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September 29, 2017

SBU Out Of Control?

Secretive law enforcement agency
accused of abusing war-time powers



See Story on Page 18

Top: Masked officers of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) in combat gear stand during a ceremony to mark the 25th anniversary of the agency on March 24 in Kyiv. (Mikhail Palinchak) Right: President Petro Poroshenko (L) grants keys to newly built apartments for SBU officers, standing next to SBU chief Vasyl Hrytsak on Aug. 20, 2015, in Kyiv. Critics blame Poroshenko for using the SBU, the largely unreformed successor to the Soviet KGB, to advance his political and business goals. (Ukrinform)

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CURRENCY WATCH

Hr 26.6 to \$1

September 28 market rate



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Reform Watch

Editor's Note: The Kyiv Post tracks the progress made by Ukraine's post-EuroMaidan Revolution leaders in making structural changes in numerous areas, including judiciary and law enforcement, defense, energy, privatization, public finance and civil service reform. Below are some of the main issues in focus from Sept. 22-29.

Overall

Although parliament is in session and elections are not until 2019, the reform agenda is stalling for two key reasons besides politics: Russia's war remains a low-intensity, though deadly affair, and Ukraine's economy and finances are on the rebound – giving politicians more time to put off the tough decisions.

Judiciary

A new Supreme Court will be named in Ukraine in just two weeks, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said in an interview with Canada's CBC News on Sept. 25. The president, seemingly recycling a sound bite he picked up from ex-US Secretary of State John Kerry at the Yalta European Strategy conference in Kyiv earlier in the month, said every court in the country would become an anti-corruption court.

Poroshenko has been dragging his heels on introducing anti-corruption courts – one of the demands of the International Monetary Fund to unlock more loans from its \$17.5 billion bailout to Ukraine. Ukraine has so far received a total of \$8.7 billion in four tranches of the IMF loan. In order to receive the fifth tranche, expected to be worth a further \$1.9 billion, Ukraine also has to pass pension reforms, speed up privatization and make progress in fighting corruption, IMF spokesman Gerry Rice said at a briefing in Washington D.C. in mid-September.

However, since the Ukraine-European Union summit in Kyiv in July, Poroshenko has been pushing for the introduction of anti-corruption panels under the Supreme Court, rather than specialized courts. Critics say this is because such panels would be easier to control, as they would be directly subordinate to the Supreme Court – a body formed by the High Council of Justice, over which Poroshenko already wields considerable influence.

Pensions

The World Bank and the IMF on Sept. 22 said they were worried that Ukraine is watering down pending pension reform legislation, which could imperil the next tranche of its \$17.5 billion IMF loan package ending in 2019. Parliament passed the first reading of the law in July, but it has been modified with dozens of amendments ahead of second reading. Ukraine's international lenders want Ukraine to pare back spending on the fiscally unsustainable pension sector, reducing the deficits to 3 percent of gross domestic product. Ukraine currently spends around 12 percent of its GDP on pensions, but there are almost as many pensioners as workers and the pensions



A man comes out of Naftogaz headquarters in Kyiv on Sept. 21. (Volodymyr Petrov)

are a paltry \$2 per day on average. The law originally aimed to raise Pension Fund revenues by cutting the number of professions that allow early retirement, and increasing the time workers must work to qualify for a pension. However, critics of the law say saving can be made without increasing the amount of time people have to work to gain a pension. Lawmakers are to vote on the legislation at second reading on Oct. 3.

Land reform

With the moratorium on farmland sales set to expire on Jan. 1, 2018, the World Bank and others are lining up in support of those in Ukraine who want to create an agricultural land market. The ability to buy and sell the nation's fertile land could attract \$50 billion in loans and investments. The Agricultural Ministry estimates the longstanding ban costs the nation more than \$3 billion a year. The World Bank also sees the ban as a brake on Ukraine's economic development, and one of Ukraine's other key lenders, the International Monetary Fund, has made removing the ban a condition of its \$17.5 billion loan package. Ukraine had promised to lift the ban by the end of December 2016, but with public support only at about 11 percent, parliament last year balked at the move, instead voting to extend the ban for another year.

Energy

Meanwhile, with the obstruction of reforms at Ukraine's state-owned oil and gas company Naftogaz of

Ukraine leading to the resignation of the last two remaining independent members of its supervisory board on Sept. 19, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development said it would pull the plug on its loan for the company unless corporate-governance reforms there get back on track soon. The EBRD has already disbursed \$300 million to the company over the last three years, but no new money will be forthcoming until a new, independent supervisory board is appointed, and the government's blocking of changes to improve the company's performance and management ends, the bank's regional director Francis Malige said on Sept. 22. Increasing gas prices and eliminating dodgy intermediaries saw the company in 2015 make a profit for its first time in five years. However, analysts say measures to separate the gas transit and storage businesses from Naftogaz have met stiff resistance from within the government, and may have prompted the independent members of the supervisory board to resign after only 18 months on the job.

