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March 27, 2015

Power Play

Poroshenko Takes On Kolomoisky



Igor Kolomoisky deployed armed guards in an unsuccessful bid to take control of state-owned Ukrnafta on March 22. The move prompted President Petro Poroshenko to sack him as Dnipropetrovsk Oblast governor. (Volodymyr Petrov).



Igor Kolomoisky. (Ukrafoto)

Fight over control of state-owned oil company at center of Kolomoisky fight

See Story on page 10

Does Kolomoisky's exit signal start of real crackdown against oligarchs?

See Story on page 17

As Kolomoisky leaves Dnipropetrovsk, fears rise over security in eastern Ukraine

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Russia's war against Ukraine renews Chechen animosities

BY OLEG SUKHOV
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Chechens, like many other ethnicities, have been divided by Russia's war against Ukraine.

One group, led by pro-Kremlin Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov, has joined Russia's cause.

Another group, part of the Dzhokhar Dudayev Battalion, is fighting for Ukraine.

The battalion, set up last March and named after Chechnya's first president and insurgent leader, views the war as part of a broader struggle against Russian imperialism and the Kadyrov regime, the Kremlin's main bulwark in the Caucasus.

The unit is currently in legal limbo and has no official status. But its leadership is working on legalizing it as part of the Interior Ministry. The Defense Ministry has also offered its help with legalization but there is "too much bureaucracy there," Amina Okuyeva, the battalion's spokeswoman, said in an interview with the Kyiv Post.

During the first stage, a company of 100 fighters will be legalized, she said, adding that the unit was based in Luhansk Oblast.

Okuyeva, clad in camouflage and a Muslim headscarf, could not specify a more specific location and the current number of fighters for security reasons. She also said that the battalion used trophy weapons and got its food and clothing supplies from volunteers.

Though the unit has been called a "Chechen battalion," ethnic Chechens account for only about 17 percent, while about 70 percent are ethnic Ukrainians. Most of the Chechens are from European countries, including Denmark and Scandinavian nations, but there are also those who come from Chechnya and fought in the First Chechen War (1994-1996) and Second Chechen War (1999-2000).

The battalion also includes other Muslims like Azeris, Ingush and Tatars, as well as Georgians.

The unit's fighters have different views ranging from secular to religious ones, Okuyeva said.

She praised the Chechen insurgents who are currently fighting against Russian troops in a low-intensity conflict in North Caucasus. "These are



Amina Okuyeva in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Dec. 12 in Kyiv. (Volodymyr Petrov)

rebels who are trying to fight for their homeland in those harsh conditions. We lend them moral support," she said.

However, she denied any links to either the Caucasus Emirate, North Caucasus' main Islamist insurgent group led by Ali Abu Mukhammad, or a London-based secular Chechen government-in-exile headed by Akhmad Zakayev.

The battalion's first commander, Isa Munayev, fought in both Chechen wars and used to be the military governor of Grozny, the capital of Chechnya. He was killed on Feb. 1.

"Isa died when he was helping the Ukrainian army to avoid being surrounded in Debal'tsevo (in Donetsk Oblast)," Okuyeva said. "They went behind enemy lines in the town of Chernukhine. They were surrounded by tanks. Several (Russian) tanks were destroyed. Isa died in that battle."

She said that Isa had fought with four other fighters of the Dzhokhar Dudayev Battalion and soldiers of another Ukrainian unit on that day.

"Isa always went ahead and always protected his soldiers during withdrawal," she said. "The death of the commander was a big blow for us because all of us sincerely loved him. He was not only a good commander but also a good man. He was like a brother to all of us."

Since Munayev's death, the battalion

has been headed by Adam Osmayev, Okuyeva's husband. In February 2012 Osmayev was arrested by the Security Service of Ukraine and Russia's Federal Security Service in Odesa and accused of plotting an assassination attempt on Vladimir Putin, then Russia's prime minister and now president.

Okuyeva believes the investigation to be a fabricated case aimed at boosting Putin's rating ahead of the March 4, 2012 presidential election. She participated in the 2013-2014 EuroMaidan Revolution in Kyiv partially to defend her husband.

In November 2014 Osmayev was found guilty of the illegal use of explosives and document forgery by an Odesa court but he was released since he had already served his term by that time.

For both Munayev and Osmayev, Russia was the archenemy. The battalion's fighters believe that in Ukraine they are helping their kinsfolk back home.

"It's the continuation of the same war but on another front," Osmayeva said. "Yesterday it was Chechnya and Georgia, today it's Ukraine, there's no guarantee that tomorrow it won't be some other country of the civilized world, like the Baltics. As long as the plague of Russian fascism – the Russian Empire – exists, nobody can be safe."

Osmayeva, who was born in Odesa

in 1983 and used to live in Moscow and Chechnya, returned to Ukraine about 12 years ago and saw a sharp contrast between Russia and Ukraine.

"In North Caucasus and in Russia it's impossible to live in the full sense of the word," she said. "You can only survive. You have to forget about the freedom of thought, voting rights and the freedom of religion."

A person can be kidnapped, humiliated or even killed in North Caucasus for Islamic head wear, she said. The authorities of the region have cracked down on people wearing some forms of Islamic clothing and long beards due to their associations with Islamists and their insurgency in North Caucasus.

"In Ukraine even in the most difficult times, even when there was a pro-Russian government here (under former President Viktor Yanukovich), there were no such harsh repressions and no such suppression of people's will," Okuyeva said. "Nobody has ever taken issue with my headscarf or my observance of Muslim traditions."

Meanwhile, Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov is even trying to export that form of government to eastern Ukraine, with many of his soldiers fighting for Kremlin-backed separatists. Kadyrov, who is increasingly becoming one of Russia's most powerful men and developing a cult of personality similar to Putin's, said in December 2014 he wanted to go to eastern Ukraine as a volunteer himself.

In the same month, Kadyrov told about 20,000 Chechen law enforcement officers in a highly publicized speech at a stadium that they were "Vladimir Putin's infantry" and should be ready to fight in any part of the world as volunteers – a veiled reference to Ukraine.

Okuyeva said she herself had not encountered any Chechens fighting for Russia. She said that their number was considerably overestimated by the media and did not exceed 500. "There are much more Ossetians there."

"We don't call them Chechens on principle," she added. "These are just Chechen-speaking Russians who are doing Putin's bidding for a good reward."

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THE PROPOSAL FOR A LEGAL OMBUDSMAN FOR UKRAINE TO COMBAT CORRUPTION AND FURTHER THE RULE OF LAW

1. The Proposal for a Legal Ombudsman.

In order to effectively combat corruption in Ukrainian courts and administrative agencies, and more quickly develop the rule of law in Ukraine, the British Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce ("BUCC") proposes the creation of a Legal Ombudsman for Ukraine, who would be appointed by the Board of a Non-Governmental Organization ("NGO") created by Ukraine's leading chambers of commerce and business associations. (Possibly, the Legal Ombudsman's appointment could also be ratified by Parliament, and the Ombudsman could also have certain special statutory powers, as suggested below.) This Legal Ombudsman could serve as an autonomous unit of a leading Ukrainian legal studies institution, like the V. M. Koretsky Institute of State and Law that is the principal independent legal adviser for the Ukrainian Parliament.

2. The Need for Such an Independent Legal Authority to Review Judicial and Administrative Action for Abuses of Justice.

Based on the unsatisfactory experience of many foreign and domestic investors before Ukrainian courts and administrative agencies, and the numerous resulting claims by these investors for gross abuses of justice, the BUCC has concluded that the creation of such a Legal Ombudsman is presently necessary in order to respond in a timely manner to such abuses and thereby improve the rule of law in Ukraine. ***This proposal addresses, in particular, the virtually total absence of timely and effective independent review of Ukrainian judicial and administrative action.***

While some abused investors have successfully prevailed in disputes over such abuses of justice by Ukrainian courts, most recently in several bi-lateral investment treaty arbitrations that have attracted attention because the abused parties received multi-million dollar awards, these cases are expensive and take many years. For foreign investors from countries having bi-lateral investment treaties with Ukraine, typically two to three years are necessary to run the required full appeals process in the Ukrainian courts, and then, assuming that the abuse is not remedied, another two to four years is required to prevail in an arbitration under the applicable bi-lateral investment treaty, for a total of up to seven years. By the time justice is served, the judges and officials involved have usually moved on to other jobs, and the effects of the abuse cannot be undone, so the only remedy is damages.

Domestic investors, and investors from countries without bi-lateral investment treaties with Ukraine, are in a much worse position, as they have no outside independent arbitration tribunal to appeal to. As a practical matter, this often leaves such investors in Ukraine without any effective protection against abuses of justice.

3. How the Legal Ombudsman Will Function.

The proposed Legal Ombudsman should function much like an independent arbitrator in a bi-lateral arbitration tribunal, but with a more pro-active role to collect evidence in order to hear claims and render opinions on abuses in months rather than years, so as to protect investors from losing their businesses, property and other rights while this is still possible, as well as to evaluate damage claims. For practical reasons, presently in the aftermath of so many widely publicised problems in the Ukrainian legal system, the proposed Legal Ombudsman should initially be an eminent jurist who is foreign and therefore independent of local

Ukrainian pressures. There are many respected foreign judges and lawyers, with a sufficient knowledge of Ukrainian law (and ability to read and speak Ukrainian), who are eminently qualified to fill this position.

The principal role of this Legal Ombudsman will be to timely provide a source of authoritative legal opinions on claims of abuse of justice that can then be recognized and implemented by the Ukrainian President and Presidential Administration, the Government and the Parliament to secure remedies for the identified abuses. Such independent review, effectively supervising judicial and administrative behaviour, should provide a legal basis for corrective action. The establishment of such a Legal Ombudsman for Ukraine should have the same impact as the Swedish Parliamentary Ombudsman (the original Ombudsman and still the leading model for the World), the creation of which to address corruption and abuses of justice turned Sweden from being a country with a corruption problem in the early 1900s into one of the world's least corrupt countries.

Thus, the creation of the Legal Ombudsman could address the problem that often arises for the Ukrainian President and Presidential Administration, the Government and the Parliament, which generally do not act as legal experts, when claims of legal abuse are brought to them without the benefit of a legal review by an authoritative independent legal expert body. They are, in essence, asked to side with a claim on an abuse of justice by a particular person or his, her or its lawyer, or the claimant's ambassador, chamber, business association or some other non-legal authority (like the EBRD's "Business Ombudsman", who is not a lawyer), against the legal decisions of the judicial branch of the State of Ukraine, which decisions non-lawyers cannot ordinarily evaluate as a matter of law. Under the proposal made above, the President, Government and Parliament will be able to act based on authoritative legal opinions that are rendered independent of the claimant. Likewise, such legal opinions of the Legal Ombudsman, to the extent that they validate and verify legal claims, will thereby also provide ambassadors, the Business Ombudsman, chambers, business associations and others with a valid legal basis to support remedies for the confirmed abuses of justice.

4. Implementation of the Opinions of the Legal Ombudsman.

Thus, on the basis of opinions of the Legal Ombudsman, the Ukrainian President, Government and Parliament should be able legally to deal with abuses of justice that are properly so analysed and recognised. The Legal Ombudsman's authority should be largely based on respect for the quality of the legal analysis of his or her opinions, which should easily be recognised by all involved as being superior to that of the identified abusive decisions, as is usually the case for the Swedish Ombudsman. With the existence of such public authoritative review of their behaviour, Ukrainian courts and administrative officials should thereafter feel obliged carefully to respect applicable law in rendering their decisions.

Such implementation of the opinions of the Legal Ombudsman should, therefore, ideally be consensual, working with the President, Government and Parliament — and not necessarily based on some formal mechanism, so that, in effect, the Legal Ombudsman is not just another court created on top of the judicial system. In practice, the Swedish Ombudsman is always an eminent former judge or lawyer capable of

legal work of the highest quality and integrity, and his or her legal decisions on abuses of law and other legal matters are ordinarily respected voluntarily, without the need for formal enforcement proceedings.

In addition, the threat of the possible impeachment of judges who are found to have committed gross abuses of justice is a measure that could potentially be used to encourage respect for the Legal Ombudsman's legal opinions on such abuses. Under Article 126 of the Ukrainian Constitution, judges can be impeached by Parliament, inter alia, for violating their oath of office, under which oath a judge swears that he or she shall "objectively, impersonally, impartially, independently and fairly administer justice, complying only with the law, to honestly and faithfully perform the duties of a judge". Parliament could therefore impeach judges based on abuses of justice identified by the Legal Ombudsman. As Parliament establishes the procedure for impeachment proceedings, it could also provide the Legal Ombudsman with the right to petition Parliament to initiate such impeachment of any judge whose decisions the Legal Ombudsman finds evidence a violation of his or her oath of office.

It should also be noted that, if an opinion of the Legal Ombudsman is not implemented to protect a foreign investor from a bi-lateral investment treaty state from an abuse of justice, then this fact should, as a practical matter, greatly strengthen the case of the investor in any subsequent bi-lateral investment treaty arbitration. This, by itself, should justify the Ukrainian Presidential Administration, Government and Parliament acting to remedy such identified abuses of justice.

However, if despite such mechanisms, it proves necessary to do more to implement the Legal Ombudsman's legal opinions, then the Ukrainian Legal Ombudsman might also be given some statutory enforcement rights and powers, such as exist for the Swedish Ombudsman, for example to initiate proceedings to legally enforce the Legal Ombudsman's legal opinions, as well as the formal power, suggested above, to bring petitions to Parliament to initiate impeachment proceedings. For this, Ukraine could consider also moving to Parliamentary ratification of the selection of the Legal Ombudsman by the NGO, as an additional foundation for providing the Legal Ombudsman with such formal statutory powers

5. Conclusion.

The proposed Ukrainian Legal Ombudsman should greatly facilitate Ukraine's fight against corruption in order to help Ukraine make a quick transition to the highest world standards, as Sweden did years ago. We would also recommend to combine this with paying Ukrainian judges and administrative officials much higher salaries commensurate with the importance of their responsibilities. International financial institutions and aid agencies, to make a genuine and rapid impact to actually combat corruption in Ukraine, should help fund such measures while Ukraine is not financially in a position easily to do so.

One important benefit of this proposal for the Ukrainian economy is that such a Legal Ombudsman should give investors, especially foreign investors, much greater confidence that they can invest in Ukraine and be protected from corruption and abuses of justice by courts and officials. Ukraine urgently needs to so encourage investment to develop the Ukrainian economy.

— British Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce

Editorials

Real crackdown?

With all the nefarious members of the former ruling Party of Regions running around free and uninvestigated, or hiding out with impunity in Russia, it was unfortunate that President Petro Poroshenko had to go after fellow billionaire Igor Kolomoisky, sacking him as Dnipropetrovsk Oblast governor on March 25. Still, Kolomoisky richly deserved to be removed from power. He actually forced Poroshenko's hand after deploying private armed guards in a failed bid to wrest control of state-owned Ukrnafta. Kolomoisky controls a minority 42 percent stake in the oil company, but it amounted to a blocking interest because the state couldn't take any action without a 60 percent quorum under a previous law. Lawmakers wisely changed that to 50 percent plus one share, a bill signed into law by Poroshenko, and demanded that Kolomoisky fork over Hr 1.9 billion in dividends denied to the state.

Kolomoisky has engaged in very questionable business tactics in the past, to put it mildly, but has been forgiven because he has shored up the eastern front quite admirably since Russia launched its war against Ukraine more than a year ago.

Poroshenko needs to go even further and demand tax payments and even renationalization of some state assets that had been cheaply, uncompetitively and non-transparently sold to insider tycoons in the past.

Police and prosecutors must also launch investigations into whether Kolomoisky committed crimes in his control of Ukrnafta.

The Kolomoisky affair, combined with this week's televised arrests of two top state emergency service officials suspected of taking kickbacks in making fuel purchases, must signal the long overdue start of a real battle against corruption – not merely more publicity stunts.

Kolomoisky's removal and the reassertion of state control over Ukrnafta also seemed to show that Poroshenko and Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk are united in putting public interests above private ones. Accusations of Kolomoisky's strong influence over the Yatsenyuk bloc in parliament seem to be exaggerated, at the least.

As for security concerns, we hope that Kolomoisky's departure creates no opening for Russian forces and their proxies to advance westward. We hope that Kolomoisky will put the national interests first when it comes to defending the motherland. Even if he doesn't, the defense of Ukraine rests with the Ukrainian people – and their armies.

It was encouraging, on this score, to see Poroshenko and Kolomoisky at a joint press conference on March 26 pledging to support Ukraine and each other.

Donors get cold feet

According to a Reuters news story out of Brussels on March 26, the European Union is putting the brakes on a donors conference that Ukraine's government had planned for Kyiv to drum up billions of dollars in new aid.

The European Commission said that its president, Jean-Claude Juncker would visit Kyiv on March 30 ahead of a newly announced EU-Ukraine summit in Ukraine on April 27.

Before pledging billions of dollars in long-term loans, Western governments "want to know what their money is to be spent on," according to one anonymous EU official quoted by Reuters. European Commissioner Johannes Hahn told Reuters last month: "We have to avoid a bottomless pit."

Western governments are absolutely right in insisting on speedier reforms from Ukraine's government. The arguments that the West should not put conditions on a nation in war simply aren't persuasive.

In the first place, Ukraine has to do more in mobilizing for war on its own before it can expect more military aid from the West to build its long-term defense capabilities.

