really knows how many lives have been lost on both sides.

Skeleton Position

Since November 2016, the industrial zone, along with other strategic points south of Avdiyivka, has been defended by combat units belonging to Ukraine's 72nd Mechanized Brigade, nicknamed the "Black Brigade" for its fearsome record in combat.

The Ukrainian soldiers' main defensive position is a former textile factory, now heavily damaged by shelling. Most of the roof has been torn away, and all that remains of it are rib-like steel support girders — so the soldiers call this place the Skeleton Position.

The factory floor is strewn metal roof parts, girders, and broken blocks of concrete support pillars. Amid the rubble, the soldiers have constructed a labyrinth of defensive walls and passages, using wooden ammunition crates, lumps of rubble, and sandbags, regularly dotted with firing points.

Just beyond the ruined building there is a line of trenches — the final frontier of Ukraine's forces. Thirty meters beyond that, the notorious Somali Battalion of Russian-backed fighters mans its forward machine-gun nests, their weapon muzzles pointed at Ukraine's ruined factory fortress.

There, among the twisted metal and crumbling concrete, a gory, deadlocked battle has been waged for nearly three years, with no end in sight.

"Each and every day we're shelled by 120-millimeter mortars,"



A Ukrainian serviceman goes scouting in the Avdiyivka industrial zone on May 17. (Volodymyr Petrov)

says Gennadiy Sabdiyev, codename "Khan," the commander of the company defending the Skeleton Position. "The militants also shoot at the roof blocks with heavy machine guns, hoping to hit soldiers with ricocheting bullets from above."

Most of the remaining part of the building's roof crashed to the factory floor in early May during a barrage of shelling by the enemy. The soldiers seem to sense their foes' frustration.

"Recently, the militants started throwing three-man commando groups against us," Khan goes on. "And we slay them immediately, right here, at the Skeleton. We don't understand what's going on — either they've gone nuts or they just don't respect us anymore. Those weak infiltrating groups are all doomed to die here, with no exceptions."

As he speaks, a walkie-talkie on his shoulder buzzes with short encoded reports from soldiers manning the nearest positions.

Overnight on May 17, the Skeleton Position was hit by tank fire, and then the Ukrainian defenders were hit by two big infantry assaults. Khan's soldiers believe it was revenge for their earlier destruction of an enemy rocket-propelled grenade fire team.

"Our neighbors are now bitter at us," the commander says.

A young soldier, Oleksandr, who refuses to give his full name and who goes by the nom-de-guerre "Psycho," is well used to tank warfare.

"When a tank is engaged in combat, you can hear its engines roaring from two kilometers away in the dead of night," he says. "And if you see a blast of fire on the horizon, get ready — a 125-millimeter tank shell is on its way to you."

The two sides are so close they can shout at each other.

As per the rules of urban warfare, the Ukrainian defenders of the Promzona try to stay as close to the enemy as possible in order to pre-

vent enemy artillery from targeting them. Even so, the Skeleton Position sometimes comes under fire from 122-millimeter self-propelled guns, and stray rounds hit the nearby positions of Russian-backed forces.

The fighting has become so routine for the men of the Black Brigade here, that peace seems unusual, even threatening. When it's quiet, they wonder what the enemy is up to.

"It's very hard to distinguish one day from another here," says soldier Gennadiy Chernin, codename "Father." "In fact, we've been stuck in here for many days. The same faces, the same fighting, the same tension happening every day. We've learned not to be afraid of the shooting — it's the silence that's really scary here."

An older, robust man with a gray-stained beard, Chernin is heating up a small washbowl with rainwater over a fire — it's the only way to have a good wash there.

"We don't even know how much manpower our enemies have against us," Chernin says. "On May 15, a dozen Chechen fighters reinforced that position beyond the Skeleton. Our snipers got a couple of them."

"Take cover!"

The silence on the morning of May 17 did not last for long.

By midday, heavy shell blasts start shaking the factory's walls. "Look out! 120-millimeter mortars!" soldiers shout. They immediately run to their shelters.

The blasts are so hard that the shockwaves can be felt through several walls. After several impacts, the Ukrainian mortars outside the building open up with return fire, and the factory floor rings to the rattling firing of assault rifles and machine guns.

Some of the soldiers off combat duty rest deep inside the building. Despite the sounds fighting, some of them sleep peacefully on the double bunk beds they have constructed from wooden planks.

"We usually sleep with our body armor on, and with our rifles in our hands," Chernin says. "The action zone is just meters away, so we can be thrown into battle again any minute."

"Let's roll"

In a murky passageway next to the soldiers' barracks, the company commander has set up his operations point, with a soft armchair and a TV set broadcasting Russian channels only. As the sounds of war outside gradually fade away, Khan puts his radio set on a coffee table next to a Kalashnikov assault rifle, and sinks back into his comfortable chair.

"Well, you guys know what a peaceful person I am. I'm even afraid of blood," he says smiling, and his

young soldiers laugh in the half-dark. The fighting is over for now, and the soldiers' minds are turning to food.

"A kitchen is the most important place at war," says soldier Valery Fedan as he stands by a gas stove frying potatoes in a pan.

At the Promzona positions, the soldiers cook for themselves in small groups. As Fedan cooks, a couple of other soldiers sit at a table strewn with rifles and water bottles.

"Sometimes, some of us have to bring food to the guys in the front-line trenches," Fedan says. "And as you do it, your main mission is to try not to drop hot fried potatoes when jumping in front of separatists — and not to get shot, of course."

After eating, Fedan, Psycho and two other soldiers take their rifles and go straight to the line of fire — with loud jokes and laughing.

Their mission, for now, is to get to the forward trenches outside the Skeleton Position to reinforce their comrades-in-arms, who are containing enemy fire while the civilian journalists are in the Promzona.

"Let's roll, fellas," Oleksandr the "Psycho" says, pulling back the bolt of his gun.

With obscene battle cries, they run outside, along the right side of the building, towards the forward trenches.

"We haven't had any casualties for a couple of weeks here," says Chernin as he watches the four soldiers run off through the ruins. "And every day I pray to God to save those boys. They're only 20 years old at most. I hate this war for ruining their lives for nothing."

Soon, the silence is broken by the loud detonation of a hand grenade near the building — and a new firefight in the Avdiyivka industrial zone begins. ■

ON THE MOVE

Advertisement

Alexander Cherinko becomes head of Deloitte Ukraine's Tax and Legal department



Starting from 1 June 2017, Alexander Cherinko will take over as head of the Tax and Legal department at Deloitte Ukraine. Alexander joined the Deloitte Kyiv office in 2004 right after graduating from university. Since that time, he has advanced from a junior consultant to the head of a department.

Alexander has extensive professional experience in corporate taxation, specifically in advisory services, including income tax, VAT, and international tax structuring. He participated in a number of IPO projects for Ukrainian companies on international stock exchanges, including the main trading platform of the London Stock Exchange.

During the period from 2012–2013, Alexander worked at Deloitte Dusseldorf, one of Europe's leading transfer pricing practices. Having gained great experience there, Alexander introduced a transfer pricing practice in the Deloitte Kyiv office, which has rapidly reached leading market positions. Alexander is also an active member of the governmental working group on key tax matters, including income tax reform, transfer pricing and BEPS.

Deloitte.

Editorials

Dashed hopes

It's been three years since Petro Poroshenko won the presidency of Ukraine, on May 25, 2014. Swept into power in the wake of the EuroMaidan Revolution, Poroshenko carried the hopes of (most of) the nation, who wanted Ukraine to finally emerge from the Kremlin's baleful influence and become a truly independent, democratic, westward-looking European state under the rule of law.

It is a credit to Ukrainians that, just three months after the start of Russia's military intervention in Ukraine, with Crimea under military occupation, and Russian proxy forces in the Donbas still threatening to take more territory, the country was able to hold democratic elections that were deemed free and fair by the international community.

Also impressive was Poroshenko's outright win the first round: He had proved himself to be a candidate the majority of voters could unite behind, even in a country riven by Russian-instigated war and writhing in political and economic turmoil.

But as he entered office, Poroshenko said that the military operation to regain government control over the Donbas should "last hours, not months," raising hopes that there could be a quick end to Russia's military meddling in the east.

Those hopes were soon dashed — after initial advances against the invaders, Russia neutralized Ukraine's airpower advantage by moving in air defense systems (the Buk anti-aircraft missile system that shot down Malaysia Airline's Flight MH17 on July 17, 2014, was one). The Kremlin then halted Ukraine's advance by intervening in Ukraine with its regular troops and shelling Ukrainian units from across the border. Ukraine was forced to come to terms at the negotiating table in Minsk.

And the war continues to this day. The failure to end the conflict is the reason why so many other hopes of Ukrainians remain unfulfilled — it is hard to reform a country at war. Visa liberalization with the European Union has been a victory, but not the key one.

It is not Poroshenko's fault that the war goes on — it is driven by the Kremlin. But he owes it to the country to be sober and realistic about the military threat Ukraine faces, and not allow hopes to be dashed again.

House of glass

Ukraine's electronic asset declaration system for officials, launched in September, revealed officials' mind-boggling wealth, with fairy-tale mansions, luxury cars, Pablo Picasso paintings, high-end furniture and the finest vintage wines there for everyone to see.

But then nothing happened. There has been no effort to check the origin of the wealth.