Finances

The numbers in Ukraine look better: inflation down from 61 percent in April 2015 to just 13.5 percent now. The economy back to growth - 2.3 percent in 2016 and roughly the same expected this year. And to top that off, Ukraine's \$3 billion dollar-denominated bond issue on Sept. 18, which has an annual yield of 7.375 percent, was an "unbeliev-

ably positive assessment of reforms," according to Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko.

However, some analysts are already worrying that the successful bond issue, which according to a report in the Economist was oversubscribed by \$7 billion, may encourage Ukraine to ease up on pursuing reforms – especially if demand for high-yield sovereign bonds remains high.

Access to cash from the bond markets may encourage Kyiv to believe it can rely less on the Western international financial institutions that saved it from total economic collapse in the wake of the EuroMaidan Revolution and Russia's war in 2014. The \$17.5 billion lifeline provided by the IMF helped Ukraine stabilize its economy in 2014 and 2015, came with conditions. It's no coincidence that most progress in Ukraine was made when the IMF's money was most needed. Now that Ukraine's need for financial support is less dire and it has other options, the pressure to make changes is lessened. Going off the IMF program has happened time and time again in independent Ukraine's history.

Deregulation

Ukraine has torn up thousands of pages of regulatory acts over the last year, making it much easier to do business in the country, Ukrainian Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman said at the opening of the Kyiv Investment Forum on Sept. 26.

He said his government had taken practical steps to "create real deregulation" in the country, and that the business environment is improving. He said he expected the new realities will attract more investment to the agriculture, infrastructure and tourism sectors.

Ukraine is now 80th in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business ranking, one place up on the previous year. But it only moved up four places in the most recent World Economic Forum's Global Competitive Index, released Sept. 26, moving to 81st among nations from 85th place. ■

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Top commanders under fire after ammo depot disasters

BY ILLIA PONOMARENKO
PONOMARENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

The government announced on Sept. 28 that evacuees could return to their homes in and around Kalynivka, the Vinnytsya Oblast town where an ammunition depot suffered a catastrophic fire and explosions on Sept. 26–27.

Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman wrote on Facebook that army sappers had cleared the area of unexploded ordnance thrown from the depot by the force of the blasts, and that travel restrictions in the area were being lifted.

But as the smoke cleared after this, the third such incident in Ukraine in the last six months, questions have started to be asked about the competence of the Ukrainian army – from the ordinary soldiers guarding such bases, right up to the generals at the top of the chain of command.

Lawmaker Ivan Vynnyk, the head of the parliament committee on security and defense, said on Sept. 28 that the disaster at Kalynivka had destroyed \$800 million worth of ammunition. The day before, in a television interview, Vynnyk called on Chief of the General Staff Viktor Muzhenko and his immediate subordinates to be held to account for the disasters.



A car passes while munitions explode at a military depot on Sept. 27 near Kalynivka in Vinnytsya Oblast. (AFP)

"I think the committee will draw a more strategic conclusion concerning the failures of the General Staff for tolerating such losses of property and munitions, which undermine Ukraine's combat readiness, and for not taking the necessary steps – for the fourth time since the beginning of the war," Vynnyk said.

Later, Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council Oleksandr Turchynov also said that top-ranking commanders, including those of the General Staff, would have to take responsibility for the

latest disaster.

"We have demonstrated that we are unable to protect our strategic arsenals," Turchynov said on Sept. 28. "So the question of the effectiveness of our county's defenses is raised. And unless those at the top who fail to fulfil their duties are held responsible, we will constantly be counting our losses."

The disaster began before 10 p.m. on Sept. 26, when massive explosions started to rip through the ammunition depot just south of the town of Kalynivka, 238 kilometers

southwest of Kyiv. Huge fireballs rushed into the air, and ignited Grad rockets spiraled crazily through the night sky.

As explosions rocked the base, the authorities in Kalynivka, a city of 14,000 people, immediately started to evacuate people from a 10-kilometer danger zone around it. In all, more than 30,000 people in the surrounding area were bused to a hospital and high schools in the regional capital of Vinnytsya.

Authorities also imposed a 50-kilometer air exclusion zone above the stricken depot and blocked the main roadways around Kalynivka. As many as 47 trains in the area were also diverted, leading to delays of from five to eight hours, and electricity and gas supplies to villages surrounding the depot were cut.

Two people had been injured and hospitalized as of noon on Sept. 28 due to the blasts.

Rumors of war

As dawn broke on Sept. 27, large explosions were still ripping periodically through the wooded area of the ammunition depot. Before long, Ukraine's SBU security service announced it was categorizing the incident as an act of terrorism.

The Prosecutor General's Office later opened a criminal case on sab-

otage, and said that investigation was following four basic lines of inquiry, without providing any detailed information.