Secondly, reforms should be done anyway to prosecute those suspected of murder and financial crimes, with or without war. Many of the schemes and schemers are known to all of Ukraine's officials, as the sacking of Igor Kolomoisky and the arrests of two state emergency service officials, showed. What's been lacking is the political will to end the "bottomless pit" of corruption schemes, kickbacks and non-transparent tenders that only enrich the insider elite and impoverish the rest of the nation.

Parliament has yet to remove their legal immunity from criminal prosecution, as well as that of judges, and appear to be dragging their feet.

Police, prosecutors and courts still don't seem to be capable of investigating crimes and finding credible evidence to present in courts -- even though the corruption and evidence are all around them.

The state-owned Naftogaz -- historically a black hole of corruption -- is still bleeding money and needs to be run on market principles to separate its production, transportation and distribution functions.

Obviously Ukraine's government, while a big improvement over previous ones, is still not doing enough to convince foreign donors or average Ukrainians that it is serious about working in the public interest.

NEWS ITEM: Vitaliy Zakharchenko, a former interior minister who fled Ukraine with ex-President Viktor Yanukovich is wanted in Ukraine on suspicion of mass murder and embezzlement. But he has found a new job as an expert hired by the Russian parliament. He will contribute to developing legislation to protect the interests of Russian investors abroad.



NEWS ITEM: On March 24, President Petro Poroshenko accepted Igor Kolomoisky's resignation as governor of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. The move was interpreted as Poroshenko's victory over Kolomoisky, the oligarch and the enfant terrible of Ukrainian politics, and as a step towards curbing oligarch influence on politics. Critics note, however, that Poroshenko himself is an oligarch, who has failed to keep his pre-election promise to sell his business.



NEWS ITEM: Ukrainian news outlet Ukrainska Pravda reported on March 24 that several U.S. newspapers were pitched an article by Serhiy Liovochkin, lawmaker from the Opposition Bloc. In those pitches Liovochkin, shunned in Ukraine for his service as chief of staff to overthrown President Viktor Yanukovich, was presented to the media as a prominent opposition figure and possible future prime minister.

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The Kyiv Post welcomes letters to the editors and opinion pieces, usually 800 to 1,000 words in length. Please email all correspondence to Brian Bonner chief editor, at bonner@kyivpost.com. All correspondence must include an email address and contact phone number for verification.



Bernard Casey, second from left, served as president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Ukraine for most of 2014. Casey is shown on May 12 in the photo. Casey's pro-Kremlin views in favor of Russia's annexation of Crimea, as well as his belief that the EuroMaidan Revolution was a foreign-inspired coup, have drawn criticism. Casey wrote an op-ed in the Kyiv Post website on March 22 that outlined his positions, prompting a statement by his former employer disavowing Casey's views. (UNIAN)

Newspapers deliver unpleasant truths



BRIAN BONNER
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"Why did you print the article?"
"This is pure Kremlin propaganda!"
"What is this trash doing on the Kyiv Post website?"
"You guys are shameful!"
"Why are you harming the reputation of a great organization?"

"I would cancel my subscription to the Kyiv Post, but I don't have one, so I can't, but I will never subscribe now."

These were some of the comments we received after publishing an op-ed by American Bernard Casey on March 22 online. In the opinion piece "Last chance for peace in Ukraine," Casey expressed views that were out of sync with most people in Ukraine and the West. They did, in fact, mimic the Kremlin script.

Casey, a Russian Orthodox Christian, believes that Crimea belongs to Russia, that Ukraine is engaged in a civil war and that the West staged a coup d'état that forced President Viktor Yanukovich to flee on Feb. 22, 2014. He went on to misstate historical and modern facts in forming his opinion.

I was surprised. But I went ahead and published the opinion anyway. Why?

Casey served as the president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Ukraine for most of 2014 before departing with no explanation – either from him or the organization. He was no Kremlin troll off the street. After the U.S. ambassadorship, the chamber presidency – representing more than 600 companies, including the Kyiv Post – is arguably the second most prestigious and public position that an American can hold in Ukraine.

Some readers posting in the Kyiv Post Facebook group understood.

Patrick Sullivan: "Pity this American's opinions were not addressed earlier, so now it is news. I am thankful the article is published."

Tomas Sivertsson: "I think that I and other readers have a good knowledge about the situation in Ukraine thanks to the Kyiv Post. If this guy wants to make a fool of himself, that's okay."

Stuart McKenzie: "I would like to thank the Kyiv Post for giving Casey enough rope to hang himself. He'll never work in this town again."

Other readers said that Casey should be sanctioned by the West or investigated. At the same time, they condemned the Kyiv Post for publishing – oblivious

to the contradiction that they would not know about Casey's opinions if they had not been published. While every journalist understands the "blame-the-messenger" tradition, it is hypocritical for critics to be outraged at the Kyiv Post for publishing Casey's views yet unbothered that AmCham hired him.

So how did the Casey op-ed come about?

For several years, I had known Casey only as a Facebook friend interested in this part of the world. I met him for the first time after he got the AmCham job, when I interviewed him for a story about the transition in leadership from 15-year president Jorge Zukoski, also an American. I met with Casey two other times over lunch and saw him at a couple of events. My impression: Decent man, but socially awkward and not very effective in his role. I heard rumblings of dissatisfaction about his performance before AmCham in October issued a vague statement that he would stop working there at the end of 2014.

The next time I heard from him was this year, when he re-friended me on Facebook. He had deactivated his account during his tenure as AmCham president, but was now eager to engage on the political situation in Ukraine. Some people soon told me to read his posts, which they thought were outrageous. Some even thought he was still at AmCham, because his firing was done so quietly and no replacement has been named.

I read some alarming posts from Casey. One grabbed my attention: "One year after the fact, it is still hard for me to fathom the intellectual dishonesty and hypocrisy it takes for the West to recognize a regime in Kiev that came to power through an unconstitutional, violent, foreign-orchestrated coup d'état with only about 30% popular support, and yet fail to recognize the right of self-determination of the peoples of Crimea to reunify with their fatherland Russia, to whom they belonged before the United States came into existence, with close to 90% popular support."

So I sent him a message, asking him to write an op-ed on the topic. Some have accused me of luring him into a trap to expose him. Not so. I do think, however, that he was oblivious to how unpopular his opinions would be among Kyiv Post readers.

While I strongly disagree with Casey, I published the op-ed for three key reasons:

1. If I were just a Kyiv Post subscriber and not the chief editor, would I want to read this? Yes, of course. I would have been angry at the Kyiv Post if it hid the radical anti-Ukrainian views of someone who held such an influential position.

2. I believe that AmCham should answer these questions: How did he get the job, given his views? Or weren't his views known when he got hired? If not, then why not, given his long record of similar

statements? Or did everyone know and he simply got hired anyway because Yanukovich was still in power? Is there any evidence he was working for the Kremlin? Is that why he got fired? What is the board doing to ensure that such a choice does not happen again? I have many more questions like that. Unfortunately, AmCham is circling the wagons in damage control. Some have said it's inappropriate to comment; I think it's inappropriate not to comment.

3. Casey's opinion is not isolated. It is shared by many people in Russia and, to a lesser extent, outside of Russia. This is an unpleasant, but indisputable, truth. The Kyiv Post is not going to publish only "the party line." This would make us no better than the Kremlin. We can no more ignore the views of people like Casey than we can ignore the Russian tanks and troops inside Ukraine. I fear that more Ukrainians are becoming like many Russians and Americans: They only want news outlets that reinforce their opinions of reality. I find it better to learn what people with whom I disagree are thinking. This doesn't mean we print anything. We have a Kremlin blacklist of organizations that simply spew Kremlin PR and misinformation, night and day, but review articles for publication or aggregation on a case-by-case basis. But when people of Casey's former stature parrot the Kremlin line, I think it shows how much work is still needed to get the truth out and also shows how oblivious some of us are about differing views in our midst.

After the article was published, Casey denied by email to me that he has ever worked for the Kremlin. I believe him. I also believe that his views are sincere. However inaccurate and morally repugnant those views, I don't believe that he deserves personal abuse for expressing them.

After all, you can be sincere and wrong at the same time – just ask the AmCham board of directors who hired Casey. They'll tell you, or then again maybe they won't. If I were involved in hiring Casey, I would be embarrassed as well.

My guess is that, considering Zukoski was disdainful of the EuroMaidan Revolution to the end, the chamber made a big mistake by hiring someone like Casey who they thought the old regime, one that many thought would be in power perpetually, would like. This mistake shows why it's good to have competing business associations and also why those associations should rank democracy, human rights and rule of law as high as making money on their lists of priorities. The chamber's silence is making a bad situation worse. We will certainly pay closer attention to the next president's views and actions – and we hope AmCham does as well.

Kyiv Post chief editor Brian Bonner can be reached at bonner@kyivpost.com



VOX populi

WITH VICTORIA PETRENKO

What is the importance of the resignation of Igor Kolomoisky as governor?



Oleksandr Kirilkov
student

"His resignation was the right step. It should not be so, that he captures UkrNafta (a state-owned oil company). And he can't talk in such a way with journalists. He should remember that he held a high position and could not allow himself such things."



Valeriy Kapelyushny
historian

"Everything being done today is right. Our Security Service (of Ukraine) works well. Kolomoisky

visited (President Petro) Poroshenko, perhaps they found some compromise. In Dnipropetrovsk there are enough forces, as in Odesa and Kharkiv, and if even somebody will try to do something there, it is not a problem anymore. We have start to make order in the country. Kolomoisky did a lot of good things for Dnipropetrovsk, it is true, but it is also true that he, or maybe his command, worked sometimes not correctly."



Anatoly Mozharovsky
poet

"Over 23 years the country was looted. The relations between Poroshenko and Kolomoisky

influence nothing. What is really matters is that the system remained to be bandits and thieves, where everything is done for money. All these games with resignations, assignments, arrests, fights with corruption, are designed for silly people."



Valentin Rynkov
office administrator

"Young progressive politicians should be responsible for reforms, not the oligarchs who act in their own interests not in the interests of people."



Tetyana Marochko
teacher

"If the person is at his right place, it does not matter who he is, an oligarch or a simple official. If he brings benefit to the state, let him work."

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Ukraine's Soviet legacy shows in outdated military logistics

BY ILYA TIMTCHENKO
TIMTCHENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

Decades-old military vehicles. Transactions still processed on paper. Troop gear requirements that haven't been updated since 2000.

Ukraine's military logistics are bogged down by their Soviet legacy and bureaucracy. The inefficiency puts lives at risk and wastes money.

"We've already invested five percent of our gross domestic product into the national security and law enforcement, so it's already a heavy burden on the budget," Finance Minister Natalie Jaresko told Bloomberg Television on March 24. "We spend on average \$5 million a day defending ourselves from unprovoked aggression."

Military logistics comprise some of the most important aspects of military organization: from planning and implementing troop movements, to the acquisition, movement and maintenance of weapons and materials.

"There's nothing more important for a nation than to be able to defend itself and raise armed forces," President Petro Poroshenko told a group of military commanders in Kyiv on March 23.

In the same speech, the commander-in-chief said the army is outdated, but is undergoing "dramatic changes to military training and logistics provisions."

Bohdan Kovalev is part of a group of eight former volunteers who helped supply soldiers that now has official status within the armed forces. On Nov. 17, the government tasked them with overseeing the transition of old logistical systems to more efficient ones.

Kovalev mainly works on the delivery of food and clothing supplies, including international humanitarian



Ukraine received 10 Humvees as part of an overall \$75 million non-lethal military defense aid from the U.S. at Boryspil airport on March 25. Overall the aid package includes 230 Humvees, medical supplies, unarmed Raven drones, counter-mortar radar and night vision devices. (Volodymyr Petrov)

equipment, to soldiers on the battlefield. The challenges he and his team face are immense, and there is no way to replace an old system at once.

An important criterion in the logistical framework is transparency since international donors carefully observe the delivery process. "People want to see where this all goes," Kovalev says.

Ukraine received 10 Humvees from the U.S. on March 25 as part of America's first non-lethal military aid package. Included in the \$75 million package are unarmed Raven drones, counter-mortar radar, night vision devices and medical supplies. Ukraine

expects an additional 200 Humvees by mid-May.

Another criterion is proper training to use new equipment, lethal or non-lethal. "If we do not know how to use it, it is useless for us," Kovalev says.

NATO is helping to improve logistics as well, said Tetyana Richkova, a volunteer who cooperates with the Defense Ministry. Money will be used to build new warehouses.

A card system will be implemented so that soldiers can register their uniform sizes and other necessary supplies automatically. Up to 20 percent of uniform costs are lost because of wrong sizes, Richkova said.

High levels of bureaucracy still curtail improvements.

One problem is that all transactions are processed on paper, said Richkova. "It's impossible to understand what is in a warehouse, and what is on its way," she says. "Everything is still operating by Soviet standards. This is simply a nightmare."

Poor logistics also affect morale.

Maksym, a deputy commander serving in the conflict zone who has asked that his last name not be given because is not authorized to speak about military service, said that many who completed their tours of duty still have not received documents stating that they

participated in military operations. This, in turn, delays the distribution of salaries.

"People do not like it that their rights are not protected and that they cannot receive their documents in time," he says.

The government currently delivers about 80 percent of military supplies and the rest is made by what is donated by volunteers, according to Richkova. These supplies include food, gas, some weapons and night-vision devices.

Based on official government requirements, soldiers are all now fully equipped. But the requirements themselves are a problem, Richkova says, pointing out that the latest update on military essentials for soldiers was compiled in 2000.

For example, as a matter of policy, new uniforms are distributed to soldiers every nine months. But this is inadequate in actual times of military operations, when a soldier's uniform is likely to be worn out in much less time.

Valentin Mayevskiy, a logistics expert and head of the Logistics Association of Ukraine, a think tank, mentions another problem: the outdated military vehicles that deliver supplies. They have been out of use for decades now, he says. They break down on the road and create further delays that hamper the army's performance.

Mayevskiy suggests that private companies step in to help the government with new and more efficient transport equipment. "Private companies have a huge number of vehicles," he says. "Moreover, they are not being used for their regular jobs."

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Ukrzaliznytsya transfers losses to cargo clients

BY OLENA GORDIENKO
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The government-run railway monopoly Ukrzaliznytsya plans to raise cargo tariffs by 25 percent in May. Tariffs have already been raised twice in the last year – by 12.5 percent in July 2014 and by 30 percent in February 2015.

Ukrzaliznytsya insists that it provides cargo services below cost. Its clients in heavy industry, however, say that the increase put some out of business. Higher transportation costs are a major threat to the metallurgy, construction and chemical industries, which experienced declines in production ranging from 28 to 31 percent in 2014.

The tariff hike is short-sighted, market players said.

Yuriy Zinchenko, CEO of Ilich Mariupol Metallurgical Plant, said that Ukrainian metallurgy might cease to exist soon.

"The last increase of 30 percent cost an additional Hr 600 million (\$25.4 million) for my plant in 2014," Zinchenko said at a roundtable in Kyiv on March 24. "And the next one of 25 percent will cost an additional Hr 800 million (\$33.9 million) by the end of this year."

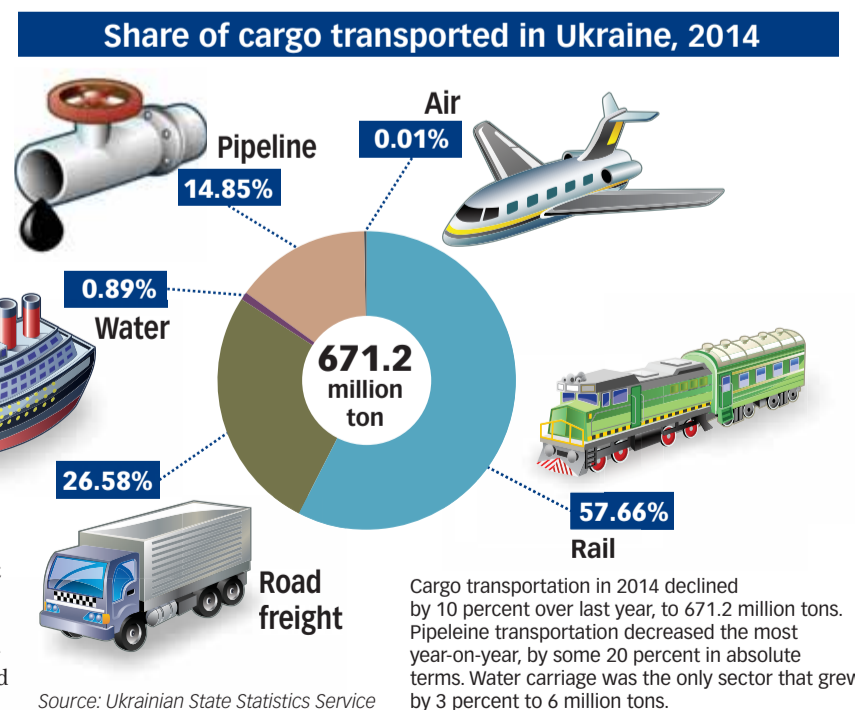
Others counter that those currently opposing the tariff spike are not representative of the larger business community. "Those are oligarchic business-

ness – metallurgists and connected productions," says industry expert Dmytro Podturkin.

"Their situation is not that critical, devaluation has only increased their competitiveness on export markets"

He says Ukrzaliznytsya has no other choice.