It's as if there's a building with walls made of glass, and everyone can see theft going on inside. But no one can do anything about it.

Since September, not a single official has been prosecuted for lying in their declarations or for unlawful enrichment. The National Agency for Preventing Corruption hasn't completed a single check of incumbent officials' declarations.

After the National Anti-Corruption Bureau launched investigations against two lawmakers based on their declarations, Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko on May 24 blocked motions to prosecute them, claiming there were errors there.

Well, it would be naive to expect thieves to punish themselves. Instead of prosecuting corrupt officials, the authorities have wreaked vengeance on anti-graft activists by forcing them to file asset declarations identical to those of officials.

Natalia Korchak, head of the anti-graft agency, awarded herself bonuses worth \$20,000 in 2016 for doing nothing but obstruction. And yet her agency investigated Yulia Marushevska, an ex-official and critic of the authorities, over an \$18 bonus.

The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) has gone even further and hidden its declarations both from the public and the anti-graft agency, citing a state secret.

Zaporizhzhya Oblast Governor Kostyantyn Bryl has concealed his assets by saying he also moonlights for the SBU, but quit the agency and revealed his declaration on May 23. He has nothing to fear — he will not be punished under the current government.

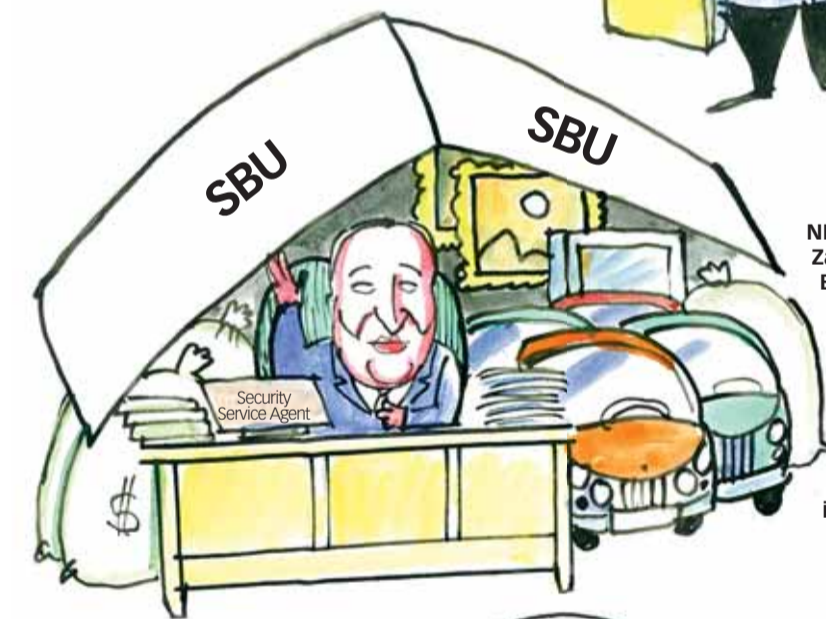
But this house of glass will one day come crashing down, and its tenants will have nowhere to hide.



NEWS ITEM: U.S. President Donald Trump chose to visit Saudi Arabia on his first foreign visit. There, he participated in a traditional Saudi sword dance on May 20. There have been no plans announced for Trump to visit Ukraine.



NEWS ITEM: A political party named Bloc of Mikheil Saakashvili was recently registered in Ukraine. However, the party has nothing to do with the ex-governor of Odesa and former Georgian President Saakashvili, his ally and former Deputy Prosecutor General David Sakvarelidze warned on May 22.



NEWS ITEM: Governor of Zaporizhzhya Oblast Kostyantyn Bryl tried to avoid the mandatory disclosure of his assets and income by getting a second job at the Security Service of Ukraine. However, he eventually he had to leave the job at SBU and disclose his assets - which included a lot of real estate for someone who has only worked in public service.



NEWS ITEM: Ukraine's Prosecutor General's Office on May 18 issued a notice of suspicion on the late Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, who died in 1953, and his head of secret police Lavrentiy Beria, who was executed the same year. The two are accused of organizing the forcible deportation of the Crimean Tatars from Crimea in 1944.

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Reformer of the week

Gizo Uglava

The Prosecutor General's Office has opened an investigation against Gizo Uglava, a deputy chief of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU), accusing him of hiding his Georgian citizenship and tax evasion, Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko said on May 24.

Uglava denied the accusations and interpreted the case as part of the authorities' efforts to destroy Ukraine's only independent law enforcement agency, which has prosecuted political heavyweights like State Fiscal Service Chief Roman Nasyrov and ex-lawmaker Mykola Martynenko.

In March, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko failed to push through parliament the appointment of his loyalist, UK citizen Nigel Brown, as a NABU auditor in order to control the bureau, though Brown is now again competing for the job. Petros Clerides, who is allegedly close to Poroshenko's gray cardinal and lawmaker Oleksandr Hranovsky, is competing for the job of the NABU auditor appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers, in a non-transparent and shady procedure. Clerides resigned as Cyprus' attorney general amid a corruption scandal in 2013.

Meanwhile, parliament is set to consider a bill banning the anti-graft bureau from starting cases against top officials if other law enforcers had previously closed similar cases against them. Last year parliament failed to pass a similar bill to restrict the bureau's independence.

— Oleg Sukhov



Anti-reformer of the week

Yevhen Ablov

The High Council of Justice on May 15 refused to fire or punish Yevhen Ablov, a judge of the Kyiv Administrative District Court who authorized riot police to crack down on EuroMaidan protesters on Dec. 9, 2013.

Previously the High Council of Justice also refused to fire under the lustration law other judges accused of unlawfully persecuting EuroMaidan protesters. These include Volodymyr Khimich, Viktor Kitsyuk, Vladyslav Devyatko, Mykola Chaus and Bohdan Sanin.

Another judge accused of unlawfully trying EuroMaidan demonstrators, Olena Lisovska, was on May 23 interviewed by the High Qualification Commission, which let her pass to the next stage of a competition for Supreme Court jobs. The High Council of Justice has missed many deadlines for firing judges under lustration and has dismissed only 33 and suspended five out of about 300 judges who persecuted EuroMaidan demonstrators.

Meanwhile, Kyiv's Shevchenko District Court on May 5 refused to issue an arrest warrant in absentia for Rodion Kireev, a judge who presided over a show trial of ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko under ex-President Viktor Yanukovich.

— Oleg Sukhov



VOX populi

WITH MARIYA KAPINOS
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What has President Petro Poroshenko achieved in three years, and where has he failed?

Oleg Zhyzhyian
self-employed

I think everything that's going on in Ukraine now started a long time ago, during

the previous revolution. What Poroshenko achieved was to replace one political clan with another. He just made the entire country believe in an illusion. That's hard to do, so for him it's definitely an achievement.

Maria Brahan
English and French tutor

I think it's good that we chose Poroshenko to be the head of our state. In my opinion, it's better to have

such a president, rather than not. But in the future I'd like Ukraine's presidents to be a little younger so they weren't connected with the criminal life of the 1990s.

Olena Kukharchuk
student

Poroshenko implemented a visa-free regime (with the EU), and that's his biggest achieve-

ment. His biggest drawback is that during the election campaign Poroshenko promised that in a year Crimea would be Ukrainian again. He hasn't kept that promise.

Erik Gumenuk
student

I think Poroshenko shouldn't be a president. When (ousted Ukraine's ex-Presi-

dent Viktor) Yanukovich was a president one dollar was eight hryvnias. Yes, (Yanukovich) was stealing, and everyone knew it. Poroshenko also steals and takes other people's businesses, but he hides it.

Olga Murashko
store assistant

Thanks to Poroshenko, we're moving closer to Europe. I think it's wonderful that he

implemented the visa-free regime. People will travel, improve themselves, and see the world. But at the same time, I don't think this visa-free regime will help poor people. Those Ukrainians haven't travelled, and they aren't going to start.

Ukraine's Friend & Foe Of The Week

Editor's Note: This feature separates Ukraine's friends from its enemies. The Order of Yaroslav the Wise has been given since 1995 for distinguished service to the nation. It is named after the Kyivan Rus leader from 1019-1054, when the medieval empire reached its zenith. The Order of Lenin was the highest decoration bestowed by the Soviet Union, whose demise Russian President Vladimir Putin mourns. It is named after Vladimir Lenin, whose corpse still rots on the Kremlin's Red Square, 100 years after the October Revolution he led.



Angela Merkel

And Merkel, like no other Western leader, understands the threat Ukraine faces. Although born in Hamburg, West Germany, she grew up in communist East Germany and learned to speak Russian fluently. Her relationship with Putin (who speaks German) is based on the kind of understanding, at least in linguistic terms, unrivaled by any other Western leader.

She has referred to Putin as "living in another world." She wasn't implying that Putin was crazy, but was referring to his worldview — imperialist, Soviet-revanchist and embittered. She no doubt understands that it is this worldview that has prompted his

wars against Georgia and Ukraine and his threats to the Baltic states — former Soviet republics that have, since the fall of the Soviet Union, shaken off the shackles of centuries of Russian domination with membership in NATO and the European Union.

Merkel is also up for re-election in autumn, and will face a direct threat from Putin himself: There is little doubt that the Kremlin, as it has done in recent Western elections, will seek to influence the vote, promoting its favored candidates with its propaganda media. It will also probably release stolen and falsified data hacked from the computers of German political parties in an effort to sway voters.