An act of sabotage by Russia was predictably the most popular theory among social media users, as well as among top-ranking politicians.

"It's an arsenal, I believe it was not destroyed by accident," Ukrainian Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman said during a cabinet meeting on Sept. 27. "We've been under attack by the enemy, the armed forces of the Russian Federation and the militants. I believe they would do anything to weaken us."

Some officials even claimed the security services had expected an act of sabotage.

Serhiy Misiura, the spokesman at the Chief Logistic Support Department of Ukraine's Armed Forces, claimed on Facebook that the SBU had been conducting raids in Vinnytsya Oblast in search of enemy saboteurs since Sept. 25, under the guise of carrying out drills in the region.

Most of the saboteurs had been captured, the military official said, but some had evaded capture and had managed to carry out their mission in Kalynivka.

more **Kalynivka** on page 17

Advertisement

The place where happiness lives: Park Inn by Radisson

Park Inn in Kyiv on Troyitska Square will accept the first guests



In 2005, Radisson Blu Hotel, Kyiv became the first international hotel in Ukraine. Since then, the portfolio of Rezidor Hotel Group, which includes Ukrainian hotels of the Radisson Blu family, has grown significantly. This week it welcomed a new member to its portfolio - Park Inn by Radisson. Claude Bulté, Regional Director for Ukraine and Georgia, and Juris Zudovs, General Manager of the new Park Inn by Radisson Kyiv Troyitska, consider Ukraine a promising market and talk about the great opportunities the year of 2017 presented.

- What created such a stable interest for your company on the Ukrainian market?

Bulté: - We must admit that coming to a country where there was no international hotels was always a risk. Kyiv interested us in 1999. It took several years to form a vision and strategy of work in Ukraine, and we decided to be the first. The risk completely justified itself. By seeing an even greater potential for us, we opened two more Radisson Blu hotels in Ukraine. This year can be considered a year of great opportunities for Ukraine. Visa-free regime with Europe and such events as Eurovision opened the country to the world, the number of tourists and business visitors keeps increasing every month. That's why we decided to bring a new international brand to Ukraine - Park Inn by Radisson.

- The last few years have been difficult for the hospitality real estate market. However, your hotels from year to year have demonstrated a high competitiveness and profitability.

What's your secret?

Bulté: - The secret is very simple. We never doubted that Ukraine and Kyiv in particular would survive the difficult times and would eventually return to positive growth. 2014 was the most difficult period for us. Almost all business stopped because of the unstable situation in the country. The occupancy of hotels fell sharply. But we immediately told our team: we do not leave Ukraine. When the market is in a weakened state, the hotelier has to fight for the client. Quality assurance is one of the reasons why people come to Radisson. The second point is our philosophy - **Yes, I Can**. Thus, we undertake to provide the customer with the very best service, quality guarantee and a comfortable stay.

- How did the idea to bring the popular brand Park Inn to Kyiv?

Bulté: - There are a lot of 5-star hotels in Kyiv, both international operators, and Ukrainian. But there are practically no international mid-market hotels with high-quality service and friendly environment, interesting design and all the necessary infrastructure. Not every tourist wants or can afford to stay in a 5-star hotel. At the same time they are not ready to sacrifice comfort either.

The general manager of the new hotel Park Inn by Radisson Kyiv Troyitska, Juris Zudovs, enters the conversation.

Zudovs: - The young generation, those who are called millennials, have now set the tone for trends in the hotel industry. For them, accessibility and choice are extremely important. These people appreciate the absence of conditions and boundaries. They prefer to work in a relaxed atmosphere of the lounge bar. They are looking for a place that will not be framed and at the same time increases productivity.

- So your guests are young progressive people who value comfort and ease?

Zudovs: - It seems to me that guests choosing Park Inn can be guests of Radisson Blu and vice versa. The new hotel will be absolutely identical in terms of service and quality. It also chose the best location - in the heart of the capital, near the Olympic Stadium. The only difference is that Park Inn has a slightly different hotel infrastructure. It is designed for a guest with an average budget, which doesn't need a second and even a third restaurant on the territory of the hotel, but at the same



time appreciates the comfort and high level of service.

- Please tell us more about the new hotel. What should guests expect at Park Inn by Radisson Kyiv Troyitska?

Zudovs: - We will have 196 numbers. 152 - Standard rooms, 35 - Superior rooms, 7 - Junior Suites. And also two rooms for physically challenged people. We have tried to take into account all the basic needs of a modern traveler. The hotel has six well-equipped meeting rooms with natural lighting, a whiteboard and the necessary equipment. Guests can use the gym and the business center. There are also lounge bar and restaurant. In the future there will be a spacious terrace.

- You mentioned two rooms for people with disabilities in Park Inn by Radisson Kyiv Troyitska. How did you come up with the idea of creating them?