"Previous management had almost led Ukrzaliznytsya to default. The railway met 2015 with zero reserves, obsolete carriage equipment and a portfolio of accumulated 'bad loans,'" Podturkin says. → 8





Advertisement

Launch of the Kuehne + Nagel 125+ anniversary year

From Bremen to the world

Bremen, January 28, 2015 — 125 years ago, August Kuehne and Friedrich Nagel founded a forwarding company in Bremen under the name Kuehne + Nagel. What started with transporting raw products such as cotton, cereals, wood, animal feed and sugar, has developed into one of the leading global logistics companies. Today, Kuehne + Nagel has a logistics network that spans the globe and offers its customers integrated and high value-added logistics solutions.

“In the history of Kuehne + Nagel, Bremen continues to have an unrivaled significance”, said Klaus-Michael Kuehne, majority shareholder and Honorary Chairman of Kuehne + Nagel International AG. “This is where the company originated and even today valuable initiatives are spread from there to the world, whether from the seafreight competence centre or the contract logistics business unit.” Kuehne emphasised that, in addition to a healthy growth-oriented corporate policy, it was particularly the commitment of the many talented employees which enabled Kuehne + Nagel to reach its current size. “It has always been one of our principles that we motivate employees, develop them within the company and strive for success through teamwork, which is essential for a logistics company with its complex tasks and cross-sectional functions as a service provider.”

Three generations at the anchor and wheel — a brief review

It was August Kuehne and Friedrich Nagel whose decisiveness, can-do attitude and innovative services set an example and laid the foundation for the company's success.

In the second generation, Alfred Kuehne shaped the organisation for six decades and not only achieved its special positioning among the leading forwarders in Germany but also initiated the first steps towards internationalisation.

At the start of the 1960s a new era started for the family-run company with the arrival of the third generation — Klaus-Michael Kuehne: He realised his vision of establishing a global logistics network that now has around 63,000 employees at 1,000 locations in over 100 countries, and thereby strengthened the position of Kuehne + Nagel in the age of globalisation and international division of labour.

Over recent decades Kuehne + Nagel has not only secured top rankings in the league of global sea and air freight forwarders, but also developed contract logistics into a third key division. In the same way that specialised transportation for cotton and tailored services achieved success for the founders, today IT-based, industry-specific logistics solutions make Kuehne + Nagel an important partner for trade and industry. In addition, due to its innovative overland services, Kuehne + Nagel is able to support its customers from the first to the last mile of their supply chains.

125+ — a look ahead

Karl Gernandt, Chairman of Kuehne + Nagel International AG, noted in his speech at the launch event that to date, only a few companies in the logistics industry have been able to demonstrate such tradition and development.

“There are specific strengths such as the entrepreneurial spirit, innovative power, efficiency, the ability to learn and a special company culture lived by all employees that enable Kuehne + Nagel to achieve sustainable success.” Gernandt demonstrated his conviction “that building on these strengths and a good mixture of tradition and further development, the Kuehne + Nagel Group is ideally prepared for the future and will not only master the challenges of the coming decades but will also be able to shape them. That is what is meant by the ‘Plus’ in our anniversary logo.”

Container Anniversary World Tour — from Bremen to the world

On the occasion of the company's anniversary, Kuehne + Nagel is sending two 40-foot containers on a trip around the world — one to the east and the other to the west. Inside, the containers hold something special: On four multimedia stations, visitors can discover information about the history, service portfolio, innovations and career options at the Kuehne + Nagel Group.

The container will be presented at 14 locations around the world at national customer events. The tour not only underlines the company's leading position in global seafreight but also the strength of its global network.

At the end of the launch event in Bremen, Klaus-Michael Kuehne personally sealed one of the two containers and wished it farewell as it started its “Anniversary World Tour”.

About Kuehne + Nagel

With around 63,000 employees at around 1,000 locations in over 100 countries, Kuehne + Nagel is one of the leading global logistics service providers. It focuses on sea and air freight, contract logistics and land transport with a clear focus on areas that add significant value such as IT-supported integrated logistics offerings.



Bremen, city where Kuehne + Nagel history started



From left to right: Karl Gernandt, Chairman; Klaus-Michael Kuehne, majority shareholder and Honorary Chairman; Detlef Trefzger, Kuehne + Nagel Group CEO and responsible for Contract Logistics of Kuehne + Nagel International AG.

KUEHNE+NAGEL



Kuehne + Nagel – Your partner in Ukraine



Victor Shkarban, Kuehne + Nagel Ukraine CEO

Kuehne + Nagel is one of the leading logistic service providers in Ukraine, over 20 years offering its customers the full scope of logistic services: seafreight, airfreight, overland, contract logistics and customs brokerage.

The Ukrainian affiliate of the company is driven by Victor Shkarban, who was appointed Managing Director of the Kuehne + Nagel national company in Ukraine in 1997.

Over the last twenty three years, Kuehne + Nagel Ukraine has grown strongly. Under Victor Shkarban's management, the number of employees has increased from 3 to 800 and the national company has developed into a leading provider of comprehensive, integrated logistic services for the strongly developing Ukrainian market.

Kuehne + Nagel Ukraine is now represented by 6 offices and 7 contract logistics centers, which cover a surface of approx. 120,000 square meters. More than 800 qualified employees offer competent and reliable solutions. With industry expertise, wide range of transportation services and global experience, Kuehne + Nagel has the flexibility to meet needs of business in a changing market.

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Ukrzaliznytsya transfers losses to cargo clients

→6 He estimates Ukrzaliznytsya has \$ 1.5 billion in foreign currency loans.

Ivan Khoryakov, deputy head of Ukrzaliznytsya's commercial department, said that tariffs must be raised because they constantly lag behind the growing producer price index.

"Diesel fuel and energy rose in price," he says. "Hryvnia devaluation and debts produce additional pressure. Cargo turnover decreased significantly, and this reduced our revenue. We cannot work below cost."

However, even the increase will not allow for infrastructure improvements or in the enhancements of services. Only Hr 400 million (\$16.9 million) in capital investments are planned for 2015, as compared to the Hr 30 billion (\$1.27 billion) needed.

The business model has been to make up for losses in passenger services, estimated at Hr 10 billion (\$0.42 billion) in 2014, with revenues from cargo transportation.

Many experts think this is not an efficient model, although hiking passenger fares is risky.

Iryna Kosse, an expert on transportation and energy from the Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting, says that railway losses incurred by local commuter traffic are supposed to be paid from local government budgets. But these payments are historically delayed and Ukrzaliznytsya receives only 30 percent of these payments.

Kosse believes that the introduction of market prices for passenger transportation together with targeted state subsidies for those who cannot afford the new prices is the best way.

"Such a mechanism is currently being designed for subsidizing utilities, and if it proves successful, it could be later applied to other services," Kosse says. "Ukrzaliznytsya is not considering this option at the moment."

Kosse hopes, however, that business meetings on the cargo tariff next

month will result in a tariff increase below the announced 25 percent.

As railway costs increase, companies will inevitably adjust, switching to road freight and water transport.

"Ukrzaliznytsya has already lost Hr 13.5 million (\$0.57 million) in 2014, as we switched to water transportation," says Pavlo Kravchenko, chairman of the board of the Zaporizhia ferrous metals plant. "With higher tariffs (Ukrzaliznytsya) will lose even more."

Water cargo turnover in 2014 grew by 18 percent to 5.5 million ton-kilometers, a measurement of when 1 kilogram moves a distance of 1 kilometer.

The fear also is that producers will pass the price increases to consumers.

"High cargo tariffs will hit the cement industry and economy as a whole," says Miguel Machado, the head of Ukrcement Association, an industry group. "As a result, the difference in prices for cement in oblasts with and without cement factories will become dramatic."

Inefficiencies and corruption inside Ukrzaliznytsya also contribute to the state-run company's losses.

"Both businesses and individuals would not have been so critical of the higher tariffs if the corruption level was not so high," says Angela Bochi, senior economist at International Centre for Policy Studies. "They should first review their expenditures, transparently set their tariffs and applied criteria, and fight corruption inside Ukrzaliznytsya."

The former head of state fiscal inspections, Mykola Gordiyenko, said that corruption at Ukrzaliznytsya has cost the state Hr 258 million (\$10.93 million), namely through procurement schemes and embezzlement.

Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk has asked the General Prosecutor's office to look into Gordiyenko's allegations.

Kyiv Post staff writer Olena Gordiyenko can be reached at gordienko@kyivpost.com.

A 'Marshall Plan' for Ukraine's roadways



ROMAN KHMIL

So is there any chance for us to smell the brand new quality asphalt on Ukrainian roads any time soon? The simple answer is yes, but those should be concrete roads instead.

It is definitely the right moment in time to deal with roads - situation has never been that critical before. Out of 170,000 kilometers of state, regional and local roads, 97 percent are officially recognized by the state road agency Ukravtodor to be in an unacceptable condition now. The death toll from road injuries is four times higher than in Europe. Yet the average speed of trucks on a highway is 30 kilometers per hour vs. 60 kilometers per hour in Europe, which leads to excessive costs of transportation. This sector was neglected and underfunded for years, and we need to turn it around now.

We know what needs to be done. Both history and economists teach us that massive road construction projects can become a powerful locomotive of economic growth and deliver \$1.6 in return for each \$1 invested in roads over the period of 5-10 years. This is on top of the Hr 50 billion annually being wasted at the moment in economical losses of the business and population.

What needs to be done? First, we need to go through reforms in the road sector:

Increase efficiency and decentralize the management system;

Increase funding and ensure it is stable and spent properly;

Replace the monopoly of state road agency Ukravtodor with competitive market for road construction, repairs and maintenance services; and

Ensure proper independent quality control and civil oversight

Decentralize

The first step would be to decentralize the road sector. We need to let local authorities and territorial communities to manage and prioritize construction and maintenance of local roads. This reform is under way already as the government is planning to transfer 120,000 kilometers of local roads to the local authorities along with the proper funding. At the same time, Ukravtodor subsidiaries, which were responsible for regional services (oblavtodor) will be split into 25 entities and also transferred to report to the local authorities.

As a second step, local authorities would have to privatize and/or reorganize oblavtodor(s) operations in order to create competitive road construction and maintenance market locally. Government will implement the same regarding 52,000 kilometers of state and regional roads.

It is very important to support those reforms with proper financing: stable, sufficient and spent efficiently. Ukraine is financing roads from the same source as other countries across the world: excise for the fuel. At the moment we charge 100 euros per ton of imported diesel and 200 euros for petrol. This results in \$1.5 billion of annual income to the state budget. But for the previous 10 years, only 20-30 percent of those funds were spent on roads, while the rest was redirected to other government spending. Also funding of the road sector was very hectic, which did not allow proper planning



A highway interchange in the Sviatoshynsky district in Kyiv on March 26. (Volodymyr Petrov)

and prevented private investments from entering this sector.

As a result, now we need at least \$3 billion annually over the next 10 years in order to fix all 52,000 kilometers of the state and regional roads. If we add local and municipal roads on to this, we are talking about a \$50 billion to \$100 billion effort here.

Double excise tax

Where do we get the money?

We would need to double the fuel excise - most countries across Europe, as well as Russia and Belarus have twice-higher level of excise and road funding available per kilometer. Unfortunately, roads are expensive and it is not possible to build those without substantial capital investment. But it pays out well!

Other sources of financing, which have huge untapped potential in Ukraine, are state-private partnership mechanisms as well as concessions, which would attract substantial amount of private investments into this sector. Government has to remove only one roadblock here: the current one-year long budget cycle does not allow Ukravtodor to sign 5-7 year maintenance contracts, which in turn does not allow vendors to invest into road construction and maintenance equipment.

Toll roads

And last but not the least, toll roads for heavyweight trucks are essential, since 99 percent of road damage comes from trucks. A number of countries which has implemented tolling systems and charge truck owners a fee per kilometer driven. The revenue is dedicated to the road rehabilitation efforts.

Excessive loads

One of the critical tasks at the moment is

to prevent roads from being destroyed by trucks carrying excessive loads, often 2-3 times more than allowed in Ukraine. There is no point in fixing roads and building new ones if those get destroyed over 2-3 years period, while the typical road lifetime should be 8-10 years instead. Current road inspection is completely corrupt and is going through reform as we speak. Yet, it is impossible to solve this issue without electronic control systems (weight in motion) being deployed. We need to eliminate physical contact between inspector and the driver, and enforce fines for the overweight electronically.

Concrete roads

There is also no point in building asphalt roads in Ukraine any more.

With cement overproduction, concrete roads would cost less and live for 30 years without repairs, which is four times longer!

At the moment concrete highways constitute 1 percent of our roads while developed countries have 20-30 percent of those on average. We simply need to build more of those.

It is that simple

Reform Ukravtodor and the road sector to ensure competitiveness and efficiency, then pour money into road construction, and enjoy high employment, happy drivers and tremendous gross domestic product growth!

Roman Khmil is an adviser to the Minister of Infrastructure and chairman of the board at the nongovernmental organization My Road. He is currently going through the bureaucratic process of being appointed head of roads and transportation department at the Ministry for Infrastructure.

Where Ukraine's concrete roads should be located



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Abromavicius faces big test in fighting tobacco industry

BY ILYA TIMTCHENKO
TIMTCHENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

Ukraine has been a suspiciously strong voice in campaigning for pro-tobacco legislation in the international trade arena, finding partnership with an industry whose products kill millions yearly.

The fight between tobacco companies lobbying their multibillion-dollar interests and anti-smoking activists, who have much less to spend, is fierce around the world.

Australia, Great Britain, Norway and Canada and other developed nations continue to toughen up tobacco regulations. While Ukraine has made progress – banning indoor smoking and advertising while hiking taxes – more needs to be done to curb the addiction in a nation in which as many as 100,000 people die prematurely.

In one key area, in particular, Ukraine's officials remain on the wrong side of the fight.

The issue is packaging, especially the movement around the globe to take away one of the last marketing and advertising opportunities that the tobacco industry has left: the cigarette pack.

Studies have found that moving to plain and standardized packaging, with no logos or bright colors, reduces smoking.

One of the trailblazers in the area has been Australia, whose plain packaging law of March 13, 2012 has been challenged by Ukraine. The nation's officials alleged that the packaging interferes with individual property rights and harms trade.

Hanna Hopko, the member of parliament who heads its committee of international affairs, worked for five years as a public health advocate before her election to the Verkhovna Rada in October.

"This case of Ukraine against Australia and already against Moldova is adding to the negative perception of Ukraine in the world," Hopko said.

Instead of working on economic reforms, the Economy Ministry is lobbying the interests of a harmful industry, Hopko said.



A customer purchases a stack of glossy cigarette boxes from a kiosk in downtown Kyiv. (Volodymyr Petrov)

In Australia, all cigarette packages must be of one olive color, with the same font and big cautionary labels on each side warning the consumer that smoking kills. Ireland and Great Britain recently approved the standardized packaging as well.

"The Ukrainian Economy Ministry was categorically against it," said Andriy Skipalskyi, chairman of the board of Smoke Free Ukraine, a non-profit organization.

The only countries that supported Ukraine's decision were Nicaragua, Honduras and Cuba.

But Hopko sees hope in the new leadership.

Economy Minister Aivarus Abromavicius has not taken any action against Australia's standard packaging, discontinuing the support of the overthrown regime of President Viktor Yanukovich.

Abromavicius also fired ex-deputy

economy minister Valeriy Pyatnitskyi, considered the main lobbyist of the tobacco industry within the government, Hopko said.

Pyatnitskyi, who is now an advisor to Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, refused to comment.

Konstantin Krasovsky, the director of the Ukrainian Center for Tobacco Control, a research and advocacy organization, has spent 20 years on tobacco control in Ukraine. He is one of Ukraine's most well-known public health advocates.

Krasovsky says it is impossible to reach a compromise between the tobacco industry and anti-tobacco coalitions. "We want people to smoke less while they want people to smoke more," he said.

The tobacco industry is involved in Ukraine's World Trade Organization claims against Australia and corrupting Ukraine's officials to take its side, Krasovsky claimed.

The world's major four tobacco companies operate in Ukraine – Philip Morris International, Japan Tobacco International, British American Tobacco and Imperial Tobacco – and hold a 98 percent market share.

In 2013, Ukraine exported \$292 million tobacco products while it imported \$454 million, according to the Ukrainian government.

Taras Kachka, acting president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Ukraine, said that the four major companies have manufacturing plants in Ukraine geared for massive export. Because of this, Kachka said that Ukraine has an economic interest in protecting the industry and, therefore, the claim should not be dismissed.

But Taras Shevchenko, director of the Media Law Institute, a human rights think tank, pointed out that Ukraine didn't sell any tobacco prod-

ucts to Australia in 2012 or since then. Instead, the tobacco industry is using Ukraine to lobby its interests internationally, Shevchenko said. "Tobacco companies look for such countries where it is easier to promote their interests via the government," he said.

The Kyiv Post contacted all four tobacco giants via email, but only got a response from British American Tobacco.

"Regarding the Economy Ministry of Ukraine, the Ukrainian tobacco industry has a long-lasting record of cooperation aimed at support and protection of its legitimate economic interests in the course of international trade," said British American Tobacco.

In 2012, a Reuters article identified British American Tobacco as providing assistance to Ukraine for its WTO challenges against Australia.

Skipalskyi said Ukraine should abandon its claim against Australia. "It's very easy to do in legal terms," said Skipalskyi. "The only thing that we did not have was the political will."

But there is still resistance.

Svitlana Zaytseva, head of Ukraine's Economy Ministry division on cooperation with the WTO, disagreed. She said laws similar to those of Australia limit property rights and create barriers to trade. "In every case in the World Trade Organization there is a commercial interest" which will shape the public interest, Zaytseva added.