Putin will not favor Merkel, so it is to be hoped that, as in France, the Kremlin's efforts to meddle in Western democracy fail. "Mutti," as the German chancellor is affectionately known, will hopefully emerge victorious (although Martin Schulz is also an acceptable contender), and remain one of Ukraine's best friends in the West for years to come.

— Euan MacDonald



Sergei Lavrov

There is a good Yiddish word, "chutzhah," for a personal quality Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has in abundance.

A common definition for the word goes like this: "It is the quality exhibited by a man, on trial for the murder of his parents, who throws himself at the mercy of the court because he is now an orphan."

In other words: jaw-dropping arrogance, insolence and speciousness.

As Russian dictator Vladimir Putin's point man at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lavrov has in recent years had plenty of opportunity to put this particular personal quality on display.

At the Munich Security Conference in February 2015 he had the gall to go before the audience and proclaim that Russia's illegal invasion and annexation of the Ukrainian territory of Crimea, by Russian troops in unmarked uniforms, and the subsequent sham referendum, was all fully in line with the UN Charter on the self-determination of peoples.

"Territorial integrity and sovereignty must be respected," Lavrov

went on to say, not meaning Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, but Russia's.

The audience sucked in its breath at Lavrov's chutzhah, and then burst out laughing.

Lavrov's latest display of this dubious quality came this week, when he complained that people in Crimea were facing "visa discrimination" by the European Union.

Ukrainians, of course, are set on June 11 to at last obtain visa-free travel rights to the Schengen Area of the European Union, and that includes Ukrainian passport-holders in Russian-occupied Crimea.

However, many people in Crimea have obtained Russian passports, and since June 2016, the European Commission has asked the consulates of EU countries in Ukraine not to recognize passports issued to people in Crimea since 2014 by Russia's occupying authorities.

In fact, Russia's occupying authorities have been coercing Ukrainian citizens in Crimea to give up their Ukrainian passports and accept Russian ones. People who don't take up Russian citizenship can face discrimination in obtaining health insurance, or

employment, according to a recent report by Human Rights Watch. Some have been fired for refusing to give up their Ukrainian passports, as their employers don't want to deal with the Russian-imposed regulations on hiring "foreigners."

Thus the problems faced by many Crimeans in obtaining visa-free travel to the EU are entirely of Russia's making. Yet Lavrov claims it is the EU that is discriminating against "Russian citizens" in Crimea, many of whom became such against their will.

That's pure, Lavrovian chutzhah, and that's what makes the Russian foreign minister our foe of the week.

— Euan MacDonald



Order of Yaroslav The Wise



Order of Lenin

Real Estate

Residential construction developers fret over low prices, lack of credit

BY JOSH KOVENSKY
KOVENSKY@KYIVPOST.COM

Kyiv's residential housing market faces oversupply in certain areas, market insiders say.

Some developers risk being forced out of the market if demand doesn't increase this year, an unlikely prospect given the difficulty of obtaining credit and the country's still sluggish economic growth.

According to ARPA real estate Director Mikhail Artyukhov, oversupply is dragging down the market. "We're seeing a glut," he said.

The mechanics

Residential construction is difficult to finance, as banks remain hesitant to lend. Moreover, individuals find it nearly impossible to get mortgages.

The banks have good reason to be afraid: According to data provided to the Kyiv Post by the National Bank of Ukraine, 33 percent of hryvnia mortgages are non-performing, while 86 percent of foreign currency mortgages are non-performing.

And yet, developers have found ways to finance new construction by relying on incoming residents.

"Over the past few years, construction of residential property in Ukraine has undergone a revival, the real estate market is quietly starting to restore itself," said Nataliya Tikhovskaya, head of Ukrsofsbank's factoring and promissory notes department. "But it's worth noting that bank portfolios of mortgage



An IntergalBud residential construction site in Kyiv on May 17. Some developers worry about a glut in segments of the market, given the dearth of conventional mortgage loans and Ukraine's sluggish economy. (Oleg Petrasiiuk)

finance continue to drop."

Contracts to buy residential real estate under construction are executed through a range of financial instruments, according to Artyukhov and Alexander Borodkin, an attorney at Vasil Kisel and Partners law firm.

The first are special purpose bonds, when an investor and developer fund construction through a bond issue.

This rare method is mostly used for low end development.

The second option is a construction financing fund, popular among the middle and higher ends of the market, in which buyers agree with the fund to invest money, and the fund then partners with a developer to build.

Forwarding contracts, popular in

the mid-market, allow buyers to sign investment agreements that split the value of the apartment between a derivative contract and a separate contract with a developer for the production of the commodity on which the derivative is based — the apartment.

The third are co-ops, in which apartment-buyers band together to

jointly own and finance construction.

Mortgages and direct purchases of property rights are still available in rare cases.

Borodkin said that many of these financial instruments were developed after a 2008 scandal that saw investors lose out in the Elita-Center property development fraud in Kyiv.

"The intention was to limit direct agreements between purchasers and developers, and to avoid situations in which a developer starts to sell apartments before he has the necessary permits in place."

The glut

But amid these financial innovations to stoke demand, the Kyiv market faces a glut of supply. "Developers have sort of stopped, they aren't very active at the moment," Artyukhov said.

Borodkin said that many developers now prefer to build buildings with smaller living areas, due in part to people's inability to pay for larger living spaces.

Anna Laevskaya, assistant commercial director at developer Intergal-Bud, blamed the glut on a burst in construction starting in the early 2010s, which has depressed prices.

"The amount of demand is not going away, it's redistributing," Laevskaya said. "If there's not more demand, the amount of developers in the near future will go down because some companies will have to leave the market." ■

Kyiv market has promise for canny investor

BY RAHIM RAHEMTULLA
RAHIMKYIVPOST@GMAIL.COM

Tim Louzonis, originally from the city of Worcester in the American state of Massachusetts, only co-founded his real estate agency in Kyiv three years ago. But his experience in Ukraine stretches much further back than that: he first arrived in the Black Sea port city of Odesa in 1993 as an exchange student, and has since then worked all over the country.

Over the years he's learned plenty about the do's and don'ts when it comes to making property investments in Ukraine. He says for many outsiders from other countries who are used to transparency and the easy availability of market data, the first thing to understand is that things here aren't quite so straightforward.

"Ukraine is a place where you have to do all your homework," he told the Kyiv Post in an interview. "It's not a place for those who want



Tim Louzonis, co-founder of AIM Realty Kiev, pictured at his office in the Ukrainian capital. A broker of many years experience, he says for those willing to put in the time to understand the market, property investment in Ukraine can be a lucrative business. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

Industry Expert: Tim Louzonis
Who: Co-founder AIM Realty Kiev
Years in real estate: Three
Top investor tip: "If your broker acts like this is going to be easy, find another one."

to do it themselves. If you think you can do it all online, you're in trouble."

Money to be made

For Louzonis, there is no question that there is money to be made in Ukrainian real estate. His agency focuses on Kyiv, where he says the simple logic of a lack of supply of good apartments in the city center means for the investor who is willing to put in the

due diligence, the deals are out there.

Not only are the values of centrally located properties likely to rise in the coming years, if you target them correctly they are rentable at rates which can comfortably yield 10 percent annual return on investment, he says.

Such predictions come as Ukraine is experiencing relative economic stability and moderate growth following the steep downturn in the wake of the EuroMaidan revolution of 2014–2015. This means ex-pats from foreign governments and big corporations are starting to trickle back in, which for property investors is very good news.

"Eighty percent of expats live in the central districts of Kyiv, and for investors that is the best market to focus on," said Louzonis. "There is a shortage of expat-suitable housing. It's already tough to find what they want, and it's only getting harder."

Market realities

In spite of the potential profits to be

made, Louzonis stressed that "every deal is different" and there are no shortcuts. As in most other aspects of life in Ukraine, the gray economy plays a major role and brings its own specific set of risks and challenges.

"People carry around suitcases of money, that's the reality of the market," he said.

But he is optimistic that things are slowly changing, and says his agency is one of the few in Kyiv which actually has the know-how and contacts to structure deals through all the proper legal channels.

That's something that could attract more foreign investors who want to work according to the kind of rules of the game they recognize from home. But for now, it remains a minority pursuit.

"It is possible and it will become easier," Louzonis said. "But for the savvy investor who's willing to put in the work to do it legally, there are opportunities that others won't see." ■

US filmmaker chooses home in Kyiv Oblast

BY VERONIKA MELKOZEROVA
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Ukraine has become a second home for award-winning U.S. independent filmmaker Chad Gracia, director of the "Russian Woodpecker." The movie, a documentary about a Ukrainian victim of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, won the World Cinema Documentary Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival in 2015.

After working in Ukraine, the director decided to buy a land plot and build a house in Kyiv Oblast. The deal is still pending, but he explained to the Kyiv Post why he chose a rural setting.

Clever investment

Gracia said there are many reasons to buy a land plot in Kyiv Oblast: fresh air, peace and quiet, proximity to the city and the wonderful beauty of the countryside.

"My first step will be to build a cozy cottage, and then I'll invite friends from abroad during the summer to enjoy the outdoors, campfires, and fresh milk and vegetables from the local babushkas," Gracia said.