Zudovs: - Social responsibility is one of the components of our philosophy. **Think people - Think community - Think planet.** These are its basis. This is a protection for the environment-reducing energy consumption, saving water, conserving natural resources, as well as cleaning up parks and so on. Caring for people means to be accessible for everyone without exception. Create a comfortable environment for hotel guests and our team. To think together is our philosophy "Yes, I can." It is our way of thinking and the responsibility for quality of service. To think together is our philosophy "Yes, I can." It is our way of thinking and the responsibility for quality of service.

Editorials

Whose sabotage?

To lose one ammunition depot may be regarded as a misfortune. To lose two looks like carelessness. To lose seven to fires followed by catastrophic explosions over the last 14 years, as Ukraine has done, looks like height of negligence and incompetence.

The latest tragedy struck the military ammunition depot at Vinnytsya Oblast's Kalynivka, 238 kilometers southwest of Kyiv. It caught fire and was hit with a series of massive blasts from the detonation of shells and rockets on Sept. 26.

The Security Service of Ukraine, or SBU, was quick to qualify the incident as an act of sabotage.

Although the SBU offered no evidence to back up its claim, sabotage is a possibility, of course, given Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine since 2014. Since the start of the Kremlin's war, there have been four cases of fires and explosions at large ammunition depots. Three of those occurred in the last six months alone.

But when looking at these incidents in the context of Ukraine's previous ammunition depot disasters, the ones that occurred in peacetime, there are other explanations than Russian sabotage units.

The blasts at Bakhmut back in 2003 were caused by sparks from a welding torch that soldiers were using to cut up scrap metal for sale. There were four incidents at Novobohdanivka in Zaporizhzhya Oblast, every year from 2004 to 2007, caused by hot weather setting off a smoke grenade, the incorrect handling of damaged ammunition and accidental fires caused by smoking in the depot. The explosions at the depot in Lozova, in 2008, were caused by an accidental fire in a warehouse that set off ammunition stored nearby. The commander and deputy commander of the depot were jailed for negligence, though soon freed.

The investigation into the blasts at Kalynivka is just starting. It may turn out that Russian or other sabotage is to blame, but self-sabotage — through laxity and neglect — is also a possibility given the history of such incidents. With Ukraine now into its fourth year of war and still unable to produce any ammunition by itself, the country cannot afford to allow more such incidents to occur.

Mind your language

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko on Sept. 25 signed a new law on education. The legislation, many months in the making, is supposed to bring the nation's schools and colleges into line with modern practices. The signing of the law would have gone barely noticed had not two of Ukraine's neighbors, Hungary and Romania, created an outcry. Both countries claim the new law restricts the teaching of their national languages in Ukraine.

Ukraine previously had a very tolerant policy regarding the language of school education. Public schools in areas densely populated with minorities offered free education in the minority's language.

But this could not continue. We have seen what can happen when linguistic and ethnic enclaves are created within Ukraine — in the Donbas and in Crimea.

The new education law makes some wise changes: it allows teaching in minority languages in junior school, or for the first three years, but thereafter education must be conducted in Ukrainian, while minority languages can still be taught in individual classes. Moreover, this concerns only public schools.

So the complaints of Hungary and Romania are completely groundless.

In fact, Ukraine ending state funding for the education of people who refuse to learn the country's official language — and therefore likely don't see their future in Ukraine — is logical and long overdue.

One would expect Ukraine's neighbors and partners to understand how important language policy is for Ukraine today.

In Russia's war against Ukraine, the language issue has been a weapon more powerful than a Buk missile or salvo of Grad rockets. It was the language issue that was the pretext for the beginning of the Russian-instigated protests in Ukraine's east in early 2014.

Poor language policy and weak national identity helped fuel the protests. And the war Ukraine has today has taken more than 10,000 lives since 2014. Should Ukraine risk losing more lives and land by supporting language enclaves?

We say: no.