But others, such as Krasovsky, do not find Zaytseva's argument credible. For Krasovsky, human lives are put at stake by challenging plain-packaging laws.

Smoking is especially popular among youth, where cigarette brands often define status. Standardized packaging eliminates this hook into young smokers. After plain cigarette packages were adopted, tobacco consumption in Australia went down, Krasovsky concluded.

The World Health Organization estimates that tobacco will kill more than 8 million people annually by 2030, most in developing countries.

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Belgium-based non-profits give Ukraine a voice in EU

BY OLENA GORDIENKO
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Ukraine's non-profit organizations in Belgium are finding that they are vital players in determining their country's future. How Europe now responds to Russian aggression and the current crisis will be paramount in determining what will happen to Ukraine.

These non-profit organizations in Belgium promote Ukraine across civil sectors – media, government and the general public. Many have formed over the past year in the understanding that Europe's perception of Ukraine will have a major effect on how the EU will set its Ukraine policy. These organizations act as Europe's window into Ukraine.

Bridge EU-Ukraine

Bridge EU-Ukraine, an international non-profit organization, has a 25-person staff and offices in Brussels, Berlin, Strasbourg and Kyiv. It aims at promoting Ukrainian interests on an international level.

"Belgian society is not indifferent to Ukraine," says Natalia Sevidova, head of Bridge EU-Ukraine. "It's very active and responsive. It gathers funds, medication, and humanitarian aid to the war front that is sent through our community." Sevidova says that the Illovaysk tragedy, in which hundreds of Ukrainian soldiers were slaughtered, was an eye-opener for many Belgians.

Sevidova says that the most active Belgian citizens are the younger generation or the elderly who have memories of World War II. These activists directly helped influence important

policy positions of the Council of Europe on Ukraine, she says.

Promote Ukraine

Marta Barandiy, the director of Promote Ukraine, tries to promote whatever has to do with Ukraine, whether it is culture, language or the civil society. "Ukrainians need to be known by Belgians and by Europeans," she says.

Promote Ukraine was established in May 2014 due to the lack of information in Belgium about the Euromaidan Revolution and Russia's war against Ukraine.

Since its establishment, the organization has organized some 20 rallies and events and has raised more than 100,000 euros in donations for Ukrainian soldiers. Promote Ukraine is registered as an official lobbyist with the European Parliament.

Brussels Policy Center

Called the Ukrainian Think Tanks Liaison Office in Brussels, the non-profit group has an office in the Belgian capital where it promotes Ukraine's European integration. The organization acts as a hub for Ukraine's major think tanks in order to provide expertise and knowledge for policymakers and diplomats in Ukraine. So far the NGO works with 20 organizations, including such think tanks as the Center for Political and Legal Reforms, DiXi Group and Europe without Barriers.

"These are the best think tanks in Ukraine," says Olena Prystayko, the executive director of Ukrainian Think Tanks Liaison. The organization was launched in March 2014. However, the original initiative was developed

in autumn 2013, when Ukraine's then-president Viktor Yanukovich did not sign the EU association agreement. Now the NGO's goal is to act as a catalyst for the EU's association agreement with Ukraine and then to ensure its proper implementation until Ukraine becomes an EU member, Prystayko says.

Ukrainian Think Tank Liaison targets EU government officials, diplomats, other NGO's and journalists in Europe. But its main goal is to cultivate EU public understanding of Ukraine. "In the end it is up to them to decide whether Ukraine becomes a member of the EU."

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Pro-Kremlin views of ex-chamber head stir criticism, questions

KYIV POST

At the height of the EuroMaidan Revolution on Jan. 13, 2014, the American Chamber of Commerce in Ukraine, knowingly or not, appointed a new president whose political views supported the Kremlin and the pro-Russian leadership of ex-President Viktor Yanukovich.

Californian Bernard Casey, who served as president of the 600-member chamber from Jan. 31, 2014, to the end of the year, also espoused antagonistic views about American corporations as far back as 2009, according to his Facebook posts examined by the Kyiv Post.

Casey's controversial views became more prominent when the Kyiv Post published an op-ed by him online on March 22 in which he described Yanukovich's flight from power last year as a Western-backed coup d'état. He also supported Russia's annexation of Crimea and described the conflict in Ukraine as a civil war rather than a Russian-orchestrated invasion.

AmCham promptly issued a statement on March 23 disavowing Casey's views.

But the chamber and 11 of 16 of the business association's 2014 board members either declined to comment or didn't respond to Kyiv Post inquiries seeking explanations for why Casey was hired, how much was known about his views and why he got fired.

Casey's predecessor, American Jorge Zukoski, "led the search for his successor," according to a Jan. 13, 2014, chamber statement. Zukoski, who returned to America after a 15-year tenure, didn't respond to an emailed message and voicemail left on his mobile phone.

It's not clear how much due diligence, if any, that the chamber's search committee did in investigating Casey's views or taking them into account in hiring him.

Casey listed "multinational corporate fascism, anti-Christian notions of human rights and gay rights, con-



Bernard Casey (Courtesy)

sumerism and materialism" among American exports to "Orthodox Christian nations," according to an Oct. 21, 2009 Facebook post.

In response to an invitation to a Kyiv Post conference on Ukraine's food supply, Casey on May 14, 2013 urged on social media that the seed company Monsanto, a chamber member, should be kicked out of Ukraine and the U.S.-Ukraine Business Council, another business advocacy group, for "their deadly poisons."

Casey didn't reply to an emailed message asking about the reasons for his firing, announced on Oct. 23 by the chamber, or whether his views affected his work performance.

"I wish the American Chamber of Commerce in Ukraine and all its employees continued success," he said in a separate email. "I pray that God will grant Ukraine's leaders wisdom to chart a path to peace, healing and prosperity. And I ask that everyone pray that God will likewise grant me wisdom to be a help and not a hindrance in this process."

As early as 2011, the American entrepreneur had advocated for Ukraine to join a common economic space with Russia and establish a free trade agreement with Belarus,

Kazakhstan and Russia, according to a report titled "Economic Integration of Russia and Ukraine," that he says he submitted to the governments of Russia and Ukraine.

In the report, he warns against Ukraine entering into an association agreement and free trade deal with the European Union and advises Ukraine to "move to federalism and subsidiarity – the principle that decisions should be made by the least centralized competent authority, which surprisingly is a principle of the administrative models in both the Orthodox Church and in the EU."

Citing Russian nationalist blogger Stanislav Mishin, Casey on Sept. 29, 2009 blames the West for "tearing away Ukraine from Russia, at any cost... They have tried to force Russian, the native tongue of half the population, out of the country, to replace it with 'proper' western Ukrainian, little more than debased Polish. They have created their own, non-recognized 'patriarch,' stealing Russian Orthodox Church lands from the Moscow Patriarchy."

This month on Facebook, Casey criticized the West for recognizing a "regime in Kyiv that came to power through an unconstitutional, violent, foreign-orchestrated coup d'état with only about 30 percent popular support, and yet fail to recognize the right of self-determination of the peoples of Crimea to reunify with their fatherland Russia, to whom they belonged before the United States came into existence, with close to 90 percent popular support."

Casey denied working for the Kremlin in a separate message emailed to the Kyiv Post.

The chamber is expected to announce the appointment of a new president in the upcoming week. Its current acting president is Taras Kachka, who was a member of the Ukrainian team that negotiated the EU-Ukraine association and free trade agreement. He was appointed on Nov. 12.



A work crew hastily erects a fence around state-owned oil producer, refiner and retailer, Ukrnafta in central Kyiv on the night of March 22 where guards, some armed with automatic rifles also arrived. (Volodymyr Petrov)

Lawmakers take away Kolomoisky's control of Ukrnafta

BY MARK RACHKEVYCH

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On the same day he accepted Igor Kolomoisky's resignation as Dnipropetrovsk governor, President Petro Poroshenko on March 25 signed a bill that allows the state to assert control over joint-stock companies where it has 50 percent plus one share or more voting rights. The law prevents gridlock situations from happening when it comes to decision-making on how earnings get disbursed, for example.

Passed by parliament on March 19, the legislation now lets the state convene a general shareholders meeting at the nation's largest producer, refiner and retailer of oil, Ukrnafta. State-owned oil and gas monopoly Naftogaz owns 50 percent plus one share of the company, while Kolomoisky controls 42 percent and has loyal management installed that handles the daily operations of Ukrnafta.

After Poroshenko signed the bill, Naftogaz executive director Andriy Pasishnyk said that new management at Ukrnafta will be hired through a competitive process "in the presence of journalists and lawmakers," Interfax news agency reported citing his Facebook page.

The Kyiv Post couldn't reach Kolomoisky for comment through his spokesperson Borys Braginsky.

Previous legislation required a quorum of 60 percent of shareholders in joint-stock companies to vote on such decisions as, management changes and the payment of dividends. The state hadn't received its share of Ukrnafta's earnings for the years 2011-2013 until an October shareholders meeting approved the measure.

"Such a high quorum has often created the so-called 'deadlock' situations when there was (an) impossibility to reach it and in consequence the normal activity of a company was hindered," Maksym Cherkasenko, head of corporate and mergers and acquisitions practice at Arzinger law firm, said in an emailed statement.

Since the October meeting, state coffers have received Hr 120 million in dividends out of a total of Hr 3.8 billion that Ukrnafta is supposed to disburse to shareholders by April 10, according to a statement published on the company's website this week. The state is still owed Hr 1.78 billion, or half the total amount.

Prior to the latest shareholders meeting, the last gathering took place on March 11, 2011. Five such meetings had taken place in 2010-2014, Ukrnafta says on its website.

The quorum bill is part of the parliamentary coalition agreement under the section that deals with "transparency of energy markets," said Cherkasenko. "The newly adopted law introduces the right approach. The above changes should have a positive impact on the business environment... and thus create favorable conditions for attraction of foreign and domestic investments..."

In a letter of intent that Ukraine sent to Washington, D.C.-based lender International Monetary Fund on Feb. 27, the government promised to clean up its bloated and corrupt energy sector, including Naftogaz and its subsidiaries.

Mentioning Naftogaz in particular, the memorandum stated: "With the assistance of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, we are also seeking to improve corporatization of key state companies. We will introduce best international standards and practices in their corporate governance based on the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development guidelines."

Naftogaz's deficit was 5.7 percent of gross domestic product in 2014 and is slated to improve to 3.1 percent of GDP this year and 0 percent of GDP by 2017, according to Ukraine's letter to the IMF.

"The loss-making and opaque gas sector in Ukraine weighs heavily on public finances, the external sector, and the overall economy," reads the letter. "The very low tariffs for residential gas and district heating encourage excessive energy consumption and lead to large quasi-fiscal losses by Naftogaz, push gas imports up, discourage investment in domestic production, and breed governance problems."

Employing more than 25,000 workers, Ukrnafta reported a net income of Hr 760 million in the third quarter of 2014, and for the same period in 2013, according to Swiss investment fund Eastern Energy and Infrastructure Invest. It reported a 20 percent year-on-year increase in revenues in September to Hr 18.2 billion.

The company holds interests in 96 onshore oil and gas fields as well as 2025 oil wells and 208 gas wells, according to Bloomberg. Ukrnafta also operates 563 wholly-owned gasoline stations, and 25 liquefied petroleum gas filling stations in Ukraine, according to the company's website. Its share of the nation's annual oil and condensate production amounts to 68 percent; the corresponding share for natural gas is 11 percent.

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Right Sector defies state order to pull out of eastern war front

BY ALLISON QUINN
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As the Ukrainian government seeks to incorporate volunteer battalions fighting in the east into the country's official armed forces, one group has defiantly refused to lay down its arms.

Right Sector, a paramilitary group that was instrumental in the Euromaidan protests that saw Kremlin-backed President Viktor Yanukovich overthrown, has called the Defense Ministry's proposal to join the armed forces "traitorous" and said they have no intention of obeying the order.

The move could throw a wrench into the plans of the Defense Ministry to bring order to all the volunteer forces fighting pro-Russian separatists in the east, where spokesman Vladyslav Seleznyov said it was vital for the various regiments to be "structured and systematized and clearly regulated and managed."

Throughout the Ukraine conflict, private battalions have fought alongside Ukraine's regular forces to prevent pro-Russian separatists from gaining more territory, but many have expressed concerns that such groups have no one to answer to, no official supervision and unclear sources of financing. Human rights groups have repeatedly sounded the alarm over major abuses by such groups, including arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances and torture.

The government's initiative to conduct housekeeping of such battalions is meant to both resolve these issues and bolster Ukraine's own government forces.

The order for volunteer fighters to either join the Ukrainian government forces or leave the counter-terrorism zones in the east came down from the head of Ukraine's Security Service on March 25.

"Now is the time for both the military leadership and the leadership of the Interior Ministry, as well as the leadership of the SBU, to take care of fighters in the counter-terrorism zones, by providing them with the legal status they deserve, the opportunity to legally enter into the official armed forces ... All those who do not want to do so must give up their weapons and select a different mode of behavior – leave the ATO zones, but more importantly, not create and not be a part of any illegal paramilitary groups," Valentin Nalivaichenko said in comments to Interfax-Ukraine.

Right Sector has been given until March 27 to leave the frontlines in conflict-stricken Mariupol and until April 1 to leave counter-terrorism zones completely, according to the group.

Artyom Skoropadsky, the group's

spokesman, said they had no intention of obeying the order, however – and that there was little the Defense Ministry could do about it.

"From the very start of the war, we have been negotiating with the Defense Ministry to make us a part of the ministry but as a separate division. But they just keep saying, 'No, you guys just dismantle and join the armed forces.' That doesn't suit us," he said, noting that Right Sector was often more effective than the armed forces.

"We've already proven with our actions, the feats of our fighters – unfortunately the deaths of many of our fighters – that we are prepared to fight, to defend Ukraine. We aren't going anywhere, and the suggestion that we would is just crazy," Skoropadsky said. "I don't even know what they were thinking when they voiced such a proposal," he said.

Skoropadsky said the group would pull out only on the orders of their leader, Dmytro Yarosh, who has yet to comment on the matter and was unavailable on March 26.

"They're taking away our right to war," said Artyom Lutsak, the chief of staff of the group's 8th independent

division. "Neutralizing the volunteer forces is betrayal," he said.

Seleznyov, a spokesman for the Defense Ministry, played down the idea that Right Sector had been issued an ultimatum, saying they had simply been offered the chance to take part in a "mutually beneficial process" to become a part of the official armed forces.

He said that as far as he knew, the group was still considering the offer, and that they had "taken a time-out to think."

Seleznyov noted that the official military wants to ensure that all fighters are "professional, well-trained and motivated, who possess military experience and are prepared to defend Ukraine and its people until the very end."

As for what would happen if Right Sector refused the offer, Seleznyov said they would figure that out "when we get to it."

"No ultimatum was given to Right Sector. We simply offered them the chance to officially become a part of the National Guard. The other option is to join the armed forces. They asked for time to consider this proposal. ... We are counting on their understanding and are awaiting a response," he said.

The OUN battalion, another volunteer battalion in the east that is not subordinate to government forces, said they were prepared to get official sta-

tus but would not leave the front until they did.

"Endless negotiations seem to be going on to get legalized. They are not denying us the right to do so outright, but there are constantly new negotiations and circumstances," Lidia Guzhva said.

For now, she said, the battalion, based near Donetsk, is getting many promises of legalization but has yet to see any results.

Oleg Sushinsky, a spokesman for Sector M, part of the government's defense forces, said in comments to Ukrainian media on March 26 that there were already plenty of government battalions serving in Mariupol, and that Right Sector wasn't needed there.

"They want to fight. But they can't do it this way. There are civilians, and then there are soldiers. If they consider themselves professionals, let them enroll officially," Sushinsky was cited as saying.

Skoropadsky was adamant that the Right Sector would settle for nothing less than getting their own separate division, saying there was not much the Defense Ministry could do to force Right Sector to comply.

"They can't take any actions against us. What could they do? The army can't fight against Right Sector; that would be absurd. Right Sector has huge authority," he said.

Russia hires Ukraine's exiled former top cop

BY OLENA GONCHAROVA
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Ukraine's fugitive former Interior Minister Vitaliy Zakharchenko was appointed a consultant for the Russian parliament's committee on property. His job is to help protect Russian investment abroad, Valeriy Seleznev, first deputy chairman of the committee, told the Kyiv Post on March 26.

Zakharchenko has a stained reputation at home. He is wanted by the prosecutor's office for crimes against humanity for his role in attacks on peaceful protests in Ukraine during the revolution a year ago. Zakharchenko was a member of ex-President Viktor Yanukovich's inner circle, referred to as "the Family," and is suspected to be one of the hawks who organized deadly police attacks on EuroMaidan.

He fled the country more than a year ago, along with his former patron, and has received a Russian passport, according to local media.

But Seleznev stressed that Zakharchenko will not be a civil servant, and will be free to help the Duma "when he has time." His work will be pro bono, according to Seleznev.

"Zakharchenko presents himself as an expert in the field of foreign real estate," said Seleznev. "Moreover, sometimes there is a need to properly organize the processes of returning foreign real estate back to the Russian Federation, so we'll appreciate Zakharchenko's work."

Sergei Gavrilov, head of the committee, was quoted by Russian Izvestiya newspaper as saying that Russian

President Vladimir Putin in his address stressed the need to strengthen the legal protection of Russian investments and property abroad.