But the main reason was affordability. The filmmaker wouldn't name an exact price, but joked that it was so low he was afraid an avalanche of Americans might come to spoil the quiet of the Ukrainian countryside.

"But for the price of a one-bedroom apartment in New York City or Boston, two cities I'm familiar with, you can live like (Anton Chekhov's) Madame Ranevskaya and plant your own little Cherry Orchard," Gracia said, referring to the main character in the famous Russian playwright's last work.

According to reat.ua land-selling website, the price of land in Kyiv Oblast starts at \$1,000 to \$2,500 for 100 square meters (0.024 acres). The average price ranges from \$12,000 to \$50,000.

Gracia has lived in New York City for 25 years, where a good plot of land within an hour of the city is only affordable for the very rich. According to Zillow.com, the price of a house in New York's Staten Island or Brooklyn starts from \$590,000.



A woman pours fresh cow milk into a cup as she sits in the yard of her house in the village of Vekhovyna in Ivano Frankivsk Oblast. The quiet and picturesque countryside around Ukrainian villages inspired U.S. filmmaker Chad Gracia to buy a land plot in Kyiv Oblast. (Ukrafoto)

"So, as a non-millionaire documentary filmmaker making movies in Ukraine, it seemed like a great way to fulfill a dream I've had since first reading (Lev) Tolstoy as a teenager — to have a summer getaway from which to go hiking, mushroom hunting, and berry picking," Gracia said.

"I also happen to think it's a great investment — but only time will tell if that is correct," he added.

How to buy

Gracia said that all a foreign citizen needs to do to buy a land plot for residential construction is to obtain a Ukrainian "tax code," a notary and employ the services either of a good local friend or a lawyer to help resolve any issues that might come up during negotiations.

Of course, buyers will need a real estate agent as well if you don't know people who want to sell to you directly.

"Also, in my understanding and experience, banks don't provide mortgages here (at least not at affordable rates), so you generally need to pay the full price in cash," Gracia said.

Halyna Teryayeva, the owner of Terezy (Sales) real estate agency in Kyiv, told the Kyiv Post that due to the economic crisis in Ukraine, a land plot in Kyiv Oblast could be a very profitable purchase for a foreigner. And the only documents a

person need to become a landowner in Ukraine, apart from a passport, is a Ukrainian tax code, which can be easily obtained from State Fiscal Service of Ukraine.

"The price is really affordable. The client purchases the land plot, but for that price, he can even get an old nice house that can be renovated. Sometimes there is even gas and electricity," Teryayeva said.

"But you have to have a minimum budget of \$30,000, because

nobody would sell you a land plot smaller than 2,500 square meters," she added.

Nice place to live and create

Gracia said that since his first visit to Ukraine in 2006, the quality of life in Ukraine has improved dramatically. The younger generation is busy creating festivals and cafes, making music and writing poetry, shooting films, and generally making Kyiv an undiscovered gem of culture and thought on the edge of Europe, he said.

"I live here part time, not only because of my profession as a filmmaker focusing on the post-Soviet world, but also because I love the architecture of the city, the pace of life, the parks, and the friendliness and optimism of the people," the director said.

"Here I can make a documentary for a quarter of the price it costs in New York, and there is no shortage of talented people in the cinema industry. That allows me to take on riskier or less 'marketable' projects, because the cost is lower," Gracia said.

Gracia said he realized that life for the average Ukrainian is still very difficult and that the war is still smoldering in the east, but for those lucky enough to live in Kyiv with a good paying job, he couldn't imagine a better place to start a new project, or find people who share your passion — whatever it might be.

"Finally, as long as Donald Trump is in office, I prefer to watch the tragedy of American politics from a comfortable distance — and where better to do that than a shady bench in Mariyinskiy Park?" he said.

Kyiv Post staff writer Nataliya Trach contributed reporting to this story. ■



American independent filmmaker Chad Gracia at work tutoring filmmaking in America House in Kyiv on April 18. (Courtesy of 86festival/Facebook)

World in Ukraine: Sweden

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Artem Muliavko's quest to find an affordable place to rent in capital

BY NATALIYA TRACH
TRACH@KYIVPOST.COM

Rivne native Artem Muliavko, 18, recently found a job as a chef in one of Kyiv's Japanese restaurants. But unlike his successful job search, finding a place to live in Ukraine's capital is more of a challenge.

"I have been looking for an apartment for rent for already two months," Muliavko said. "Initially I wanted a nice flat, but now I wouldn't even refuse just a room."

Muliavko lives with friends and is hoping to find a one or two-room apartment to share for Hr 3,000–5,000 (\$115–\$190) rent a month.

"We just want to find any flat somewhere," Muliavko said.

The supply of rental properties is high – for those who can afford it. But many can't.

That, in a nutshell, describes Kyiv's home rental market.

Slow price rise

As of mid-May, 16,500 apartments are available for rent in Kyiv, says Oksana Vengrovska, a PR manager of Olx, Ukraine's largest online classified ads website. Most of the apartments – 11,000 – are for long-term rent while there 5,000 ads featuring short-term rents and only 250 ads for hourly rental apartments.

But despite many rental proposals, it is not easy to find an inexpensive apartment in Kyiv, real estate agent Nina Synytsya says. The lowest price for a one-bedroom apartment near a remote metro station in Kyiv is Hr 4,500, Synytsya says, adding that "in this case it would be a flat in poor condition with old Soviet era furniture."

Tetyana Ripka, another real estate agent, says that an average rental price for a cheap one-room apartment is Hr 6,000 while an apart-

ment with better costs Hr 10,000 on average.

A one-bedroom apartment with a babushka-style interior is Hr 7,000–8,000 per month while a similar apartment in good condition would cost Hr 15,000–17,000 a month.

A two-bedroom apartment in poor condition is on average Hr 9,000–10,000 per month while the rent of a two-bedroom flat in excellent condition is nearly Hr 24,000.

Muliavko dreams of more affordable prices in Kyiv but, despite his expectations, residential rental prices in Kyiv only increased during the past year, Vengrovska of Olx says.

Thus, the prices for long-term rent for a one-room apartment increased by 7 percent – from Hr 6,258 a month last May to Hr 6,707 this year. The rental price for a one-bedroom apartment rose by almost 11 per-



Artem Muliavko prepares meals in the kitchen of one of Kyiv's Japanese food restaurants. Muliavko, native of the western Ukrainian city of Rivne, has been unsuccessfully searching for an apartment to rent in Kyiv for two months already. (Courtesy)



People pass by a private real estate advertisement reading "apartment for daily rent" stuck to a street lighting pillar in central Kyiv on May 23. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

cent – from Hr 8,577 to Hr 9,490. A two room flat was rented last year for an average of Hr 11,515 while this year its rental cost is Hr 11,915.

Market trends

Kyivans between the ages of 25–40 are looking for apartments to rent, Synytsya says.

"Neither students nor internal migrants from Donbas or Crimea look for apartments because people simply don't have the money," she explains.

Real estate agents say that the number of people renting flats in the suburbs of Kyiv increases as the rental prices are cheaper there. For instance, in Vyshneve, a city 14 kilometers west of Kyiv, the price for a one-room apartment

in good condition ranges from Hr 4,500–6,000.

Real estate analyst and chief editor of Stolichnaya Nedvizhimost (Capital's Real Estate) analytical website Zakhar Fedorak says that demand for apartment rental in Kyiv's satellite cities is growing primarily because of an increase in the number of apartment buildings.

New constructions, recent renovations and good infrastructure are among the reasons that people want to rent apartments in towns around Kyiv.

"It takes on average the same time to get to Kyiv from a satellite city and from a remote district but the rental prices outside Kyiv are slightly lower," Fedorak said. "With the same budget one can rent bigger

and better place than in a remote city district."

Ripka agrees, saying that another trend is that people try to rent flats not far from their work.

Iryna Hudz recently rented a one-bedroom apartment for Hr 7,000 near a metro station to have a shorter commute to work. It was important for her to rent a flat with good repair and a pleasant landlord. Both her expectations were met. "My landlord is a very pleasant person who has willingly made concessions during our discussion about the conditions of apartment rent. He even agreed to half the rental price if I buy furniture or technical devices for the flat," she said.

Rental market prospects

The Kyiv's rental market is still busy and the rental prices do not scare off potential tenants, says Ripka who often happens to have up to 15 property viewings per day in Kyiv. Fedorak says that "the demand for rent in Kyiv will remain high, as the number of high-quality and adequate offers is not catching up with the demand. Even neglected housing with an (average) price easily finds its tenants."