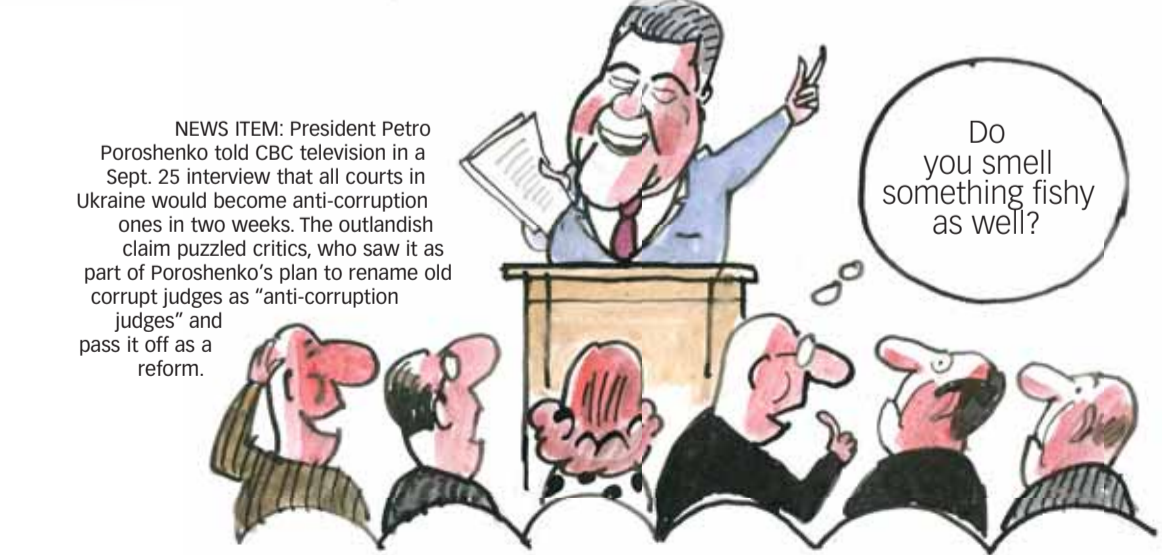
NEWS ITEM: Mayor of Kyiv Vitali Klitschko returned from a trip to Italy in August on a private jet with several prominent developers, who are behind some controversial properties that the public protested against but Klitschko defended. Klitschko said that he bumped into one of them in Italy and was offered a ride, for which he paid, as he would for a regular plane ticket.



NEWS ITEM: President Petro Poroshenko, Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman, ex-Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Interior Minister Arsen Avakov, along with many other ministers and lawmakers were guests at the wedding of Oleksandr Lutsenko, son of Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko, that took place in Kyiv on Sept. 15. The guest list makes one wonder whether Lutsenko can be politically independent when so many top politicians are among his close friends.



NEWS ITEM: Lviv Oblast judge Yuriy Bilous on Sept. 22 sentenced ex-Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili to a Hr 3,400 fine on charges of illegally crossing the border. Previously, a prankster had pretended to be presidential ally Oleksandr Hranovsky and spoken to a person he alleges to be Bilous who expressed readiness to cooperate with him, while Bilous denies having spoken to the prankster.



NEWS ITEM: President Petro Poroshenko told CBC television in a Sept. 25 interview that all courts in Ukraine would become anti-corruption ones in two weeks. The outlandish claim puzzled critics, who saw it as part of Poroshenko's plan to rename old corrupt judges as "anti-corruption judges" and pass it off as a reform.

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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.

Reformer of the week

Vitaly Tytych

The High Council of Justice on Sept. 20 refused to give the floor to Vitaly Tytych, a member of the Public Integrity Council, a civil-society watchdog that oversees judicial reform.

Tytych wanted to give the council a Justice Ministry statement that Bohdan Lvov, head of the High Commercial Court and a candidate for the new Supreme Court, had falsified the conclusion that ex-High Commercial Court Chief Viktor Tatkov is not subject to lustration under the law on the dismissal of top officials who served ex-President Viktor Yanukovich. Tytych also wanted to provide proof that Lvov is being investigated for embezzlement during a construction project.

Lvov, whose income does not match his spending, also said he had brought two watches worth between \$40,000 and \$100,000 from abroad, but could not explain when he did this or prove that he paid import taxes on them, which could mean that he smuggled them and evaded taxes, Tytych said.

Lvov is also being investigated for the interference in the automatic distribution of cases by Tatkov and his former deputy Artur Yemelyanov, who have been officially charged in a criminal case.

Lvov, who was negatively assessed by the Public Integrity Council, is also under investigation in a criminal case against High Council of Justice member Pavlo Grechivsky, who has been charged with fraud but voted for Supreme Court candidates nonetheless, according to the Slidstvo.info investigative television program. According to the investigators, Grechivsky has promised to help in a legal dispute with Lvov's assistance for \$500,000. Lvov and Grechivsky deny accusations of wrongdoing.



(Courtesy)

– Oleg Sukhov

Anti-reformer of the week

Valery Heletei

Employees of the State Security Department, headed by Valery Heletei, assaulted journalists of the Schemes investigative project, according to video footage in Radio Liberty's Schemes television program aired on Sept. 21.

Heletei and his subordinates denied there had been an assault, but their claim is contradicted by the video footage. The assault resulted in a cameraman suffering from concussion and other injuries.

State Security Department employees repeatedly tried to prevent the journalists from filming state officials, despite the journalists being in a public area. The attack took place during the wedding of Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko's son in the wealthy Koncha Zaspia district south of Kyiv. President Petro Poroshenko and many other top officials attended the wedding. Schemes journalists argued that the use of the State Security Department for officials' private purposes was an abuse of power.

Heletei, who was defense minister in 2014, has also faced accusations of negligence that resulted in the killing of hundreds of Ukrainian troops by the Russian army during the battle of Ilovaisk in August 2014. No top Ukrainian officials have faced charges as a result of the disastrous defeat at Ilovaisk.