"Vitaliy Zakharchenko will work on a number of relevant legislative initiatives as a part of the expert council of the committee," Gavrilov said to Izvestiya.

Ukraine has asked Interpol to put Zakharchenko on the international wanted list for his crimes in Ukraine. Interior Minister Arsen Avakov said last month that Ukraine is still working to persuade Interpol that there is no political element in his prosecution. Zakharchenko has also been under European Union sanctions since March 2014. The EU has frozen his assets.

Seleznev also said that Zakharchenko will solve "some operational problems in the sphere of foreign property" for Russian investors in his new capacity.

In December 2014, Zakharchenko presented a charitable foundation that started its work in the city of Sevastopol in Russia-occupied Crimea.

The organization called South-East aims to help the members of disbanded Berkut riot police unit and the employees of the Interior Ministry of Ukraine and the victims of what Zakharchenko calls "an armed coup in Kyiv."

Zakharchenko has also worked as an adviser to Russian state-company Rostec Corporation, that promotes development, production and export of hi-tech industrial products for civil and defense sectors.

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World in Ukraine

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

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Belgium wants long-term stability for investments

BY ILYA TIMTCHENKO
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Belgium companies in Ukraine say they are committed to the nation.

Like everyone else, Belgian firms took a hit in 2014 when the nation's economy contracted by almost 7 percent and the hryvnia lost 48 percent of its value against the dollar. But they are not remaining idle. Many have large projects planned.

During the first 10 months of 2014, Belgian investments nearly doubled to 85 million euros over the previous year.

In 2013, Ukraine's exports to Belgium were 366 million euros, while imports reached 632 million euros. Exports to Belgium last year increased by 6 percent, while imports fell by 25 percent, with total turnover at about 900 million euros.

ACP Ukraine

Volodymyr Yarmola, the regional manager of ACP, a liquid and dry ice carbon dioxide producing company, says that his firm is planning to build two factories. Since building a single factory can take up to five years, ACP needs a stable business environment.

"ACP has a long-term commitment, and we don't consider the Ukrainian market as a fast-money market," Yarmola says. "Belgians are very old fashioned in doing business. They are very careful in their approach."

Today the company exclusively imports carbon dioxide products from ACP's branch in Poland, and the transportation costs are expensive.

"It's absolutely clear that we have to build a plant here in Ukraine," says the 40-year-old Yarmola.

The company launched its Ukrainian operations in 2010 and now has two offices, one in Kyiv and another in Lviv.

The team of 10 employees managed to sell 15,700 tons of carbon dioxide, worth more than 3 million euros, in 2013. In 2014, the company's annual



A boat carries tourists along a canal in the Belgian city of Bruges on March 12. (AFP)

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revenue fell by 17 percent compared to the previous year. Despite the drop, the company managed to occupy more than 10 percent of market share after four successful years of development.

ACP's clients are predominantly in the beverage industry, including PepsiCo. But the company also serves food-processing and agricultural firms. Yarmola specifically sees potential growth for his company in Ukraine's agricultural industry, since greenhouses use carbon dioxide.

"The agricultural business will grow in Ukraine," he said.

Yarmola's confidence is also encouraged by visible changes in the judicial system. Last year the company won a court case against customs officials who were demanding bribes.

When ex-President Viktor Yanukovich refused to sign a far-reaching political association agreement with the European Union at the end of 2013, the company almost turned its back on the Ukrainian market. No longer, although small steps should turn into bigger ones. "We see the good trend for improvement. But it's still not enough," Yarmolenko says, emphasizing that anti-corruption laws need to be further developed.

Puratos Ukraine

Serhiy Solovey, 41, became the CEO of Puratos Ukraine in 2012, four years after it entered Ukraine's market. The supplier of ingredients to bakeries and chocolatiers, has an office in Kyiv. Its factory in Odessa burned down in 2014 and they are now planning to build a new one. In the meantime, their products are being imported from Belgium.

But the company's tragedy did not stop Puratos' ambitions. Just recently it invested 8 million euros into further development, including rebuilding the factory.

Unlike many other companies in Ukraine, Puratos grew in 2014, with 10 million euros in annual turnover.

Solovey thinks that growth could have been even better with tax reform and less bureaucracy and product regulation. "The (state) inspections do not support the business. They are only thinking about how to earn money in their pocket," he says.

He wants to see reforms similar to those in Poland 20 years ago, when the country experienced deregulation and trimmed down its bureaucracy. Similar actions by the Ukrainian government will attract international businesses, he says.

"We still have a Soviet-type regulation of business. You cannot develop your business properly if you have such kind of regulation or law environment."

Kyiv Post staff writer Ilya Timtchenko can be reached at timtchenko@kyivpost.com.

Belgium at a glance

Total area: 30,528 square kilometers
Capital: Brussels, home of the European Union and NATO
Population: 11.1 million (2015)
Government type: federal parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarchy
Head of state: King Philippe
Head of government: Prime Minister Charles Michel
GDP, PPP: \$466.4 billion (2013)
GDP per capita, PPP: \$41,663 (2013)
Main exports: Machinery and electrical equipment, chemicals, vehicles, metals, diamonds

Ukrainian-Belgian relations:

Trade: \$943.9 million (2014)
Exports from Belgium to Ukraine: chemical products, machinery & equipment, transport equipment, food, plastics
Exports from Ukraine to Belgium: Vegetable products (57.2 percent), chemical products, base metals, mineral products, textiles
Austrian investment in Ukraine: \$102 million (cumulative as of Oct. 2014)
Main investors: TPF (real estate), Schreder (street lights), Sun InBev Ukraine (beer), Puratos (food ingredients), Sibelco (industrial minerals), Melexis (IT), Siniat (Etex-Group) (gypsum extraction and building materials), Reynaers Aluminium (aluminium profiles)
Source: Embassy of Belgium in Ukraine, BBC News country profile, Belgian Foreign Trade Agency, Belgium.be, World Bank

Belgian ambassador bullish on Ukraine despite war, recession

BY OLENA GORDIENKO
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Belgium's cumulative investments in Ukraine almost doubled, to \$102 million, in the first 10 months of 2014.

Although complete statistics aren't available on the companies responsible for this growth, Belgium Ambassador to Ukraine Luc Jacobs said Belgian companies are finding creative solutions to the challenges of the Ukrainian market and are determined to stay despite war and recession.

While recapitalization of subsidiaries could be one reason for investment growth, some businesses are also expanding and planning further investments.

Cases in point are the TPF real estate company, which continues the development of the "Belgian Village" apartment complex in Lviv, and the Puratos bakery, which is planning to expand in Odesa Oblast.

"Ukraine is being kept on the radar of Belgian companies, be it in terms of trade or investment," Jacobs told the Kyiv Post during an interview at his residence in Kyiv. "Ukraine has potential as a market, as a production site, in terms of its qualified working force. You have companies that see that potential and do invest in the country."

Belgians are also active in information technology, one of Ukraine's strong sectors in terms of qualified engineers and economic potential. Meanwhile, they are also seizing the opportunities offered in energy efficiency and agriculture.

Farming, research, food processing and bioenergy are key areas of Belgian interest in the Ukrainian agriculture sector.

There are a number of medium-sized Belgian farms in Ukraine that are using innovative approaches to increase their productivity. They are also creating clusters around the farms, such as related food processing plants. Such approaches translate into more jobs for the region, the ambassador believes.

"We have a particular know-how in those areas that would be a good match for the Ukrainian expertise in the field," Jacobs said. "The success of Ukrainian agriculture translates into exports also creates added business for the ports of northwestern Europe, of which Flemish ports are an important part."

Ukraine's reputation for an unstable and corrupt business environment is still among the major obstacles to attracting more investment, the Belgian ambassador said.

"We have seen the hope-giving developments in terms of legislation, the anti-corruption bureau," Jacobs said, adding that the Belgian business community in Ukraine still feels hindered by the judicial system, in which much reform is needed.

"If businesses that are present here are happy, they will inspire others to come," he said.

The Ukrainian diaspora in Brussels is also contributing to improving the country's image abroad, taking advantage of the vast international community in Belgium.

"It is a driving force behind the initiatives taken in terms of awareness campaigns, humanitarian aid collected and sent to Ukraine, but they are not unique. There are many Belgian NGOs involved," Jacobs said.

The Belgian government contributed an additional 30,000 euros to



Speaking at his residence on March 23, Luc Jacobs, the ambassador of Belgium to Ukraine, said that hard power will have never prevails in the long run. Soft and smart power will finally help resolve Russia's war against eastern Ukraine. (Volodymyr Petrov)

the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe for assistance to Ukraine in 2014, and committed a further two million euros in humanitarian emergency aid for Ukraine on Jan. 30.

Belgium, one of the founding countries of the European Union, is an active participant in shaping EU policy and a strong advocate of a unified, European "single voice." It is pushing for a diplomatic solution to Russia's war against Ukraine.

During its chairmanship of Europe's leading human rights organization, the Council of Europe, which began in November and ends in May, Belgium wants to fully exploit its soft power to contribute to a lasting political settlement in eastern Ukraine.

→ 'Ukraine is being kept on the radar of Belgian companies.'
— Belgium Ambassador Luc Jacobs

"The council's rich experience could be used in order to find a more decent approach than just letting the guns talk and only listening to those who hold the trigger," Jacobs said. "The council has its tools which are not weak in themselves: the European Court of Justice, elements of political pressure,

a 'naming and shaming' approach that can be very effective."

In a statement released on Feb. 27, in his capacity as chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Belgian Foreign Minister Didier Reynders called on "Russia to respect its commitments and to release,

without delay, Nadia Savchenko, Oleg Sentsov and all other Ukrainian citizens that are illegally detained in Russia."

However, the efforts have been so far unsuccessful.

While the channels for dialogue should be kept open for all the parties involved, the ambassador says, the EU's political pressure and economic sanctions should be kept in place to ensure the implementation of the Minsk peace agreements, which the ambassador believes to be "the point of reference."

At the same time, the failed historic "Belgian solution," — externally imposed and internationally-guaranteed neutrality — for Ukraine is clearly out of tune with 21st century diplomacy, Jacobs believes.

In 1831, the "big powers" of the age decided that Belgium had to be a militarily neutral state, although without giving Belgium a say in the discussions. As a result, the country's neutrality was brutally violated in both world wars.

"Countries should decide for themselves — and that is what the whole crisis in Ukraine is about," the ambassador said. "Your eastern neighbor cannot dictate to you what to do. Neither can Belgium or the EU. You know what you want and it's up to you to do that. You have international order and the international community behind you."

The number of Ukrainian visa applications to the Belgium Embassy decreased by eight percent, to 8,756 in 2014. At the same time, the refusal rate rose from six to eight percent for all Ukrainian applications, considerably higher than Austria's one percent or Finland's 1.5 percent.

The ambassador believes that the hryvnia exchange rate plunge was one of the main reasons why Ukrainians cannot afford to travel elsewhere in Europe, particularly Belgium, now ranked the 11th most expensive European country by Eurostat.

Kyiv Post staff writer Olena Gordienko can be reached at gordienko@kyivpost.com.

Microelectronic Innovations Created in Ukraine: For the Good of People and Planet



Anna Potapova
Site Manager

At Soviet times the microelectronics industry was pretty well established in Ukraine and designed solutions for consumer electronics, military and other applications. During the early 1990's microelectronics in our country went through difficult times and shrank significantly, what is quite unfortunate in today's world where high-tech industry is one of the important factors for the long-term prosperity of the country.

Is there a chance for microelectronic innovations in Ukraine?

Yes, of course. Since 2000 Melexis, Belgian owned company, designs and develops in Kyiv advanced mixed signal semiconductors, sensor ICs, and programmable sensor IC systems. For the last 15 years the team of over 50 engineers have been creating innovative microelectronic solutions including mixed signal design of integrated circuits, embedded SW design and verification of integrated circuits.

The innovations Ukrainian engineers create are extremely important since the products are used in automotive applications which require high standards of quality and reliability. If a particular IC is designed for safety applications (such as pedal, steering wheel, brakes systems) the reliability standards become almost equal to the ones of the air industry. In the reliability lab in Kyiv Melexis IC's are being exposed to extremely harsh conditions while functioning at operating mode: the temperatures between -40°C to +175°C for the period of up to 5,000 hours with no failure accepted to ensure they meet these high standards.

Why integrated circuits are so important?

In 2004 more than 119,000 CNN.com users voted in the survey looking at technology of the past, present and future. As a result, the silicon chip was identified as the most significant invention of the past 50 years (24%). Chip creation revolutionized and miniaturized technology and paved the way for the development of the modern computer. In fact, the majority of many other inventions listed in the survey would not be possible without integrated circuit.

What is the particular contribution of Ukrainian engineers into innovative products?

The products designed by engineers in Kyiv provide higher comfort of driving and increased safety for the passengers and pedestrians, as well as decreased emissions. Some of the specific product designs include:

- **Time-of-Flight:** camera sensors with Time-Of-Flight (TOF) pixels that allow 3-dimensional imaging with high resolution and accuracy. Possible applications for this type of sensor include collision avoidance, gesture detection and parking assistance.
- **Solutions for Tire Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS):** Tire pressure monitoring is a proven safety enhancement for any vehicle, whether it is a passenger car, light truck, heavy truck or bus.

And this is just a fraction of what has been created by Ukrainian engineers. These people make something even bigger than innovative microelectronics — they create solutions that make driving safer, by this bringing the good for people and planet.

That's really impressive that such innovations are created in our country. Is it possible to have

sustainable development of the microelectronics industry in Ukraine?

It is no surprise the development of microelectronic industry, like any other knowledge-heavy industry, depends on people. The jobs we have in Kyiv are included in the global list of jobs that are most difficult to fill. Moreover, the state of the technical education in Ukraine needs important upgrade. Due to this, we have already implemented educational programs for students to develop future engineers in microelectronics. Many graduates of this program are now considered as strong engineers and work today at Melexis, both in Ukraine and abroad. In 2015 we are going to upgrade our student program and will create a new program for teachers.

We believe this will contribute to the development of technical competencies of young talents and enable them to innovate in the high-tech world. Consequently, this will contribute to the growth and development of the microelectronics industry in Ukraine.

More about Melexis:
www.melexis.com



Melexis is involved in many cutting edge new development areas: acceleration sensors, automotive CMOS cameras, heads-up-displays (HUD), optical bus, integrated LIN microcontrollers, 360-degree position sensing, ultra high-voltage (650V) engine ignition IC's, and others. Today nearly all automobile brands rely on Melexis ICs to safely, efficiently and comfortably convey passengers and goods, bringing Melexis at a 5th place among automotive sensors manufacturers worldwide.

Journalists rate Ukraine's best friends in Brussels

Editor's Note: The Kyiv Post asked three Ukrainian journalists based in Brussels, Belgium, the administrative capital of the European Union, to name non-Ukrainians based in Brussels who they think are the nation's best and most influential supporters. Here are their responses. The journalists who participated are Andrii Lavreniuk, Ukrinform's staff correspondent in Belgium; Sergei Voropayev, an independent journalist; and Zhanna Bezpiatchuk of Radio Svoboda.

BY BRIAN BONNER
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Four people made the list of all three Brussels-based Ukrainian journalists when asked to name Ukraine's best friends in Brussels. They are:



Donald Tusk

The European Council president and former prime minister of Poland is seen as playing a pivotal role in drumming up support within the European Union for Ukraine and keeping the Western alliance united in sanctions against Russia. However, Lavreniuk said that Tusk's public stance in support of Ukraine has weakened in his new job. "Nonetheless, Tusk tries to consolidate support for Ukraine, criticizes Russian aggression and insists on continuing and strengthening sanctions against Russia," Lavreniuk said.



Rebecca Harms

Rebecca Harms is a European Parliament member and a leader of the European Greens movement. "The German politician is influential and an old friend of Ukraine as well as a strong opponent of Russia's (President) Vladimir Putin," Lavreniuk said.

Bezpiatchuk agreed: "Her political capital is reinforced by the very fact that she is the leader of one of the political groups with very clear messages and a good reputation in Brussels. She has come to Ukraine on all occa-

sions, both tragic and happy. I know of cases when she literally helped solve problems of Ukrainians related to visas, for example. Rebecca used to attend anti-Ukrainian propagandistic events that occurred in Brussels quite regularly to counter propaganda and outright lies."



Jacek Saryusz-Wolski

Jacek Saryusz-Wolski is a member of the liberal-democratic majority in the European Parliament. "Few have been as active or as strong in support of Ukraine," said Lavreniuk. He is "an old and dedicated friend of Ukraine in all possible terms," Bezpiatchuk added.



Andrej Plenkovic

Andrej Plenkovic is a Croatian politician serving his first term as an elected member of the European Parliament, Lavreniuk said, and chairs the delegation to the European Union-Ukraine Parliamentary Cooperation Committee.

"He understands quite well the situation in Ukraine, can compare it with the Balkan experience and is trying to maintain strong contacts between Ukraine and the EU," Voropayev said.

"He has good diplomatic skills," added Bezpiatchuk.

Twelve others made the lists of at least one of the journalists. They are listed in alphabetical order:



Petras Austrevicius

Petras Austrevicius, a member of the European Parliament, is the initiator and the chairman of the informal group "Friends of European Ukraine," according to Lavreniuk. "He sincerely supports Ukraine, organizes and promotes different actions," Lavreniuk said.



Elmar Brok

Elmar Brok, the European Parliament heavyweight and German representative, chairs the Foreign Affairs Committee. "He has been backing Ukraine and criticizing Russia for years," Lavreniuk said.