Both real estate agents and experts agree that rental prices in the capital will not rise over the next year. The real estate market is a marker of the economy. If salaries don't grow and the purchasing power of Ukrainians remains low then landlords won't be able to raise rental prices. Fedorak does not "see any reasons for any changes in Ukraine's rental market (in the nearest future)." ■



4th Kyiv Post CEO Dinner guests discuss Ukraine's investment, image

Ways to stimulate foreign investment in Ukraine took center stage at the 4th Kyiv Post CEO Dinner in the Hyatt Regency Hotel on May 23. The event was sponsored by DHL Express Ukraine and S&P law firm, formerly Syutkin and Partners. Ukraine is clearly starved for investment, getting only \$4.4 billion last year, with cumulative stocks dwindling to less than \$50 billion since 1991 independence. This has left Ukraine a laggard among European countries, with economic output likely to be less than \$100 billion this year for 44 million people. Participants in the 4th Kyiv Post CEO Dinner included: Oleksandr Danyliuk, finance minister of Ukraine; Vadim Sidoruk, country manager at DHL Express Ukraine; Nataliya Osadcha, partner at S&P; Yulia Kovaliv, head of the Office of the National Investment Council; Ulyana Khromyak, deputy director at Ukraine Invest; Pavel Gorbunov, deputy general director at SOCAR Energy Ukraine; Tom Reed, CEO at JXX; Vasily Bovdilov, general manager at Unilever; Haim Kapelnikov, CEO at Avis; Petro Rondiak, general director at Winner Imports Ukraine; Isabelle Dumont, ambassador of France to Ukraine; Anna Derevyanko, executive director of European Business Association; Andriy Samusenko, head of supervisory board at Mondelez Ukraine. The Kyiv Post was represented by: Mohammad Zahoor, publisher and chairman of the ISTIL Group; Luc Chenier, CEO; Alyona Nevmerzhytska, commercial director Bermet Talant, staff writer; and Oleg Petrasuiuk, staff photographer. (Oleg Petrasuiuk)

ON THE MOVE

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EBS is happy to introduce you the new EBS partners - Alina Bakulina and Yevgeniya Vozniuk.



Yevgeniya Vozniuk

Yevgeniya Vozniuk was appointed as a partner in the sphere of HR services. Yevgeniya has been working in EBS for a long time and has made a significant contribution to the firm development. Yevgeniya was the one of those who initiated the practice of human resources and was able to successfully develop it. We believe that Yevgeniya will develop and expand the practice of HR and her team will achieve great success. We wish inspiration, new achievements and increasing team.



Alina Bakulina

Alina Bakulina was appointed as a partner in the area of transfer pricing services. Alina has joint EBS in 2014 to help build a new at that time practice of transfer pricing and the goal was successfully achieved. Alina is the most active participant in seminars, business breakfasts and other events of EBS and partners. Alina doesn't tire to share with all the latest news and keep the team in touch. We wish Alina and her practice many interesting projects and successful development!

We are very happy new appointment and consider it a major step in the development of EBS.

www.ebskiev.com/en/



Mid-level investors find profit in residential real estate in Ukraine

BY RAHIM RAHEMTULA
RAHIMKYIVPOST@GMAIL.COM

When Igor Rubinstein moved to Kyiv six years ago, he had big problems finding an apartment. He realized that there were no agents or brokers able to offer the kind of high-quality help that he had come to expect when living in Western Europe. So he decided to set up his own agency to fill that gap in the market.

What's more, Rubinstein saw that alongside information technology and agriculture, property ranks as one of the economic sectors of Ukraine with the potential to prosper. One of the telltale signs, which can often seem puzzling to outsiders, is the high price of property relative to average incomes.

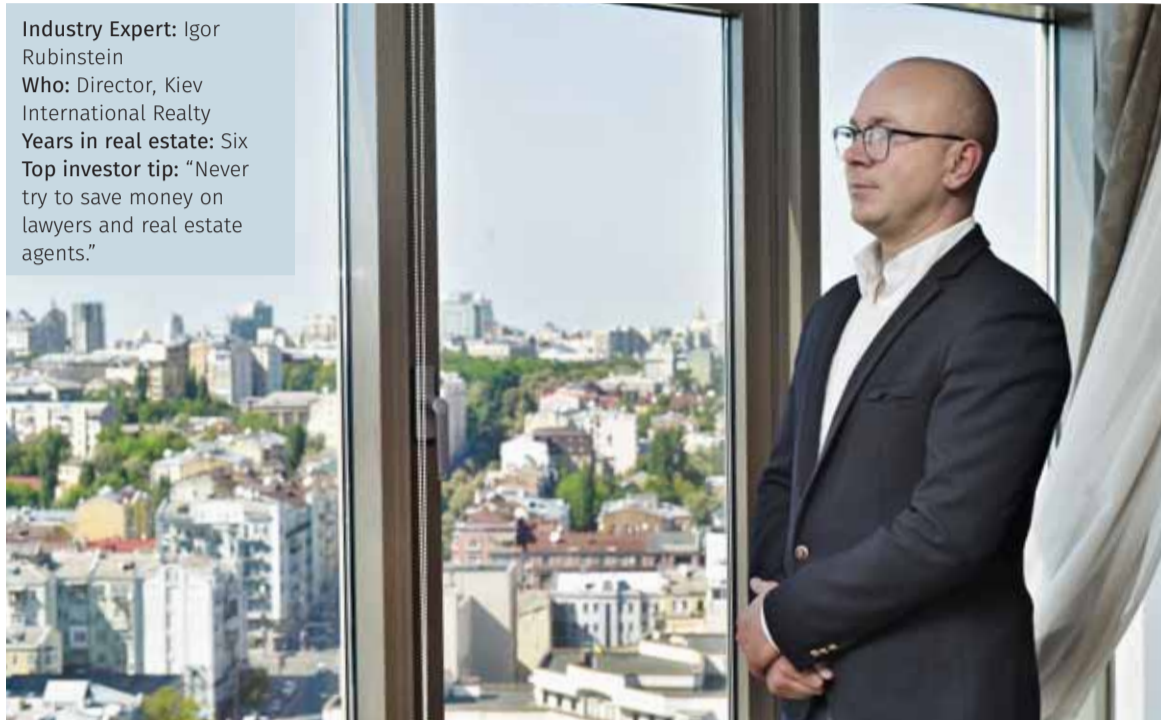
"There aren't any investment vehicles apart from real estate and keeping money under the mattress," he told the Kyiv Post in an interview. "Banks fold, savings deposits can be withheld, the hryvnia gets devalued. So essentially the only safe haven is putting money abroad, or, for the general population who don't have investment vehicles for that, it's real estate."

Rental income

Rubinstein says that for the uninitiated it is crucial to know that in the Kyiv property market things move fast, because the vast majority of deals are made with cash, without the need for mortgages.

Local investors — who typically own several properties — know well

Industry Expert: Igor Rubinstein
Who: Director, Kiev International Realty
Years in real estate: Six
Top investor tip: "Never try to save money on lawyers and real estate agents."



Igor Rubinstein, the director of Kiev International Realty, looks out over the Ukrainian capital. He says property in Kyiv is neither more nor less risky than investments in other, more developed markets, "it's just different." (Oleg Petrasjuk)

the going prices and are quick to pounce on anything that looks like a good deal.

"The way it works here is a little tricky, it can be difficult for people to understand," he said. "We're a cash-driven gray economy. There's never a lack of cash or financing. If something is priced below the market, by say, 15 percent, it gets snatched up straight away."

Over the years, Rubinstein has

seen that in Kyiv trying to make quick money by "flipping" a property through buying it, renovating it, then quickly selling it is the domain of domestic investors, who better understand the tastes of local buyers. Foreigners, meanwhile, are better off holding on to apartments for longer periods in order to get rental income out of them and long-term capital appreciation.

The agency director says the advantages of Ukrainian real estate are

especially pronounced for mid-level investors who don't have sufficient capital to put into projects in places like Dubai or London, where property prices can be three or four times higher per square meter.

"When they come to Kyiv they can use their purchasing power to afford something they couldn't find elsewhere," he said.

Different risks

The risks, says Rubinstein, tend to

come in two forms: the macro and the micro.

Among the macro risks he counts political and economic instability in recent years, which has meant that, since 2011, property prices in Ukraine have decreased by about 30 percent.

In the micro category, there are issues like lack of a publicly accessible database containing historical information on property sales and prices, meaning that, without expert help, it can be difficult to know if you're getting a good deal.

"When you purchase something, you get an evaluation done," said Rubinstein.

"But the evaluation can be decreased or increased based on the taxes involved in a transaction. The evaluation can be as low as \$30,000 and as high as \$150,000 for the exact same property."

Whatever the potential pitfalls, Rubinstein believes that, as with other emerging market economies, Ukraine can be a relatively attractive place to invest, especially when annual returns regularly reach 8 to 10 percent.

"If you have \$100,000 in the developed world, what can you do with it? Nothing. You can put it in a bank in Switzerland and get interest of 0.5 percent or something miniscule," he said. "What this market has to offer an investor who has a lot of cash is the ability to invest it and catch capital appreciation and instant yield. I wouldn't say it's more or less risky. Just different." ■

Kyiv office market tightens up after years of low prices, high vacancies

BY BERMET TALANT
BERMET.TALANT@GMAIL.COM

The Kyiv office market will get tighter due to the limited supply of new business centers and growing occupancy, experts say.

However, any development boom is unlikely in the foreseeable future because of economic instability in Ukraine, low rents and lack of credit.

As of the end of 2016, total office stock in Kyiv amounted to 1.7 million square meters. Last year five new business centers were commissioned with total volume of about 40,000 square meters. It was the lowest supply since 2008.

The vacancy level remains very high,



One of the newest business centers in Kyiv, Astarta, is scheduled to open in September 2017 in Podil district. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

between 14–22 percent, according to various estimations, which brings down rental rates. Currently, the monthly average rate for grade A office premises is \$16-\$29 per square meter and \$8-\$16 for grade B.

Four new business centers are scheduled to open in 2017 — Sigma, Astarta, Protasov Business Park, and K/Most. UNIT City plans to finish redevelopment by the end of this year.