(photo)

– Oleg Sukhov

VOX populi

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Who is to blame for the ammunition depot blasts in Kalynivka?



Valeria Holierova, manager

"Judging by the latest events, I wouldn't say it was an accident. I think it was done intentionally, because it's the largest ammunition depot in Ukraine and this is the fourth time in the last two years that this has happened!"



Viktor Stahivskyy, pensioner

"It's sloppiness. It could also be an external factor - that's quite probable. However, I don't think it was a Russian operation. But it's absolutely clear that our military men are lazy, sloppy and undisciplined."



Tetiana Ryabchuk, student

"Maybe it was just an accident. From the news, I've just learned that it happened, and that a lot of people had to be evacuated."



Vlad Belobrov, student

"A watchman lit a cigarette somewhere out there, and that caused it. Why not?"



Liudmyla Kondratiuk, pensioner

"Kalynivka is my hometown. My relatives called me and that's how I learned about the disaster... It's impossible that it was just a coincidence. In times like these, it had to be a provocation."



Denis Kostyuk, actor

"I think it was done intentionally."

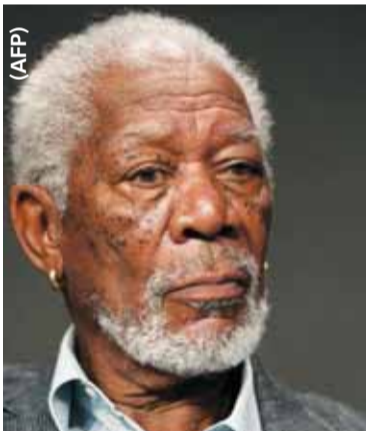


Serhiy Kudenko, analyst

"I haven't heard anything about it, so I don't really want to speculate about this incident."

Ukraine's Friend & Foe Of The Week

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



Morgan Freeman

U.S. movie star Morgan Freeman's latest film was released on Sept. 19 and has already been viewed by at least 350,000 people.

The film, or more correctly a video, is a two-minute appearance for a group called Committee to Investigate Russia. In it, Freeman announces in his velvety baritone that America has been attacked, and is at war. He goes on to outline a film script in which a KGB officer, still bitter over the demise of the Soviet Union and the victory of the United States and its allies in the Cold War, seizes power in Russia and builds an authoritarian regime. He then launches a cyberattack on the United States to undermine its media and institutions of democracy.

However, this script is not fiction, but fact, Freeman goes on to say, naming the KGB officer as Russian President Vladimir Putin. Freeman, who played the

fictional U.S. President Tom Beck in the 1998 disaster movie "Deep Impact," then slips into the role of U.S. President Donald Trump addressing his fellow Americans, and calling for Congress and the intelligence services to get to the bottom of Russia's interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Freeman's performance did not go down well in Russia. The actor was subjected to mockery and abuse, the worst of which was a vicious video satire that depicted Freeman being kidnapped and forced to apologize to Russia before the monument to assault rifle designer Mikhail Kalashnikov in Moscow.

The Kremlin's sham news channel RT wrote that Freeman had been "weaponized," and Russia's armies of Internet trolls and bots started under the hashtag #StopMorganLie. For the domestic Russian audience, the Rossiya 24 television channel claimed the 80-year-old actor was "losing it" because of overwork and smoking marijuana.

While the idea of a weaponized Morgan Freeman is indeed awesome to contemplate, the fact that the Kremlin, via its mouthpieces, reacted so loudly to Freeman's performance shows that it hit the mark. Ukraine has been the victim of election interference, and much graver meddling, at the hands of the Kremlin, and anyone who brings its wrongdoing to the attention of a wide audience is a friend indeed.

– Euan MacDonald



Sergei Udaltsov

"My enemy's enemy is my friend," goes the old saying, and at first glance Sergei Udaltsov, the Russian political activist, would look like a candidate for Ukraine's Friend of the Week.

A fierce critic of Ukraine's chief foe, Russian dictator Vladimir Putin, Udaltsov was among the leaders of protests in 2012 against the Russian president's re-election. He was sentenced in 2014 to serve four-and-a-half years in a penal camp for organizing a May 2012 protest that turned violent. He went on hunger strike while imprisoned, and was named a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International. He was released in August 2017.

Udaltsov says he wants Russia to develop from an autocratic state into a social democracy. However, he has said he will not work with a more well-known opponent of Putin, Alexey Navalny, whom he has accused of "flirting with the West," and it is here that alarm bells

start to ring.

While saying he does not want the return of the centrally planned economy of the Soviet Union, Udaltsov seems to be misty-eyed about that odious totalitarian state, which tortured and killed millions of its own people before it finally collapsed in 1991. He says he wants to keep what was good in the Soviet system – whatever that may have been.