Mark Demesmaeker

Mark Demesmaeker is a European Parliament member with the European Conservative and Reformists group.

"He is the only MEP and European politician in general who went to the very core of the conflict zone in the east," said Bezpiatchuk. "He was nearby Debatseve at the moment of the ongoing Russian and separatists' offensive and massive retreat of the Ukrainian army. It's one thing when a Polish or Lithuanian politician supports Ukraine actively and wholeheartedly. But it's slightly different when it's done by a Belgian politician with European reach. Demesmaeker is doing a great job by going on the air and giving interviews to the Belgian press, countering Russian propaganda with his

eyewitness accounts. He has hired a Ukrainian assistant."



Valdis Dombrovskis

Valdis Dombrovskis is a Latvian who serves as commissioner for the euro zone and social dialogue on the European Commission. "He is one of those directly involved in working out sanctions on Russia. He has a very professional, realistic and strong position on sanctions. His office and assistants do everything they can to help Ukrainians," Bezpiatchuk said.



Michael Emerson

Michael Emerson is an experienced analyst who cooperates with the European Policy Center in Brussels, Lavreniuk said, and "presents the situation in Ukraine objectively in his research, blogs and commentary amid Russia's aggressive policy."



Johannes Hahn

Johannes Hahn took over for Stefan Fuele as the EU's top person for neighborhood policy and enlargement. While the Austrian politician "is no Stefan Fuele," Lavreniuk said, "he supports Ukraine, tries to get unity behind action and urges Ukraine to reform."



Sandra Kalniete

Sandra Kalniete, the ex-minister of foreign affairs of Latvia and cur-

rent European Parliament member, "became persona non grata in Russia because of her strong stance against Crimea's annexation, Russia's hybrid war and active support for Ukraine," Bezpiatchuk said.



Gabrielius Landsbergis

Gabrielius Landsbergis, a European Parliament member from Lithuania, has been involved in the most recent \$1.8 billion euro assistance package for Ukraine, Voropayev said.

"One of the youngest MEPs who goes frequently to Ukraine," Bezpiatchuk said. "He got one of the most difficult and responsible assignments at this European Parliament - to prepare the report on EU-Russia relations that will be taken as a basis for a resolution on these relations. This resolution will be voted in June before the European Council that will decide on sanctions. He also lobbies for more macro-financial support for Ukraine."



Marju Lauristin

Marju Lauristin is a member of the European Parliament from Estonia.

"Having the experience of Soviet dissident, Marju has a very deep understanding of Putin's regime that makes her speeches, proposals and Comments on EU-Russia relations and support for Ukraine concrete, very straightforward and clear cut," Bezpiatchuk said. "She offered to consider seriously switching Russia off SWIFT, for example. She tries to cooperate with Ukrainian journalists in terms of what information sources are reliable, what she has to read, etc. She is a member of the parliament's delegation to Ukraine." → 15

Leading European producer of high-quality carbon dioxide plans expansion in Ukraine

It took about four years for ACP, a leading European producer of a high-quality carbon dioxide to gain the client's trust on Ukrainian market.

ACP first went into Ukrainian market in 2010 as CO₂ supplier and today has 10.0 percent of Ukrainian CO₂ market share. Despite ACP has faced a flurry of challenges in Ukraine: the Ukrainian revolution 2014 and hryvnia dropped its value three times against dollar, the company is in the midst of a massive takeover of local CO₂ business.

After a successful launch of the plant in Poland with production volumes of 22,5 tonnes per hour, ACP starts expansion to Ukraine.

The company's model based on local production will help to secure a reasonable price for customers, to shorten the supply chain and minimize the impact of a weak hryvnia on the CO₂ price. Today like many other

importers, the company suffers from hryvnia's exchange rate depreciation.

Customers in Ukraine are focused on improving the quality and we have been working on product standardization for a long time. ACP's Food-Grade Quality Programme conforms to the European Industrial Gases Association (EIGA) and the International Society of Beverage Technologists (ISBT) regulations.

Our dedication to quality is unconditional, we were the first gas company certified worldwide. In co-development with some key customers, we went even further, beyond the already demanding requirements of the EIGA and ISBT regulations. In order to serve these customers even better, we developed a Safe For Food programme with guaranteed 99.99% purification and the most stringent safety system.

The ACP model is based on the quality of CO₂ and a reliable delivery. But for the company, this is not just a business model, it is a mission. Since the company was founded in 1897, we have never failed to deliver to a single customer. In 2013, ACP received the Coca-Cola's best supplier of the year award.

CO₂ is...

Carbon dioxide is an odourless, colourless gas which is part of the atmosphere. Because of its typical chemical and physical properties, CO₂ plays an important role in

many applications: carbonation, plant growth stimulation, transport cooling, dry ice cleaning, cryogenic cooling and freezing, fire and explosion protection and many others.

For example carbon dioxide gas is used to carbonate water that gives carbonated soft drinks, sparkling water and beers refreshing taste sensations and fizzy effect.

For more than 118 years, ACP has gradually built its know-how in the following industries: beed carbonation drank beverages, beed food, beed experienced supplier for agriculture, beed CO₂ in bulk, pharmaceutical transport and beed/logo ice-shuttle transport cooling.

ACP can be your partner for CO₂ deliveries as well as for your tailor-made installation using equipment suited to your needs. Ice-Shuttle Closed System is ACP's new, state-of-the-art system for filling insulated containers with CO₂ for cold chain transport cooling. ACP recently developed and patented this system of dosing stations and cooling cassettes which brings a real step-change to the cold chain cooling market.

With the new Ice-Shuttle Closed System, there are no CO₂ emissions at all during the filling process. This is a real revolution when compared with all other existing systems. It is the only system which allows cassettes to be filled in the cold room, which delivers major efficiency and safety benefits.



ABOUT ACP

ACP was founded in 1897 and is a leading supplier of CO₂ in Europe, with unrivalled expertise in the field. ACP's head office and competence centre is based in Heusden-Zolder, Belgium, near Hasselt. Spread across Europe, we have 6 independent CO₂ sources, 7 state-of-the-art CO₂ purification lines and 2 Dry Ice production sites. Our own annual production capacity is 725,000 tons. The ACP model is based on the quality of CO₂ and reliable delivery. But for the company, this is not just a business model, it is a mission. Since the company was founded in 1897, we have never failed to deliver to a single customer. In 2013, ACP received the Coca-Cola's best supplier of the year award.

Our 5 major commitments to our customers:

- Our customers can always rely on us to deliver what we promise, when we promise it
- We have an unconditional dedication to quality and safety in everything we do
- Our expertise in technical matters and innovation is designed to benefit our customers
- Our true respect for the environment is present at every stage of our production and delivery process
- We work with our customers to find new and innovative ways to reduce their costs

ACP's commitments:

- We supply what we promise
- Quality and safety above all
- Experts in technical matters and innovation for your benefit
- True respect for the environment
- We help you to reduce your costs



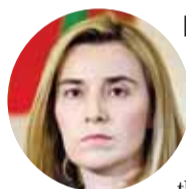
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High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini (L), Commissioner for European Neighborhood Policy & Enlargement Johannes Hahn and their Latvian counterpart Edgar Rinkevics are seen before a European Union foreign ministers meeting in Riga, Latvia, on March 6. (AFP)

Journalists name those helpful to Ukraine's cause

→ 14



Federica Mogherini

Federica Mogherini, the EU foreign policy chief, "is on the list because she has the capability to do much for Ukraine, but she has not been a very sympathetic voice thus far," Lavreniuk said.



Amanda Paul

Amanda Paul, the European Policy Center analyst, "supports Ukraine's European integration

and actively promotes her views," Lavreniuk said.



Charles Tannock

Charles Tannock is a British member of the European Parliament with the European Conservative and Reformists group. "He is personally lobbying for the United Kingdom's supply of weapons to Ukraine, using his connections in the British government. He is an old and dedicated friend of Ukraine," Bezpiatchuk said.

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Belgian expatriate stops by to create new mobile apps

BY BOZHENA SHEREMETA
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With thousands of tech specialists leaving Ukraine each year in search of higher salaries and better lives, why did Belgian Tes Mat, a 46-year-old mobile applications developer, move to Ukraine?

He smiles when he's asked – and he's asked often.

But Mat likes Kyiv, and he has been enjoying his stay while developing several of his own iOS apps and working as a freelancer.

"I came here mainly to learn Russian," he says of his first visit in 2012. A friend from Lviv had pushed him by asking: "Why do you need to go to Russia? Come to Ukraine. Everybody can speak Russian here."

After visiting Kyiv for a month, he eventually returned in 2013 and settled in.

Mat participated in tech competitions called Startup Weekends in Kyiv and Odesa. Now familiar with Kyiv's tech community, he enjoys working in KyivWorking, a shared working space popular among Kyiv's tech freelancers.

Though not part of his formal training, after the Internet was developed, he learned to make websites as a freelancer. With the development of the iPhone, he worked on iOS-apps development as well.

The first app Mat created was Vocab Ninja, which he began before moving to Kyiv. The app was launched on AppStore in May 2014. It helps to enlarge one's vocabulary in any language by showing flashcards with words. There have been around 1,000 downloads so far, mainly in Belgium. Mat plans to add new functions and promote the app via international media.

Mat developed Notifyapp with Ilia Tslaf, a Russian-Israeli who now lives in Kyiv. This app notifies people on a contact list about the holder's whereabouts just before his or her phone battery



Tes Mat, Belgian mobile application developer, talks about the products that he developed in Ukraine on March 23. (Anastasia Vlasova)

dies. The app was launched last month on AppStore. There are no analogues on the market at this point, according to Mat. There's no charge for it now, but the plan is to advance the app with more features and charge a monthly subscription later.

Mat still generates most of his income through freelance work rather than his apps. He accepts orders from Belgian clients because he can charge them significantly higher rates than clients in Ukraine.

Ukrainian IT developers can be more competitive on the market, Mat says, due to the fact that they are less expensive. The high costs charged by Belgian IT developers are pricing them out of the market, he believes.

A prerequisite for any global IT

developer, Mat says, is English-language skills. This, and doing high-quality work are the two most significant things for an independent developer, he believes. With these essential skills one can compete globally, and location becomes less important.

Mat is unsure how long he will be in Ukraine. "It would be nice to start working together with Ukrainian freelancers here on apps for clients in Belgium, but it's not necessary to start a big company," Mat says. "When I learn Russian well enough, I will probably leave to learn Chinese, Portuguese or German."

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'We will continue the fight for Ukraine with its patriots'



**GENNADIY
KORBAN**

To achieve one's goal in life you can't always go straight and up. Everyone has their own way. All my life I worked to make a profit. I was a businessman who played by twisted rules or no rules at all. This is what business was like in my country.

I thought that I had nothing to do with politics. For the first time in my life I had to change my principles when I saw the EuroMaidan Revolution (that forced ex-President Viktor Yanukovich out of power on Feb. 22, 2014). For the first time I felt that this is a chance to change our life and society.

When we organized a protest in Dnipropetrovsk, we had criminal cases started against us, and a wave of inspections came to our businesses. When Yanukovich ran, and Russia invaded Crimea, the regional council of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast only had 106 members out of 140 left. The main agents of Russian influence included (former member of parliament) Oleg Tsarev, the Communists and Party of Regions. There was no police, courts, prosecutors or Security Service of Ukraine.

For the first time in my life, (billionaire businessman) Igor Kolomoisky invited me to the most responsible and totally unprofitable project – to protect our motherland and defend Dnipropetrovsk from war and Russian separatist occupation.

Nobody could help us, and we started a war against saboteurs and terrorists with the only force we had. It was a couple dozen people from our security companies with air guns, and a score of folks from the Right Sector whom our compatriot Dmytro Yarosh brought right from the Maidan and who started defending the region.

There was no power, there was no money in the budget, and we had to do everything. We had to go to war with no weapons and repel terrorists and prepare the army to war. For months, we lived in our offices. We did not conduct any tenders when we fueled tanks. We just bought all the necessary parts, food and supplies.

Apart from us, there was no Ukrainian power in Dnipropetrovsk. We accepted all help. And we demanded support from everyone. Was it lawful? Were all our comrades law-abiding citizens? Of course not. We were at war and only needed to know if we could count on the man in the heat of battle.

Don't ask me what decisions I had to take. We did things people don't typically brag about in history books. We caught and neutralized the Russian

agents, and we looked for weapons because neither the army, nor the police gave any to volunteer fighter groups until mid-May. We went around every law that stopped us from fighting. And we formed the first volunteer battalions in the country. As soon as they got arms, the fighters immediately, without testing them at shooting ranges, went out to fight. We saved the country. We fulfilled our duty.

During our work, there were no mass disorders in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. There were no terrorist acts. We neutralized dozens of Russian agents. The Security Service of Ukraine arrested three subversive groups that planned attacks. They wanted to shoot us or blow us up.

We did not expect gratitude from the government because we were not fighting for money, but for our motherland.

In the past year, we have not privatized any assets. We did not take part in any auctions. We had no time to make money. We just spent it. We transferred money either to the defense fund of the country or concrete projects to support the army and the police.

What did we get from the government?

There have been eight criminal cases started against me and our team, and new ones are getting started. Those who wanted to destroy the revolution – and these are the friends

of Yanukovich, (former deputy Prime Minister Oleksandr Vilkul, (ex-President Leonid) Kuchma, (gas and chemicals tycoon Dmytro) Firtash – have not had a single case started against them. They're hanging around resorts, observing their "neutrality," making money and staying clean while we waged war.

We cleansed the enemy from Ukrainian land. We made them fear crossing the border into our oblast. We helped Ukraine's troops take up positions in the south and solved all their problems without phone calls from Kyiv.

We built the best hospital system and a system for evacuating the wounded. We organized the delivery of ammunition and all types of supplies. We led in the mobilization of people and equipment. We led in tax payments of all types in Ukraine.

I asked Kolomoisky to dismiss me from my job. I have no intention of taking part in restoring the old flawed system that feeds selected people. We're against the handover of national interests in energy, transport and economy. We don't want to take part in the ugly corruption created by some top officials and party leaders.

We went to war to stop the lies. We won't forget that our team buried several comrades who gave their lives to change the country. Some don't believe that we got into a conflict over princi-

ples, not money. We're not holding on to power. We don't want to take part in a coup of clerks against their own people. We decided to quit power so that nothing stops us from criticizing and opening up the painful problems of the state.

We're leaving Dnipropetrovsk Oblast with a record budget surplus of Hr 2.8 billion. We started reforming every aspect of the regional economy. We prepared the region for defense and there are Ukrainian flags flying over our land.

And I want to tell the patriots of Ukraine that we won't leave you. We won't stop fighting. We stay with you. We will not allow a repeat of 2005, we won't allow the president's friends to sell the country again to pro-Russian clans, making us again dependent on Moscow. We also won't allow the revenge of the Yanukovich-led Party of Regions and the Opposition Bloc.

We will prove that we won't stop for truth and for principles. After a year at war, we're no longer afraid. We leave offices in our native Dnipropetrovsk, but we continue fighting.

Gennadiy Korban is the former deputy governor of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast and a long-time ally and business associate of billionaire Igor Kolomoisky. Korban resigned on March 24, the same day that President Petro Poroshenko accepted Kolomoisky's resignation as governor of the region.

Kolomoisky has been too powerful economically, politically for too long



**SERHIY
LESHCHENKO**

Finally, the process of limiting the political and economic power of Igor Kolomoisky, the former Dnipropetrovsk governor and billionaire owner of Privat group, has entered its active stage.

Even though this issue should have been dealt with much earlier, the process started only now mainly because Kolomoisky crossed the line in using public resources for his own enrichment.

Besides, the political pressure young lawmakers (and former civic activists) initiated also brought its result. It eventually influenced public opinion on what it means to use public resources for enrichment.

Moreover, the West stepped in, as they don't want American and European taxpayers to support Ukraine with their money if the Ukrainian government fails to take its own money back from the oligarchs.

The concerns of Western governments are understandable.

Ukraine keeps reducing pensions and salaries and introducing new taxes, while the government fails to make steps towards getting money back from the tycoons. Instead, the government looks into the pockets of citizens.

Ukraine's budget still lacks Hr 1.8 billion (\$720 million) in dividends that Kolomoisky failed to pay to other shareholders of state-owned Ukrnafta company. Kolomoisky said he would "never pay the dividends." (Editor's note: The state owns 50 percent, plus one share in this oil extracting company, but it has been managed by Kolomoisky's team for years).

If the country could use the money to buy equipment for the army, Ukraine's fighters would be equipped much better now. This is something that shatters the idea of Kolomoisky as a patriot who saved Ukraine.

He violated the law and his oath as a government official.

Besides, he violated the law that prohibits dual citizenship, because he actually has three, not even two passports – Ukrainian, Israeli and Cypriot ones. He is officially registered as resident in one of the resort areas of Tel Aviv. The oligarch mostly lives between Geneva and Kyiv and he appeared in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast once in the last few months. He had been keeping the region under control remotely.

It's unlikely that the so-called Dnipropetrovsk People's Republic will emerge. Kolomoisky won't destabilize the situation there. If Kolomoisky tries to create such a republic, he could be charged with encroachment on the territorial integrity of the country.

Besides, citizens saw what kind of problems their neighbors have been



President Petro Poroshenko and former governor of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Igor Kolomoisky attend a meeting with the leadership of the Dnipropetrovsk region and present the new head of the region, Vitaliy Reznichenko, in Dnipropetrovsk on March 26. (Mykhaylo Palinchak)

facing in the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk republics, and are weary of separatism.