If all project are delivered on time, they will add approximately 50,000 square meters of new office space. Most of the new office supply classify as grade B.

Therefore, the demand for high quality office space will continue growing as more companies seek

to expand or improve their work conditions, said Kira Pruglo, head of research at CBRE Ukraine, a Kyiv-based consultancy firm.

"Relocations don't affect vacancy level on the market unless occupiers expand their offices. But we see decreasing vacancy in class A and B buildings as more occupiers want to move to buildings of better quality or to expand," said Pruglo.

Recently it is also difficult to find smaller suites in the center of Kyiv, said Nick Cotton, managing director at Cushman & Wakefield.

"I think office market is being relatively healthy. There are no large projects that are ongoing and that would suggest we will continue seeing vacancy going down," said Cotton.

According to Colliers International, nearly half of demand (41 percent) for office space in 2016 came from IT sector, followed up by pharmaceutical and manufacturing companies.

Business centers began to adapt the technical characteristics of their premises to meet the needs of IT companies such as reliable power supply, adequate air and sufficient room for servers. ■

ON THE MOVE

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Artur Martynenko

Arzinger law office is glad to announce that as of May this year, attorney-at-law Artur Martynenko has joined Arzinger team at the position of Counsel and Head of Commercial Litigation Practice.

Artur has over 10 years' experience and specializes on the pre-trial representation of clients, representation of clients in commercial, administrative and general law courts as well as at the stage of enforcement of judgments by state bailiffs in various business industries. Artur has repeatedly represented clients in disputes on debt collection and compensation for damages, disputes related to the execution of contracts or their invalidation, as well as in bank and corporate disputes.

Artur Martynenko participated in drafting a number of laws, including the Draft Law "On Industrial Parks" and the Draft Law "On Ensuring the Rights and Freedoms of Internally Displaced Persons."

Arzinger

Leading bankers hash out cash crash at Kyiv Post's Straight Talk gathering

BY JOSH KOVENSKY
KOVENSKY@KYIVPOST.COM

Some of Ukraine's top bankers gathered in Kyiv on May 24 to discuss the pressing issues facing the country's financial sector: How did the entire system collapse, and when will banks restart lending? Did the government need to nationalize PrivatBank, and when will it be sold?

Former National Bank of Ukraine Deputy Governor and current International Monetary Fund Alternate Executive Director Vladyslav Rashkovan opened the discussion with an impassioned speech on how to "avoid the mistakes of the past."

Panelists included European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Country Director Sevki Acuner, NBU Financial Stability Chief Vitaly Vavryshchuk, Prax-Bank CEO Taras Kyrychenko, Oschadbank Restructuring Chief Iryna Mudra, UkrSibbank Deputy Chairman for Retail Konstantin Lezhnin, and Deposit Guarantee Fund Asset Management Director Taras Yeleyko.

Redcliffe Partners law firm's Managing Partner Olexiy Soshenko moderated the discussion.

1 Panelists discuss mass embezzlement and high non-performing loan rates in Ukraine's banking system.

2 Oschadbank Restructuring Chief Iryna Mudra speaks at the event.


3 Austrian Ambassador to Ukraine Hermine Poppeller looks on as panelists discuss how to revive Ukraine's banking system.

4 Former NBU Deputy Governor Vladyslav Rashkovan takes a sip of champagne with guests of the Kyiv Post's Straight Talk discussion meeting on the banking sector. (Volodymyr Petrov)




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Odesa oyster farmers open up new Kyiv bar

City Life

WITH MARIYA KAPINOS
MARIONKAPINOS@GMAIL.COM

Secret Ticket startup offers mystery tours

Hate planning vacations and love surprises? Good news: There is a new service in Kyiv that will plan an entire trip to a mystery destination based on one's budget.

The startup, called Secret Ticket, provides its customers with an envelope just before the trip. Inside are two-way tickets to some place in Ukraine, a booking confirmation for a hotel, and tips on what to do once there.

The people behind the startup, Tania Kosianchuk, 25, and Serhiy Klepyk, 29, announced the launch of Secret Ticket on Facebook on April 17. Then they worked for a month in trial mode, getting a feel for the market, seeing what clients wanted, and finding the best prices. The service went live on May 15, and the founders say it is already loaded up with orders.

Secret trip

Anyone in Ukraine can order a trip: Go to www.secreticket.com, click on the big purple button, fill in a short form, and wait for a call to confirm the order. There is no English version of the website yet, but there are only three questions: name, phone number and e-mail address. Foreigners can communicate in English, in which Kosianchuk is fluent.

The trips, which usually last two days, come in four price types: economy (Hr 1,090 for the first person, and Hr 790 for each other member of a group), standard (Hr 1,890 for the first person, and Hr 990 for each of the other travelers), comfort (Hr 3,190 for the first person, and Hr 1,790 for each of the other travelers) and expensive (Hr 9,990 for the first person, and Hr 4,990 for each of the other travelers).

The price includes travel and hotel accommodation. The higher the price type, the better the level of tickets and accommodation.

Kosianchuk and Klepyk say there's a simple secret to the success of their service: Ukrainians are tired of bad news, they want a bit of positive changes. What they don't want is to deal with the nitty-gritty of a trip: choosing a hotel, booking tickets, and planning where to go, what to see, and what to do.

more Ticket on page 13



Andre Pigulevsky (L) and Serge Stakhov (R) hold a plastic crate with oysters as they pose for a photograph during an interview with the Kyiv Post on May 16. They are pictured in the storeroom behind their bar in Kyiv where they keep oysters in containers with sea water. (Oleg Petrasniuk)

BY ALYONA ZHUK
ZHUK@KYIVPOST.COM

What do you do if you own the biggest (and only) oyster farm in Ukraine? Open an oyster bar, of course.

The bar, called Matza and Oysters, opened in Kyiv on May 19. The owners say their restaurant, like their farm, is one of a kind.

The new bar not only serves the drinks that go best with its oysters, but also offers a range of cocktails that include raw oysters.

Serge Stakhov, 28, and Andre Pigulevsky, 35, call themselves Ukrainian Jews, though they obviously don't follow the kosher dietary laws. But they said they respect those who do keep kosher, and there are kosher options on their bar's menu as well.

"In this place we wanted to combine two things that are close to us — oysters and Jewish cuisine," Stakhov says. "Our chef worked in Tel Aviv, Israel, for two years. It will be really tasty and cheap."

Matza and Oysters works only on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. It has hummus with lamb on the menu, and will offer a different kind of grilled meat and seafood each week.

However, the main feature of the bar is still the oysters — the freshest in Kyiv, the bar's co-founders say.

Their company Skifian Oysters produces up to 4 tons of oysters a month. The farm in Odesa Oblast supplies oysters to more than 400 restaurants all over Ukraine and to all of the big supermarket chains.

Matza and Oysters is the only place, the owners say, where the oysters won't have been kept in refrigerators, but will be served right from special reservoirs of sea water. Pigulevsky says the oysters not only stay fresh in these reservoirs, but can continue to live and grow, as the water contains all the vital elements and sea microorganisms they need.

10 days without water

Pigulevsky plunges his hand into the cool water of one of the big containers, and fishes out several oysters.

"When you pick out an oyster, make sure the shell is shut tightly," he says. "It means the mollusk inside is alive."

An oyster can live in a refrigerator for about 10 days. Then, if it's not put back into sea water, it dies, opens up,

and becomes inedible. Pigulevsky opens the shell with a knife.

"Don't feel bad, an oyster has neither a brain nor a central nervous system. It doesn't feel pain," he says.

But Stakhov warns that people usually don't appreciate the taste of oysters at first.

"Andre and myself, we've eaten so many of them," he says, smiling. "We still love them though."

Healthy food

Mutual friends introduced Pigulevsky and Stakhov some four years ago. They soon became friends, partly because they shared an interest — healthy eating.

This was also the reason they chose to farm oysters, which, accord-

more Oyster on page 13

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KyivPost

Ukrainian bodyfitness champion finds success away from home

BY MARIYA KAPINOS
MARIONKAPINOS@GMAIL.COM

Olena Chumakova works out twice a day, seven days a week, drinks up to seven liters of water per day and sticks to a very strict diet.

Her dedication and discipline to a healthy lifestyle have paid off in recent years: In 2013 she won the European Bodyfitness Championship in Spain, and this May she repeated the feat, returning from Spain for a second time as champion — something very few bodyfitness competitors ever achieve.

Bodyfitness, as opposed to bodybuilding, emphasizes a “natural” look — muscles should not be overdeveloped, but be in proportion to the body. Indeed, the 35-year-old Chumakova looks quite delicate as she sits with her husband Oleksandr in a café in Kyiv — it is hard to believe she is a top, professional athlete.

Husband's support

According to Chumakova, she wasn't appreciated in Ukraine's domestic bodyfitness community. She said she had unusual proportions for a Ukrainian bodyfitness athlete, and she struggled to compete. Some women, she said, gained better results than her in competition after just eight months in the sport, whereas she had been training her body since the age of four.

It was Oleksandr Chumakov's idea to take his wife to a new level of competition.

He came to the conclusion that if Ukraine did not appreciate Chumakova, they should explore other options, and in 2013 he talked



Olena Chumakova, a Ukrainian athlete who has won the European Bodyfitness Championship in Spain twice, works out at a Kyiv gym on May 19. (Oleg Petراسиuk)

her into going to Spain to compete in the European championship.