But most disturbingly, Udaltsov recently went on record as supporting both Russia's occupation of the Ukrainian territory of Crimea and Russia's military intervention in the Donbas. He has described Russia's sham referendum on Crimea joining Russia as a democratic vote that expressed the "will of the people, to be with Russia."

It can be assumed that Udaltsov is not naive – he is very familiar with the ways the Kremlin holds votes and has gone to prison for opposing them. So his support for the Kremlin's land grab can only indicate that he thinks the reconstitution of the Soviet Union – which nowadays means Russian nationalism and Russian imperialism – is more important than international law, democracy, and human rights. Indeed, he is on record as saying he is "a Soviet patriot and consider(s) the destruction of the Soviet Union the greatest mistake and a crime," – which echoes a very similar statement made by none other than Vladimir Putin.

So despite his anti-Putin credentials, Udaltsov's disregard for Ukraine's sovereignty qualifies him to be Foe of the Week and gets him an Order of Lenin. With friends like Udaltsov, Ukraine wouldn't need foes.

– Euan MacDonald



Order of Yaroslav The Wise



Order of Lenin



World in Ukraine

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

In partnership with GOLAW

Ambassador Ernst Reichel senses business optimism

BY BRIAN BONNER
BONNER@KYIVPOST.COM

The mood of German businesses in Ukraine is swinging to optimism, says German Ambassador Ernst Reichel.

Next week he travels to Kolomyia, a city of 61,000 people in southwestern Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, for the opening of a second export-oriented factory by German auto parts maker LEONI Wiring Systems UA. President Petro Poroshenko is expected to join him.

"That's noteworthy, but there could be more of this," Reichel told the Kyiv Post in an interview ahead of Oct. 3 German Unity Day, which celebrates the reunification of the nation in 1990 after its post-World War II division.

For Ukraine to prosper, Reichel said that more needs to be accomplished to improve the investment climate and the nation's image.

"Ukraine has to shed this image of being a hotbed of oligarchy and corruption," Reichel said. "It's always been, in part, unfair. But it's a fact, unfortunately, that this is the perception many people have of Ukraine. A change in the society, a change in government policies, as we have seen in the Revolution of Dignity (that ousted President Viktor Yanukovich on Feb. 22, 2014). That is really what is needed. People are starting to understand that change is actually happening. For this to take root, it has to continue and be brought to the conclusion."

'Far below potential'

Reichel said "the Ukrainian economy and foreign investment are still far below potential. The reason for this is the investment conditions are still not right... If Ukraine were able to speed up reforms, create an independent and quality judiciary and improve the things it does against raider attacks or against administrative difficulties created arbitrarily, there's much more in growth that could be achieved and much more in German investment."

Nonetheless, "overall there is



German Ambassador to Ukraine Ernst Reichel speaks with the Kyiv Post on Sept. 25 in the German Embassy in Kyiv. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

optimism developing" among the 1,200 German businesses in Ukraine, most of them small-to-medium sized enterprises, the ambassador said.

"The German business community is increasingly optimistic," he said. "After we went through this hard crisis, things are picking up now. German businesses who are here, as a majority, are happy and they are increasing their engagement. Also German trade is picking up. German exports to Ukraine are picking up nicely. Also Ukrainian exports to Germany are picking up due to the (free trade) association agreement with the European Union."

Arrived in August 2016

Reichel took up his post in August 2016, replacing Christof Weil. He has experience in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. He started in the foreign service in 1988. His initial posting abroad was in Leningrad,



25 UKRAINE-GERMANY YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

now St. Petersburg, Russia. He's also worked at the United Nations in New York and NATO in Brussels. Yet Eastern Europe is his area of specialty. "The more expertise I accumulated, the more they put me there," Reichel said. "It works out for me. It's a fascinating job I have here."

He is a lawyer by training, but practiced for only a year before joining the foreign service and getting married. He has two grown daughters. To relax and stay in shape, Reichel, 57, is an avid tennis player. "From my early age, I'm a tournament tennis player," he said.

German election

Germany's power as the fourth or fifth largest economy and the most populous nation in Europe, with 82 million people, means that its influence extends globally.

So the Sept. 24 parliamentary election was watched closely for political shifts. The results were partly reassuring and partly alarming to many.

On the reassuring side, the first-place showing of the Christian Democratic Union gave Chancellor Angela Merkel a fourth term. She's already been in office for 12 years, behind only Konrad Adenauer and Helmut Kohl.

On the alarming side, the pro-Russian, anti-immigration, far-right Alternative for Germany party scored the third-largest vote total, securing 93 out of 709 seats.

But Reichel said there's no need for alarm about Germany's foreign policy, which has been consistent despite political shifts, including support for Ukraine and opposition to Russia's annexation of Crimea and Donbas war since 2014.

With Germany sharing the lead role with France in trying to bring an end to Russia's war through the Minsk agreements, Reichel thinks there's no chance for business as usual with the Kremlin — or the lifting of economic sanctions — until peace comes to Ukraine.