Besides, the dialogue shouldn't be over how many more state companies Kolomoisky should get in order to secure Dnipropetrovsk Oblast from Russian aggression. But rather the debate should be what will happen to him next. Will he flee the country or go to jail to face punishment for all of his crimes. There are enough grounds to think that Kolomoisky violated the criminal code.

Back in 2005, Kolomoisky was suspected in the attempted murder of Sergei Karpenko, a lawyer who refused to contribute to the oligarch's attempt to gain control over the Dneprospsstal, a steel producer.

Igor Sholodko, a former investigator with the Prosecutor General's Office, opened and then closed the criminal case against Kolomoisky on suspicion of murder that same year. Solodko was killed on Nov. 30 while defending the Donetsk airport from Russian forces.

The case was dropped after

Prosecutor General Svyatoslav Piskun was allegedly paid a bribe. It was closed also because Kolomoisky's ally and now deputy governor, Svyatoslav Oliynyk, managed to get the charges dropped. Oliynyk appealed to the local Dnipropetrovsk court where Kolomoisky supposedly had a connection, even though only the Kyiv-based Pechersk district court had enough rights to conduct this kind of trial.

Sholodko then gave up his work for the General Prosecutor's Office.

However, last year another tycoon – billionaire Viktor Pinchuk – filed a lawsuit in the London High Court against Kolomoisky, demanding the return of shares of the Kryvy Rih Iron Ore Combine worth some \$1.5 billion. Pinchuk accused the defendants of failing to fulfill contracts.

At the same time, Sholodko was mobilized to the army by Dnipropetrovsk military commissariat, even though he lived in the central Ukrainian city of Zhytomyr at that time. Before Sholodko made it to the army, he contacted Oliynyk in Dnipropetrovsk.

All these episodes might be coincidences, but very suspicious ones.

Regardless of them, Kolomoisky's crimes as well as the crimes of other oligarchs should be punished.

Serhiy Leshchenko is a former investigative journalist who is now a member of parliament from President Petro Poroshenko's bloc.



Serhiy Bochkovsky, head of the State Emergency Service (C), being arrested by a police officer at a Cabinet meeting on March 25. (kmu.gov.ua)

Do these two events signal crackdown on corruption?

BY OLEG SUKHOV
REAGANX84@GMAIL.COM

Igor Kolomoisky was dismissed as governor of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast in the early hours of March 25.

Shortly after noon the same day, the head of Ukraine's Emergencies Services, Serhiy Bochkovsky, and his deputy, were handcuffed on suspicion of corruption in the middle of a Cabinet meeting. The scene was broadcast live on national television. The two officials are suspected of taking kickbacks from the purchase of fuel at exorbitant prices.

Is the nation witnessing the rule of law finally taking root? Is this a power play? Or are these merely public relations stunts?

Some observers have said that Kolomoisky's resignation may indicate clout in collaboration with President Petro Poroshenko's increased political will. A lot will depend on the whether suspects are successfully prosecuted, and whether the government cleans up state-owned companies and reduces the influence oligarchs have on them.

The resignation followed the passage by parliament last week of a bill depriving the oligarch of his de facto control of state-owned oil and gas extractor Ukrnafta. At the same time, the government removed a Kolomoisky protégé as head of oil pipeline operator Ukrtransnafta.

Kolomoisky responded by sending armed men to both companies while exploding in a curse-laden tirade at journalists.

Observers say the future will show whether Kolomoisky's resignation and

Bochkovsky's arrest were a cheap show intended to impress the public and the West or a demonstration of genuine political will. A lot will depend on the whether suspects are successfully prosecuted, and whether the government cleans up state-owned companies and reduces the influence oligarchs have on them.

Viktoria Syumar, a lawmaker from Yatsenyuk's People's Front party, told the Kyiv Post that the most qualified, independent people should run state companies. They should be hired through a transparently competitive process, and possibly be Western executives. Others maintain that the firms should be privatized at transparent auctions – a measure for which Poroshenko has recently pushed.

Another crucial issue is whether Kolomoisky's resignation will have implications for other oligarchs, including Rinat Akhmetov, Viktor Pinchuk, Dmytro Firtash and Konstantyn Grigorishin, among others.

The tycoons have dominated Ukraine's political and economic life for most of its nearly 24 years as an independent state. "Nobody doubts that Kolomoisky is an oligarch but he's definitely not the only one and he's a pro-Ukrainian oligarch," Syumar says.

Some argue that Kolomoisky's amicable exit from his job is an indication that some kind of agreement had been reached with the president.

Another theory is that Poroshenko – himself a billionaire oligarch – was motivated not by the interests

of the state but by his own business in his struggle with Kolomoisky. Last week the former governor accused some of the president's allies, including Poroshenko Bloc lawmaker Ihor Kononenko, of installing a loyal associate at the helm of Ukrtransnafta.

Kolomoisky's resignation also prompted a debate over the extent of his influence over Yatsenyuk and his allies, who have often been accused of being in the oligarch's pocket. Yatsenyuk's faction, however, voted with Poroshenko's to pass the Ukrnafta bill, suggesting that claims of Kolomoisky's influence over Yatsenyuk were greatly exaggerated.

Syumar denied that Kolomoisky was financing her party and said that Yatsenyuk "supported the Ukrainian state's interests in the dispute."

"We should divide the business story and the political one. Politically, we support (Kolomoisky) in what he was doing, in his efforts to help volunteer battalions," she says, adding that they did not support Kolomoisky as a businessman.

The oligarch has been praised for turning Dnipropetrovsk Oblast into a bulwark against pro-Kremlin separatists last year. He succeeded in those efforts far better than former Donetsk Oblast Governor Serhiy Taruta and Odesa Oblast Governor Ihor Palutsya, Syumar says.

The Kolomoisky saga may also have repercussions for the fate of volunteer battalions, some of which have been accused of being his "private army."

He has reportedly financed the Dnipro, Azov and Donbas battalions, which are part of the Interior Ministry, and also has links to the Right Sector's military unit, which has no legal status, and Dnipropetrovsk-based private security firm Sich.

Pavlo Kishkar, a combatant in the Donbas battalion turned lawmaker from the Samopomich party, denied by phone that there were any links between his unit and Kolomoisky, however.

Interior Minister Arsen Avakov has argued that Kolomoisky does not have much sway with the battalions now, and they have been firmly incorporated by his ministry. Meanwhile, Security Service head Valentyn Nalyvaichenko said on March 25 that all "illegal" military units, including those in Donbas and in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, should be disarmed. The statements were likely a reference to the Right Sector and Sich, the security firm.

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Kolomoisky's departure triggers security debate

BY ALLISON QUINN
and OLGA RUDENKO
A.CASEYQUINN@GMAIL.COM
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The dramatic firing of Dnipropetrovsk Governor Igor Kolomoisky, credited with staving off the spread of Russian-backed separatism in Ukraine's second most populous oblast, has sparked nervousness over the region's security.

Any instability in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine's de facto eastern border, could allow Russian forces and their proxies to gain more ground.

Shortly after Kolomoisky was dismissed late on March 24, his deputies Gennady Korban and Svyatoslav Oliynyk resigned as well.

President Petro Poroshenko's action came after Kolomoisky dispatched his security men to seize control of state-owned companies Ukrnafta and Ukrtransnafta. Before, the state tried to reassert control over Ukrnafta, in which Kolomoisky has a minority stake, and fired Kolomoisky's former associate from the Ukrtransnafta top position.

Kolomoisky's team in Dnipropetrovsk is credited with stopping the westward advance of Russian-backed forces. Now, some fear the creation of a separatist Dnipropetrovsk People's Republic.

Viktor Mironenko, head of the Ukrainian Studies Center at the Russian Academy of Sciences' European Institute, suggested that Kolomoisky's



Fighters of the Donbas Battalion train at an Interior Ministry base in Novi Petrivtsi near Kyiv on June 5. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

resignation was part of a wider and destabilizing war among Ukraine's powerful elites.

"If the Donbas falls because of this competition between elites, the only thing left to hold back the separatists is Dnipropetrovsk," Mironenko said. "Ukraine needs to do some cleaning house, but I can't imagine who is capable of doing that today."

Oliynyk, who served as deputy governor for Kolomoisky, said he wishes the successors well, but doubts that the new governor, former media manager Valentyn Reznichenko, can be as successful on the security front.

"I doubt that the new governor realizes how much money it requires to maintain security," he told the Kyiv Post.

According to him, Kolomoisky and his deputies last year raised some Hr 300 million to equip several volunteer battalions and to build 23 roadblocks to keep out separatist fighters based 70 kilometers away from the Dnipropetrovsk Oblast's border.

The money came from Kolomoisky himself, businesses and private donors, including foreign ones. Many of them donated because they trusted Kolomoisky, according to Oliynyk.

The fact that Kolomoisky funded the local volunteer battalions in 2014 stirred speculation about the oligarch putting together a private army. But the battalions have since been incorporated into the Interior Ministry as part of the National Guard.

The threat to the region comes not only from the east, where Russian forces and their allies are eager to snatch up more territory, but also from within Dnipropetrovsk, where Kolomoisky's allies had been keeping local separatists in check.

According to Oliynyk, they were "maintaining a dialogue" with local separatist organizations to prevent attempts at seizing local government buildings. Two attempts took place in March 2014, but were unsuccessful.

Viktor Marchenko, leader of Soviet

Officers Union, a non-government organization in Dnipropetrovsk, was one of the most active pro-Russian activists in the city. During the March rallies last year he called on the Russian army to come to the city. However, under the rule of Kolomoisky, Marchenko was forced to stop such activities. Marchenko blamed it on the pressure of local authorities, who started eight criminal investigations of separatism expressions in the region, and questioned him on all of them.

Such precautions paid off. "There were terrorist attacks in Odesa and Kharkiv, but not a single one in Dnipropetrovsk," Oliynyk said. "I know of three attacks that were prevented, and organizers were arrested. I'm sure there were more."

But some experts still think that the role of Kolomoisky in keeping the region safe is exaggerated.

According to Volodymyr Fesenko, head of Kyiv-based Penta Center for Political Expertise, the success of the Kolomoisky's team was largely based on Dnipropetrovsk and the local mood.

"To say that Kolomoisky was a savior of Dnipropetrovsk — sorry, but

his plainly stupid," he said. "The polls were showing that separatism risks in Dnipropetrovsk were much smaller than in Kharkiv or Odesa, let alone Donetsk."

Some separatist leaders saw Kolomoisky's ouster as a reason for celebration, however.

Alexander Zakharchenko, the head of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, suggested that Kolomoisky will create his own Dnepropetrovsk People's Republic.

"Why not? Kolomoisky is the de facto leader of this territory, and that is the true authority. Kyiv will have to make some deal with him," Zakharchenko was cited as saying by Kommersant newspaper. Denis Pushilin, another Kremlin-backed separatist leader, doubted Zakharchenko's forecast, but didn't rule it out.

"Considering the complicated situation that has shaped up in that part of Ukraine, anything can happen there," Pushilin said in comments carried by Russian media.

Kyiv Post Lifestyle editor Olga Rudenko and staff writer Allison Quinn can be reached at olgarudenko.dp@gmail.com and a.caseyquinn@gmail.com, respectively.

Svyatoslav Oliynyk (right), one of former Dnipropetrovsk Governor Igor Kolomoisky's deputies, talks to Ukrainian soldier Volodymyr Sakhnevych, a released prisoner of war on Sept. 11, 2014 in Dnipropetrovsk. (UNIAN)



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Ukraine cheap yet scary for tourists

Book Review



WITH YULIANA ROMANYSHYN
ROMANYSHYN@KYIVPOST.COM

British coloring books get unexpected fame in Ukraine

Coloring books for adults, originally published in the United Kingdom, have gained wild popularity in Ukraine, outselling popular local authors.

“Secret Garden” and “Enchanted Forest” by British illustrator Johanna Basford were adapted for Ukraine and sold more than 50,000 copies – a huge number for a struggling local book market, where even popular authors publish new titles in just a few thousand copies.

The two coloring books were originally released in 2013 and 2015 in the U.K. and translated into 14 languages since then, including Ukrainian. Over one million copies were sold globally. The “Secret Garden” was second best-selling book at Amazon.com as of March 24.

The books have nearly no text, so Ukrainian editions are fit for English readers as well. Plus, they are considerably cheaper, being sold in Kyiv bookshops at some Hr 85 (\$3.5). On Amazon the books are sold for \$10-12 each. To reduce the price of the books, Ukrainian publisher printed it without original craft pages.

The pages of both books are filled with inky contours of tiny flowers, trees, insects, and birds. Ukrainian publisher of the books, Vydavnytstvo Staroho Leva (The Old Lion Publishing House), branded the books the “anti-stress” coloring books, and it may be the reason behind the books’ success.

Vydavnytstvo Staroho Leva has released Basford’s “Secret Garden” in Ukrainian in September, 2014, a year after the book’s world release. It proved to be so popular that the next creation of the British illustrator, “Enchanted Forest,” was brought out simultaneously with the world release in March of 2015.

According to the publisher, the 50,000 copies of the “Secret Garden” first edition were sold out by March, and more are about to be printed. For comparison, the same publishing house is still selling the first 3,000 copies of “Felix Austria” by Sofia Andrukhovych, an acclaimed novel that became a BBC Book of the Year in Ukraine in 2014.

The fans of the book even mail the colored pages to the publisher to boast their progress. Vydavnytstvo Staroho Leva receives two or three such pages every day. The publisher has released a calendar and a set of postcards with images from the hit books.

The connection between →21



Simone Lautenbacher and David Lieber from Germany pick souvenirs at Andriyivskiy Uzviz in downtown Kyiv. The war in Ukraine’s east cut the flow of tourists in 2014, but some still come, moved by curiosity and low prices. (Volodymyr Petrov)

BY VICTORIA PETRENKO
PETRENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

Ukraine’s tourism dilemma can be boiled down to this: cheap but scary.

While devaluation of the hryvnia has devalued the lifestyle for many Ukrainians, it makes the nation a price paradise for foreigners who come to

Ukraine with dollars or euros in their pockets.

A combination of low prices, Ukrainian hospitality to foreigners and no visa requirements for Westerners should, in theory, make Ukraine an attractive place for tourists.

But Russia’s ongoing war, even though it is taking place only in the eastern Donbas, is scaring people away.

The number of foreigners visiting Ukraine dropped almost by half in the last year, marked by Russia’s March annexation of Crimea and April instigation of war in the east. Only 147,000 tourists came in 2014, compared to 232,000 in 2013.

Foreigners are afraid to come. Most don’t know Ukraine well, so because of the news they associate the whole

country with hostilities, while the war is being fought only on 7 percent of Ukraine’s territory.

“We have to inform foreign guests that the rest of Ukraine is quiet, comfortable, safe,” says Halyna Malets, the head of the tourism department of the Lviv City Council.

Those who dared to come say they are rewarded with arguably →21

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Olympic medalist Olga Kharlan and founder of YUNA Mohammad Zahoor present the Best Music Video Director nomination.



The Hardkiss performs at YUNA after being awarded in Best Hit and Best Album categories.



EL Kravchuk (L) performs his song "Dolya" ("Fate") with Nadiya Hranovska.

YUNA marches on in fourth year



Kamaliya performs her new single "We Got The Love" on the stage of Palace Ukraine on March 25.



Pop singer Alyosha opens the YUNA ceremony with her performance.



Dmytro Monatik (center) performs at YUNA wearing a straitjacket with dancers band Apache Crew.



Fagot (L), front man of TNMK, performs with Skryabin band in the place of the band's vocalist Andrii Kuzmenko, who died in a car accident in February.



Andriy Danylko, better known as Verka Serdushka, performs in the finale of the YUNA ceremony on March 25.

BY YULIANA ROMANYSHYN
ROMANYSHYN@KYIVPOST.COM

On March 25, the crème de la crème of Ukrainian show business gathered in the Palace Ukraine in Kyiv to honor musical achievements in the fourth annual Yearly Ukrainian National Awards.

A music award similar to the Grammy, YUNA was launched in 2012 by Mohammad Zahoor, ISTIL Group owner and Kyiv Post publisher.

In one of the most touching moments of the ceremony, YUNA honored Andriy Kuzmenko, also known as Kuzma and front man for the group Skryabin, killed in a car accident in February. Kuzmenko was named Best Lyrics Writer post mortem, and Skryabin won Best Band of the Year.

The audience gave Kuzmenko a standing ovation several times. "There is nothing to talk about. Andriukha, it's for you. We love you," pop singer and

producer Potap said when announcing the Best Lyrics Writer award.

In a tribute performance for Kuzmenko, Oleh Mykhailiuta, a.k.a. Fagot, front man of the hip-hop band TNMK, performed Kuzmenko's song "Pusty Mene" ("Let Me Go") with Skryabin.

The band Hardkiss was triumphant, winning two of the six awards it had been nominated for: Best Hit for the song "Stones" and Best Album for their debut "Stones and Honey."

Kostyantyn Meladze, best known as creator and producer of the female group Viagra, was named Best Composer for the second year in a row.

Svitlana Loboda and Emin won Best Duet with their hit song "Smotrish v Nebo" ("You're Looking in the Sky").

Ivan Dorn was named Best Male Performer, making it his third YUNA prize.

"It's bad to win so often, because I want to feel competition," Dorn joked when accepting the prize.