However, there was a problem: they still had to undergo the selec-

tion process in Kyiv for the international competition.

In Kyiv, Chumakova was selected for Group B, which meant she was

low in the team's rankings. No one had any high hopes for this group, so her win was a big surprise.

It was an even bigger surprise when she repeated her success in 2017.

“During the championship in Spain I didn't see any familiar faces. Years had passed since my last visit, and everything had changed so much. I was the only one from the previous contest,” she said.

Mentor matters

Chumakova and her husband in 2013 moved from their hometown Zaporizhzhya to Sevastopol, a city in Crimea. Even though Russia annexed peninsula in 2014, Chumakova continued to see herself as a Ukrainian athlete.

But she couldn't find a personal trainer in Sevastopol, and in 2015 she started working with Alexander Kyslyi, who lived in Kyiv. After two years of working with Kyslyi remotely, Chumakova and her husband decided to move to Kyiv. Now, Chumakova says, her coach can make sure she is working out properly, and can monitor even the smallest changes in her body.

“Without a trainer, you cannot be objective. Sometimes you feel overweight, not beautiful, and you can't even look at yourself in the mirror,” she says. “A trainer will calm you down and give his honest opinion on how to improve yourself.”

Healthy lifestyle

Chumakova emphasizes that leading a healthy lifestyle and participating in professional sports are two different things. Not every person can put up with the disciplined regime of a real athlete, she says.

“When I prepare myself for a contest, my regime is a lot like Groundhog Day — I wake up at the same time, eat at the same time, go to the gym, and go to bed.”

She also adds that as the time goes by, her body changes too, and this requires modifications to be made to her workout plan and diet.

“One cannot expect that if they ate only fish for a half a year and lost weight, then the next time they will get the same result,” she says.

Life after sports

Having proved herself with her latest win, Chumakova now wants to take a small break and have some rest.

She has traveled all around the world, but only for competitions, and hasn't really seen the countries she has been to. Now is the time to change that, she says.

Also, she and her husband have started a new project — they are producing swimsuits under the ColorJoy brand, which they plan to develop in the near future.

But this doesn't mean the couple plan to leave sports — neither can imagine their lives without it.

But in Chumakova's case, after her run of success, she wants to slow down a little and live for herself. ■



Teenagers gather for annual pillow fight

Teenagers have fun fighting with pillows during the annual pillow fight in Kyiv on May 20. Nearly 50 teenagers gathered for the huge fun fight, which is held every year before the summer heat begins. Those who didn't want to bring their own pillows from home were able to buy them on the spot in various sizes. After a short time, both the fight's “battlefield” and the fighters themselves were completely covered in feathers. (Volodymyr Petrov)

New travel firm knows where you're going, though you don't

Ticket from page 11

Kosianchuk came up with idea in January, when she heard about a similar service in Spain. Soon after that she discussed the idea with Klepyk.

"Serhiy thinks the topic came up by accident, but in reality I'd wanted to talk to him about it for quite a time. We worked together, he's a great designer and I know I can rely on him," Kosianchuk says.

Careful planning

Klepyk and Kosianchuk work hard to make their clients happy. Before choosing a destination, they ask their clients where they have already been and what their preferences are like. Then they get down to planning the trip.

"We want to promote not the popular places, but ones that are less known to Ukrainian travelers," adds Klepyk.

But even if Secret Ticket sends clients to a big city, they advise them to avoid the usual tourist hot spots, and gives them information about the places the locals favor.

Typical clients of Secret Ticket are couples in love, or people buying a present for their relatives or friends.

The founders of the startup say



Tania Kosianchuk and Serhiy Klepyk, co-founders of the Secret Ticket service, talk to the Kyiv Post during an interview in Kyiv on May 17. The two hope their startup's services will soon expand to offer mystery tours not just to cities in Ukraine, but to destinations in Europe. Visa requirements for Ukrainians will be scrapped from June 11 by most member states of the European Union. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

their best experience so far was to arrange a trip for an elderly couple from Kyiv.

"They called us and said that all their life they'd put off any kind of travelling, and now they wanted to take their last chance," Kosianchuk says.

Some people want everything about the trip to be a surprise.

"Recently one customer called us and asked to put tickets in one envelope, and the rest of the information in another. He said he would ask friends to put him on the train blindfold so he wouldn't even know where he was going."

The number of clients using the service is growing rapidly: Last week Klepyk and Kosianchuk sold four secret trips, and this week 15. The next step for the pair of founders, who are full of enthusiasm for their new venture, is to arrange trips abroad.

And the bigger they grow, the better, as 10 percent of the cost of each trip goes to charity – Kosianchuk is also a volunteer who works with children in orphanages.

Secret Ticket, www.secreticket.com Hr 790 – Hr 9,990 ■

Odesa oyster farm looking to expand into European market

Oyster from page 11

ing to Pigulevsky, are very nutritious. The two friends traveled across the Europe, trying oysters, and decided to bring the shellfish back to Ukraine.

They discovered that oysters had been a popular and cheap food in Ukraine before the early 20th century, until the Bolsheviks came to power and squeezed the oyster business out of the Black Sea, consid-

ering the shellfish a bourgeois food.

After several failed attempts, Pigulevsky and Stakhov in 2014 finally found the perfect place in Odesa Oblast, where they successfully raised some young oysters they had bought from an oyster farm in France.

It takes an oyster about 18 months to grow to the commercial size at which it can be sold.

Big plans

According to Stakhov, Skifian Oysters meets about 40 percent of Ukraine's domestic demand for oysters. The remaining 60 percent is imported.

Now, with their farm growing, the partners plan to ramp up production and enter the European market.

Stakhov says Ukrainian oysters' taste is more delicate, since the water in the Black Sea is less salty than, for example, in the Mediterranean Sea. Ukrainian oysters are also cheaper than those raised in Europe.

To export their oysters, the partners will also have to receive a European quality certificate, which they say costs a six-figure amount of dollars.

"(But) in several years we will be feeding the whole of Europe," Stakhov says.

Matza and Oysters. 39 Dmytrivska St. Open Thursday-Saturday starting from 7 p.m. and until the last customer.

To order fresh oysters go to www.skifian.com.ua/zakazat and fill in the short form (name, city, email address, phone number and the amount of oysters). There is no English version of the website, but the owners say their employees can take the orders in English at +38063-999-2101. The price starts from Hr 33 per oyster. ■



One of the employees of the Skifian Oysters holds an oyster near the entrance to Matza and Oysters bar in Kyiv on May 16. (Oleg Petrusiuk)

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May 27



(Courtesy)

Sandali Beach Complex opening

Sandali is the perfect place to recharge the batteries and reconnect with nature without having to leave the big city. Sandali's swimming pool, deck chairs, a restaurant with a terrace, summer houses for small groups and fully-fledged beach

complex in French retro style awaits its first visitors.

Sandali Beach Complex opening. May 27, 6 p.m. Trukhaniv Island. Hr 100

May 27



(Courtesy)

Ice cream festival

Despite the name, visitors won't find ice-cream at this small festival, its organizers warn. However, they will find lots of little-known underground artists and music – a veritable feast of Ukrainian underground culture.

Ice cream festival. May 27, 12 a.m. Atlas Night Club (37-41 Sichovyyh Stiliitsiv St.) Hr 400-600



(Esthetic voice/facebook)

June 1

A Capella Fest

This annual festival recasts Ukrainian modern music with a new sound – a capella. Vocal choirs Accord, Esthetic voice and United people will perform at this fest in various musical styles, showing off their vocal mastery over a wide range of material.

A Capella Fest. June 1, 8 p.m. Carribean Club (4 Petlury St.) Hr 100-300

Days of Kyiv

This year the Ukrainian capital celebrates its 1,535th anniversary, and Kyiv Administration has prepared lots of cultural and entertaining events for the upcoming weekend. The main location for the events will be Sofiyska Square. During both days, dance bands will host shows on the square and hold contests for visitors. Around 150 events around the capital are to be held in honor of the city days.

Days of Kyiv. May 27-28. Sofiyska Square.



(Volodymyr Petrov)

May 27-28



(Courtesy)

June 4

Teulis Theater of Shadows

Teulis is a mix of acrobatics, theater, optical illusions and incredible video projections. The theater proves that with shadows alone, the most fantastic tales can be brought to life, and the wildest stories told.

Teulis Theater of Shadows. June 4. 7 p.m. Petro Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine (1-3/11 Arkhitektora Horodetskoho St.) Hr 190 – 490

June 2-3



(sian-evans.com)

White Nights in Kyiv

The first weekend of summer is celebrated at Platforma Art Factory. Sian Evans from Kosheen, a British electronic band, will host the event. A range of music styles are on agenda, however, from Disco to Drum 'n' Bass, the best music hits of the 2000s, as well as art installations and a lightshow.