Ivan Dorn accepts Best Male Performer prize with YUNA producer Pavlo Shylko standing next to him on stage on March 25.

The group Onuka won the Discovery of the Year award. Nata Zhizhchenko, the front woman for the band, received the prize by evoking the patriotic slogan, "Glory to heroes!"

Tina Karol was named Best Female Performer, but didn't attend to pick up her award.

The YUNA ceremony will be broadcast by Inter TV at 10:30 p.m. on March 28.

International tourist arrivals in Ukraine

Country	International tourist arrivals (2014)	International tourist arrivals (2013)	Change (2013 to 2014) (%)
Belarus	67,446	18,320	+72.8
Russia	51,574	270,689	-80.9
Turkey	4,885	24,615	-80.1
Germany	4,522	30,354	-85.1
Israel	3,061	8,950	-65.8
U.S.	3,038	14,390	-78.9
Austria	1,702	3,789	-55.1
United Kingdom	1,203	14,271	-91.6
Italy	981	5,619	-82.5
France	851	6,087	-86.0
All countries	146,804	488,496	-70.0

The number of foreign tourists coming to Ukraine has declined from every country except Belarus in the last year. Despite Ukraine's affordability, many tourists have been frightened away by Russia's war against Ukraine. Additionally, the number of Russians arriving for tourism has declined substantially in recent years.
Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine

Russian tourist arrivals in Ukraine



Ukraine offers price paradise for foreigners

→ **19** Europe's cheapest tourism destination. And they're happy about it. One of them was Simone Lautenbacher, a German citizen, who came to see Ukraine in March out of curiosity. It was nothing like she had pictured it from the news. She was surprised by the modernity, good service in restaurants and variety of nightlife.

"You have everything we have in Western Europe, but it is so much cheaper and nobody knows it," she says. Lautenbacher's friend, David Lieber, a UNICEF worker from Germany, was transferred to Ukraine from Kenya, and found the prices here ridiculously low even compared to Africa. "The hotel prices here for us, Westerners, are a real joke. You should advertise this," he says. Accommodations are, indeed, heap even in Kyiv, the country's most expensive city. Here a tourist can live on just \$35.16 a day, according to Numbeo, a user-generated cost-of-living statistics website. The sum includes meals in inexpensive restau-

rants, public transport and cheap hotel. The same package in Oslo will cost at least \$90, in London \$66, in Berlin \$54.31 and in Moscow \$50. Even Thailand and Bali, destinations well-known for their affordability, are expensive compared to Ukraine. Rent, beer, and transport are twice cheaper in Kyiv than in those Asian getaways. However, dining out is still slightly cheaper in Asia. Besides the low prices, foreign tourists name other advantages of Ukraine: friendly locals, cuisine, architecture of Kyiv, Lviv and Odesa, the nature of the Carpathians, a variety of nightclubs and shops. A shopping lover, Christian Bec, from the U.S. couldn't hide his delight with the wide variety of stores and the quality of souvenirs. The Kyiv Post met Bec at Andriyivskiy Uzviz, Kyiv's main souvenir market, in early March. Bec came to Ukraine as a tourist after her friends visited it and found it interesting and safe. "I knew Kyiv was safe," she said. "I've already been to the countries where there was war. And I know

that just because there is war in one place, it doesn't mean there is war everywhere." She was astonished with the prices. She visited the Kyiv Circus and paid \$7 for the ticket. "In United States it would cost \$40-\$50 and not for those good seats we had," she said. Still, it is now hard to find a foreigner from Andriyivskiy Uzviz. Souvenir vendors complain about the lack of foreign tourists, but add that Westerners usually buy cheap things, while the real moneybags were Russians. Now with the decreased flow of both, the sellers only count on domestic tourists. Lieber from Germany agrees. "When you think about Ukraine in Europe, you think about war," he says. "But when you stay in Kyiv you do not feel anything of what is going on in the east." At the same time he points out other difficulties that foreigners face in Ukraine, such as low penetration of English. Kyiv Post staff writer Victoria Petrenko can be reached at petrenko@kyivpost.com.

Average prices in Kyiv and other European capitals

Source: Numbeo

	Kyiv	Oslo	Stockholm	London	Paris	Moscow	Warsaw	Riga
Domestic beer (0,5l)	\$1.07	\$8.91	\$6.49	\$5.98	\$6.59	\$2.58	\$2.22	\$2.20
Cappuccino	\$1.35	\$4.33	\$3.74	\$3.80	\$3.95	\$3.63	\$2.21	\$2.15
Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant	\$5.11	\$19.09	\$11.80	\$16.45	\$13.19	\$13.87	\$5.35	\$6.59
Local transport (one-way ticket)	\$0.23	\$3.82	\$4.13	\$3.89	\$1.87	\$0.87	\$1.18	\$1.26
Taxi start	\$2.23	\$9.67	\$5.31	\$4.49	\$2.86	\$7.34	\$2.14	\$2.20
1 bedroom apartment in city center per month	\$417.20	\$1,344.33	\$1,134.66	\$2,376.96	\$1,226.55	\$1,336.40	\$513.02	\$380.73

Shopping Tips



WITH NATALIYA TRACH
TRACH@KYIVPOST.COM

Finding custom-made suits in Kyiv

All style-savvy men can now cancel their shopping tours to Milan, because elite bespoke men's wear is available in Kyiv too. At least three local designers offer quality custom-made men suits.

Indposhiv

Six years ago Kateryna Vozianova started a men's wear atelier Indposhiv (Custom Tailoring), focusing on high-quality bespoke suits. Indposhiv charges Hr 18,000 and more for a custom-made, hand-tailored suit. Production takes up to six weeks. The quality meets the standards of Savile Row Bespoke Association, according to Vozianova. Indposhiv has an office in London, but the London orders go to tailors in Kyiv. The atelier charges its London customers 1,600 - 1,700 British pounds for a suit, and production takes up to three months. Still, the price makes Indposhiv competitive in London. Vozianova is happy that half of her clients are British. "Foreigners appreciate our price and quality," she explains. The last year has brought Indposhiv new Ukrainian clientele, including newly-appointed government officials in need of formal wear.

price of a suit varies between \$1,200 and \$4,000, depending on the fabric and the time of production. In case of urgency, Bublik's tailors can make a suit in just five days, but it will bring the price up.

Bublik atelier has some 20 regular expat clients. She speaks fluent English. "Our clients always come back," says Bublik. "They appreciate the quality of tailoring that makes our suits fit perfectly."

Olena Golets atelier

Olena Golets, like her competitors Indposhiv and Bublik, uses only foreign-made fabrics for her custom-made suits. Golets prefers fabrics by Italian producers Loro Piana or Guabello. She charges \$1,000-1,800 for a suit. Events host Yuriy Krasiuk, known under name MC Yuras, was impressed by the suit that he tried on at Golets stand on Ukrainian Fashion Week on March 18. "The fabric is gentle, light and well-manufactured. Definitely, I will buy the suit," he said. The price tag didn't scare him off. The clientele of Golets, as well as those of Indposhiv and Bublik, didn't seem to be affected by the recession and place as many orders as usual. Many of them are from politicians.

Anna Bublik Fashion House

Designer Anna Bublik makes both women and men's clothes to order. The

"Every fifth Ukrainian politician is our client," Golets claims. Kyiv Post staff writer Nataliya Trach can be reached at trach@kyivpost.com

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Visitors of Ukrainian Fashion Week look at the display of the suits by Ukrainian designer Olena Holets in Kyiv on March 18. (Volodymyr Petrov)

Book Review: Adults love coloring books too, sales show

→ **19** the success of the "anti-stress" books in Ukraine and the turmoil of the last 1.5 years seems obvious. However, psychologists are unsure if the books really have an anti-stress effect. According to Iryna Natalushko, art therapist at Caritas Ukraine charity center, the effect of the book is hypothetical, and was not confirmed by any research. "It is quite possible, given that making art in itself can be therapeutic, that coloring books might have a grounding and soothing effect," she says. The same effect can be reached through any crafting activity - for instance, clay modeling. Yuliia Yurchenko, a 28-year-old tour guide from Kyiv, was among the

first who bought "Secret Garden." She counts 105 colorful pencils and pens in her toolbox, all being used to color the book almost daily. "I don't look at the coloring book as an anti-stress one. I just like painting," she says. Seeing the success of the "Secret Garden," another publishing house released an adult coloring book. The Book Club (Klub Simeinoho Dozvillia) has released the "Animal Kingdom" coloring book, by another British illustrator Millie Marotta. It is available in Kyiv bookshops for Hr 97. Kyiv Post staff writer Yuliana Romanyshyn can be reached at romanyshyn@kyivpost.com.

From March 26



(Courtesy)

Acclaimed EuroMaidan documentary

"All Things Ablaze," a Ukrainian documentary that won the Best Eastern European Documentary Film Award at DOK Festival in Leipzig, hits the screens on March 26. It explores the development of the EuroMaidan Revolution from peaceful protests to bloodshed. It is a debut movie by Ukrainian photographers Oleksandr Techynskyi, Aleksey Solodunov and Dmitry Stoykov. It runs with English subtitles. **"All Things Ablaze" (documentary). From March 26. Kyiv Cinema (19 Velyka Vasylkivska St.). 6 p.m., 9:15 p.m. Hr 40 – Hr 50**



April 4

French Spring opening performance

Light performance "I Am a Dream" by French company Spectaculaires-Allumeurs d'Images will open the 12th annual French Spring Festival in Kyiv. The festival introduces Ukrainians the latest of the theater, film, literature, visual and dance art in France. Besides Kyiv, the French Spring festival will be held also in Lviv, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Rivne and Odesa. **French Spring Festival Opening Performance. Sofiyivska Square. April 4, 8:30 p.m. Free**

Ukrainian abstract art

The exhibition features 200 abstract paintings by 120 modern Ukrainian artists, including artists from eastern regions and Crimea. It covers many genres, from abstract expressionism to suprematism. Ivan Marchuk, Sergiy Savchenko, Petro Lebedynets, Tyberiy Silvasi, Oleksandr Zhyvotkov are among the authors of the exhibits.



(Sergiy Savchenko)

Ukrainian Exhibition of Abstract Paintings. Central House of Artists (1-5 Artema St.). March 27 – April 26. Closed on Tuesdays. 12 p.m. – 7 p.m. Free

March 27 – April 26

March 27, 28, April 4, 5, 10



(Courtesy)

Magic Music From Magic Movies

Ukrainian chamber orchestra Svitlo will perform film scores from famous movies, including "Midnight in Paris," "Amelie," "Ghost," "The Intouchables," "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," "Love Me If You Dare," "Mr. Nobody," "The Pursuit of Happiness," "The Lake House," "Forrest Gump" and others. **"Magic Music From Magic Movies" (live soundtracks). House of Architect (7B Hrinchenko St.). March 27, 28, April 4, 5, 10, 11. 8 p.m. Hr 125 – Hr 300**



March 28

Fair of Ukrainian-made goods

Those who want to see a wide range of local goods at one place may visit UAmade Fest, where local producers will sell clothing, accessories, souvenirs, and home decor. On the entertainment program there are food vendors, DJ sets, beauty services, and children entertainments.

UAmade Fest. Lavra Art Gallery (7 Lavrska St.). March 28, 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. Free

'Trudna Zemlya' ('Hard Land') exhibition

March 26 – April 12



(artarsena.in.ua)

On Dec. 7, 2013, a group of artists, musicians and photographers went to see a trash heap near Krasnodon in Luhansk Oblast. Using these materials, the artists created four projects that will be presented at the exposition.

Trudna Zemlya (exhibition). Mystetsky Arsenal (10 Lavrska St.). March 26 – April 12.

March 27



(Kryhitka/wk)

Kryhitka concert

At its upcoming show Kyiv pop rock band Kryhitka will present new songs written under influence of EuroMaidan Revolution and the war in eastern Ukraine. The band was formed in 1999 and was previously known as Kryhitka Tsahes. **Kryhitka (pop rock). Sentrum (11 Shota Rustaveli St.). March 27, 7 p.m. Hr 160 – Hr 300**

April 3



(Lviv Jazz Orchestra/facebook)

Lviv Jazz Orchestra

Jazz Orchestra from Lviv offers Kyiv public a taste of the atmosphere of 1930s-1940s America through immortal hits of Louis Armstrong and Frank Sinatra. All 45 members of the orchestra are students. They will be accompanied by soloist Yuriy Hryhorash.

Lviv Jazz Orchestra concert. Culture and Arts Center of National Technical University of Ukraine (37 Peremohy Ave.). April 3. 7 p.m. Hr 50 – Hr 350



For an anticipated program in Ukraine, Pact is recruiting **Project Director** and **Deputy Project Director** with strong background in project management, peacebuilding, conflict mediation, confidence building and facilitation.

PROJECT DIRECTOR:

- Serves as the official contact point and provides overall project management and strategic direction for the project;
- Develops and manages relationship with donor, civil society, local government and other stakeholders;
- Manages program budget(s) and ensure budget discipline;
- Oversees program communications, outreach and marketing;
- Oversees development of key program documentation and deliverables including implementation plans, monitoring and evaluation plan, reports and other learning documents;
- Supervises all project personnel, consultants, and other personnel as assigned;
- Ensures compliance with all USAID and Pact requirements.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Master degree in peace, conflict, international development, political science, public policy, sociology or related field;
- At least 7 years experience for the Project Director and at least 5 years for the Deputy Project Director in managing donor-funded programs;
- Extensive knowledge of US Government rules and regulations;
- Experience in designing and implementing people-to-people peacebuilding programs;
- Demonstrated leadership and management skills related to program management;
- Demonstrated understanding of conflict sensitivity principles and ability to maintain unbiased relationships with various stakeholders coming from different sides of a conflict;
- Demonstrated ability to think strategically.

DEPUTY PROJECT DIRECTOR:

- Assists Project Director in daily tasks regarding the project management;
- Ensures that program meets the highest standards of people-to-people principles of the peacebuilding program including inclusive and participatory design, implementation and evaluation, security and no-harm principles, fostering capacity building and facilitate engagement of key players;
- Responsible for monitoring, evaluation and reporting for the program.

To Apply: Please send your CV and cover letter to jobs@pact.org.ua and put "Project Director" and "Deputy Project Director" in the subject by March 30, 2015. Short-listed candidates will be invited for interview.



is looking for a

Local Media Liaison (LML)

A national **media specialist** with sound understanding of and a network of contacts with the national and regional media for a new **International Humanitarian Communications Project**.

The LML will

- advise aid organizations on ways to work with regional and national media;
- contribute to an increase in humanitarian reporting for and about Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine;
- strategize on how to address critical information gaps.

This position contingent on available funding.

For application details go to: umedia.kiev.ua/u-meda/anons
Deadline: April 15, 2015

HEALTH CONSULTANCY OPPORTUNITY

Deloitte is seeking candidates to apply for the following positions to support a five year USAID funded project HIV Reform in Action.

HEALTH POLICY LEAD

For qualifications and job description refer to: www.kyivpost.com/employment/job/151

HUMAN RESOURCES FOR HEALTH (HRH) INTERN

For qualifications and job description refer to: www.kyivpost.com/employment/job/150

NATIONAL PEACE & HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER

As part of the Swiss Cooperation Strategy Ukraine 2015 – 2018, the Human Security Division of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs engages with governmental and non-governmental partners in the fields of peacebuilding/dialogue, human rights and dealing with the past. Currently, the Embassy is seeking applications from suitable candidates for the position of "National Peace & Human Rights Officer". The National Peace & Human Rights Officer will work under the direct supervision of the Human Security Adviser and assist him in the design and implementation of the programme strategy. (S)he will be part of the Swiss Embassy team in Kyiv and coordinate his/her work with the Swiss Cooperation Office and other relevant actors.

Tasks

- Support the Human Security Adviser in the implementation and further development of the Human Security Division's programme in Ukraine
- Provide input and ideas on programme strategy
- Participate in planning sessions and meetings
- Assist in the identification of potential programme partners
- Independently organize events
- Assist domestic partner organizations in the design of project proposals
- Independently supervise the implementation of projects by partner organizations
- Follow political developments in Ukraine and neighboring countries as related to the conflict
- Issue background reports on peace and human rights topics in Ukraine
- Maintain good working relations with government officials, civil society and other interlocutors on national, regional and local levels
- Represent the Embassy as required
- Engage in other tasks in agreement with the Human Security Adviser

Required qualifications:

- University Degree in social or political science, international relations, law, history, geography or other related field
- At least 4 years of professional experience in peacebuilding, human rights and/or dealing with the past
- Very good verbal and written knowledge of Russian, English and Ukrainian languages
- Proven ability to work with a variety of stakeholders including authorities and civil society
- Sensitivity for delicate social processes in a conflict context
- Ability to engage with people with different views on political and identity issues
- Readiness to travel to the conflict zone and areas currently not under control of the government

Desirable qualifications:

- Good knowledge of the situation in the East of Ukraine and/or Crimea (highly desirable)
- Experience in international projects and/or programmes
- Knowledge of project cycle management
- Experience in monitoring, financial management and accountability
- Experience in the application of mediation and/or dialogue facilitation techniques
- Analytical skills

If you are interested and fulfill the required qualifications, please submit your application including a motivation letter, a CV and copies of diploma to: kie.vertretung@eda.admin.ch. Contact simon.greuter@eda.admin.ch (mob. +380 96 958 13 21) for any question.

Closing date — April 13, 2015

THEY CHOSE THE KYIV POST!

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