White Nights in Kyiv. June 2-3, 8 p.m. Platforma Art Factory (1 Bilomorska St.) Hr 399-699

Compiled by Mariya Kapinos

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KfW, the German development bank, is seeking a qualified consultant. The position is project-related with a contract duration of one year. The volume of work will comprise approx. 11 working days per

month. The focus will be on developing several projects related to socially orientated financing (e.g. social housing, small business start-ups), which will partly be channeled via the Ukrainian banking sector. Within the framework of Ukrainian-German financial cooperation, KfW's portfolio in these areas is expanding. The consultant shall be based in Kyiv and report to the Director of the KfW office in Ukraine as well as to the responsible Project Managers in KfW headquarters in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

The main responsibilities in relation to the above mentioned projects shall include:

- To liaise with, advise and coordinate the national project partners and other stakeholders of financial cooperation projects;
- To discuss with, advise and support the responsible sector teams at KfW HQ in the processes of identification, preparation and implementation of financial cooperation activities;
- To monitor and report on relevant developments, policies and donor activities;
- To contribute to the fulfillment of supervisory and reporting requirements;
- To provide organizational support to, and participate in, KfW missions visiting Ukraine.

The required qualifications are:

- University Degree in Business Administration, Banking, Economics or Law;
- At least seven years of working experience, of which at least five years directly related to social and municipal investments and/or SME finance;
- Excellent Ukrainian/Russian and English or German language skills, including the ability to produce reports in these languages;
- Project management, organization as well as oral and written presentation skills;
- General understanding of banking and finance as well as development cooperation;
- Ability and readiness to travel in- and outside Ukraine.

The following experiences and skills will be considered as additional advantages:

- Longer professional experience;
- Experience in other fields of development cooperation;
- Working experience in an international environment / team;
- Good knowledge of the financial sector;
- Excellent English and German language skills.

Please address your applications in German or English, which must include CV and compelling motivation letter, electronically to vacancies-kyiv@kfw.de no later than 14th of June 2017. Only short-listed candidates will be invited for interviews. Questions should be directed to the email address named above.

Announcement



U.S. firm seeking Ukrainian manufacturer of aluminum brazed automotive style intercoolers (charge coolers) and radiators.

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For more detailed information about preferred qualifications and skills, indicative duties and responsibilities, as well as applying procedure, please visit web-site: <http://edge.in.ua/vacancies>



Abt Associates Career Opportunity

Kyiv, Ukraine

Abt Associates, a mission-driven, global leader in research and program implementation in the field of international development, seeks qualified candidates for an upcoming USAID-funded Health Reform project in Ukraine. Positions will be full time for the duration of the 5-year project. These positions are contingent on successful award of a proposal.

Chief of Party – Ukraine

Responsibilities:

- Providing and implementing strategic vision and overall technical, administrative, and financial management leadership to produce required project results;
- Managing collaboration and coordination with key Ukrainian counterparts and ensuring capacity development and sustainability;
- Ultimately responsible for overall project performance and achievement of goals and objectives
- Project planning, including timely preparation of the annual implementation plan;
- Effectively coordinating and engaging with all project stakeholders;
- Maintaining a productive partnership relationship with USAID;
- Managing and developing staff, sub-Contractors, and consultants to achieve expected results;
- Ensuring high quality standards of technical assistance and support to Program stakeholders;

Qualifications:

- Master's degree, PhD, or Medical Doctor degree,
- At least 8 years of senior-level project management experience in designing and implementing, health programs, with a preference given to health systems strengthening programs,
- Demonstrated understanding of health systems in the former Soviet Union,
- Prior experience in working with USAID and/or other international donors in Ukraine, Central and Eastern Europe, or the former Soviet Union;
- A demonstrated track record of progressively responsible managerial experience managing a complex portfolio that includes health reform activities,
- Experience developing project vision, aligning key stakeholders, and assuring that the vision is translated into implementable strategies
- Proven ability to effectively lead and manage large, multi-disciplinary teams to achieve results
- Ability to liaise effectively with and develop consensus among key stakeholders, including USAID, national and local officials, public, private, and civil society partners
- Proficiency in English and either Russian or Ukrainian required.

Deputy Chief of Party – Ukraine

Responsibilities:

- Providing overall project management support to the Chief of Party.
- Supporting overall project performance and achievement of project goals and objectives
- Project planning, including timely preparation of the annual implementation plan;
- Overseeing population education component;
- Effectively coordinating and engaging with all project stakeholders; Liaising with Project partners and USAID;
- Managing and developing staff, sub-Contractors, and consultants to achieve expected results;
- Ensuring high quality standards of technical assistance and support to Program stakeholders;
- Managing Program communications with USAID, key stakeholders, and the general public;
- Ensuring compliance with USAID, USG and GOU laws, regulations, policies and procedures.

Qualifications:

- Master's degree, PhD, or Medical Doctor degree
- At least 5 years of project management experience.
- Understanding of health delivery, civil society, and/or health systems in the former Soviet Union
- Prior experience in working with USAID and/or other international donors in Ukraine, Central and Eastern Europe, or the former Soviet Union;
- Proven management skills.
- Ability to liaise effectively with and develop consensus among key stakeholders, including USAID, national and local officials, public, private, and civil society partners.
- Proficiency in English and either Russian or Ukrainian required.

Finance and Administration Manager – Ukraine

Responsibilities:

- Provide leadership, management, and direct supervision for the project's finance and operations staff.
- Oversee the development of administrative and operations management systems and processes required to support project implementation, ensuring compliance with USAID and Abt Associates policies and regulations, and terms of the project contract/agreement.
- Develop, manage, and monitor project budgets, accurate financial reports, and projection of funding needs, in close coordination with senior project staff.
- Oversee the human resources function for the project.
- Support the startup, general operations, and closeout of the project.
- Manage the financial operations and financial reporting of the project, providing guidance and technical assistance to financial management personnel.
- Create and maintain financial reporting and tracking systems that provide basic data measurements on financial performance of project activities.
- Provide ongoing financial administration to the project, including the processing of approvals for procurements, consultant agreements, and vendor invoices.
- Manage the timely submission of the monthly field expenses (ROVs) to the headquarters office.
- Oversee the development, execution, and management of subcontractor and consultant agreements.
- Develop and implement accounting and reporting systems for project expenditures, and provide guidance and training to project staff and partners on financial procedures.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree (minimum) Master's Degree (desirable) in Business Administration, Accounting, Finance, Management, or other relevant field.
- At least 8 years of professional experience managing financial and contractual aspects of large international development projects, preferably USAID-funded projects.
- Significant experience managing and supervising financial, administrative and procurement personnel.
- Demonstrated experience and skills in developing and managing large budgets, contracting, procurement, and inventory management.
- Demonstrated supervisory skills and ability to work well on teams.
- Proficiency in relevant computer applications and databases.
- Familiarity with US Government Cost Accounting Standards, including Federal Acquisition Regulations (FARs) and USAID Acquisition Regulations (AIDARs).
- Familiarity and experience with Ukrainian finance, accounting, and HR regulations and procedures.
- Strong analytical and computer skills, with an emphasis on budget and financial analysis.
- Fluency in written and spoken English.

Health Management Information Systems Specialist - Ukraine

Support the strengthening and harmonizing of the routine health information system and build capacity in quality collection, analysis, dissemination, and use of health information for program planning and management. Position requires:

- Master's Degree in Public Health, Information Systems, or other relevant field.
- 8 years of relevant professional experience in Public Health, Health Information Systems, or other relevant field.
- Excellent writing, computer, management and organizational skills.
- Proficiency in English and Ukrainian required.

Technical Director for Health Services - Ukraine

Lead the development of strategy, technical assistance, and implementation oversight for a USAID-funded project's activities. Position requires developing and implementing workplans, leading local technical coordinators implementing work and developing effective partnerships with local organizations. Requirements include:

- Master's Degree with 8-10 years of experience, or MD/PhD with 5 years of experience in public health or related field.
- Demonstrated ability to work both as a member of a team and as a team leader, with the ability to accept the inputs of other team members. This also may include working on teams comprised of members from other local and national organizations.
- Strong management and planning skills of project tasks and budgets.
- Excellent organizational, interpersonal communication and computer skills.
- Experience with USAID is highly desirable.
- Proficiency in Ukrainian required and English language proficiency is advantageous

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialist- Ukraine:

Leads design and implementation of program's M&E framework and information system to track delivery against targets, outcomes, and impacts. Develops results framework, performance monitoring plan, and research and evaluation plan. Creates database and systems needed to systematically collect, analyze and present program data to enable staff to monitor performance and systems strengthening.

Qualification Requirements:

- Masters Degree in Statistics, Public Health, or other relevant field.
- 10+ yrs. designing and implementing M&E activities for complex Health System Strengthening and/or service delivery programs, using rigorous quantitative research and analytical methods.
- USAID experience preferred.

To apply, please email your cv to ukraine_jobs@abtassoc.com specifying the position in the subject line. Please note that only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Russia's war against Ukraine has killed at least 2,700 soldiers

BY OLENA GONCHAROVA
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It has been another deadly month for the Ukrainian army, which is fighting Russia-backed forces in the east of the country.

At least 28 soldiers have been killed and 166 wounded, according to a Kyiv Post count based on information from the military, volunteers, and local media reports.

The government-controlled city of Avdiivka, as well as Donetsk's Oblast Pisky, Horlivka, Verkhniotoretske and Luhansk

Oblast's Popasna remained hot spots. Civilians casualties also saw an increase: Since March to mid-May, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs verified at least 178 civilian casualties – 35 deaths and 143 injuries.

Overall, since the Russian military intervention started in Ukraine, more than 2,700 Ukrainian soldiers and representatives of other law enforcement and security bodies have been killed, and up to 9,800 wounded.

Read the full story at www.kyivpost.com



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