"There's much less reason to worry about Germany, also after the election," Reichel said. "Government policy has always been straightforward and clear. We have been very instrumental in keeping European Union cohesion on sanctions, despite challenges that have come from time to time from one member or another."

Especially if the so-called "Jamaica coalition" comes alive — uniting Merkel's Christian Democratic Union with the Green Party and the Free Democrats — "it's even more the way I describe" in keeping the pressure on Russia, he said.

Kyiv's fears

Still, German politicians regularly create anxiety in Kyiv about whether they will bow to commercial interests

and ease sanctions on Russia before the Kremlin ends its war.

One of the most irritating is former Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, an apologist for President Vladimir Putin who is also on the payrolls of Russian state-controlled Gazprom and Rosneft.

But there are others, especially in the Social Democratic Party, who harbor pro-Kremlin sympathies, including ex-Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and current Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel. Moreover, the leader of one of Merkel's possible coalition partners, the Free Democrats' Christian Lindner, has suggested that Germany should accept Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula.

Reichel himself triggered a public backlash in February after suggesting that elections could be conducted in the eastern Donbas before the withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukrainian territory.

Other parts of the quote, as published by censor.net.ua, were less alarming: "Undoubtedly, elections should be held in those conditions that will correspond to European standards. And therefore safety, as well as other requirements regarding the electoral process, are essential. Any Ukrainian politician should be able to hold their campaign without fear. And if that is not possible, then such elections can not meet the standards," Reichel also said.

Nonetheless, taken together, the disturbing sentiments from numerous German officials and politicians, raise fears that Germany will support Ukraine more in principle than in practice.

'We are very frustrated'

Reichel said, however, that Germany will not abandon Ukraine and he acknowledged frustration with Russia, in particular.

"I am a lawyer by training. I have learned something since: It's not good enough in international relations to be right. You have to find ways to achieve what you are seeking. Since there's no international court available that can enforce what's right in every instance, one has to go the path of diplomacy, which means dealmaking. One should never lose sight of the values side of matters. But one has to go beyond that and think about how one can achieve what is right."

"It's something I find lacking in discourse here. It's very much about who's right — namely Ukraine, no question about it," the ambassador said. "That's where often the consideration stops, while countries

more **Ambassador** on page 7

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German ambassador: Ukraine must shed image as 'hotbed of oligarchy, corruption' in world

Ambassador from page 6

that are in the situation we are in — with the Normandy Format (Russia, Ukraine, Germany, France) — we have to think further and think about how to get to the point where what is right turns into reality. We cannot stop trying to figure that out."

That's why Putin's recent offer of a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Ukraine is a development. "We have to explore the chances and the dangers of this mission. That's the way we see it. If you straight away say 'it's a trap,' then you close an avenue where you don't know where it leads," Reichel said.

Reichel said that there is "no question that sanctions have helped" in pushing Russia towards peace. And that's why sanctions should remain. "I participated in the international coordination meetings to set up the sanctions," he said. "We are very intent to see international cohesion."

He said Germany remains "very frustrated with the course of the discussions we are having and, in particular, with Russia." Russia hasn't carried out the three major elements of the Minsk peace agreements: a cease-fire, withdrawal of troops and weapons and return of the eastern border to Ukraine's control.

Corruption 'resistance'

Reichel doesn't believe that war is a reason for Ukraine to stall on domestic reforms. He has developed a list of changes that he believes Ukrainian politicians should make to satisfy the demands of Ukrainians and to strengthen the nation's democracy and economy.

Among them are reforms in the judiciary, elections, privatization, pensions, land, energy and corporate governance of state-owned enterprises. On Ukraine's historic resistance to creating a private agricultural land market, "Ukraine is missing a really important chance by hesitating," he said.

At the top of his list "is everything that is related to anti-corruption — judicial reform, of course, also an end to obstructions and difficulties for anti-corruption activists. I have a sense that in this area, reform is more difficult than in social and economic areas not directly related to anti-corruption."

On Ukraine's need to effectively fight corruption, Reichel said, the G7 group of leading industrial democracies — Japan, Germany, Italy, France, United Kingdom, Canada and the United States — are aligned.

"We have a lot of international cohesion in the way we think of reforms in Ukraine: an independent court structure which provides beside quality judicial service on anti-corruption measures and is not in danger of being influenced is crucially important. The sooner, the better."

While he's heard Poroshenko and Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman express support for anti-corruption chambers within the existing court structure, Reichel said: "I still believe it is much better to have a specialized judicial structure which takes care of high-level corruption issues."

He sees resistance coming from "quite a few people in the Rada who are not interested in changing the way anti-corruption issues are being investigated." But he's impressed with new anti-corruption institutions, particularly the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine, led by Artem Sytnyk, who seems fearless, he said. Sytnyk has also said that the agency has reached a dead end because Ukraine's courts are incapable of holding proper trials and delivering fair verdicts.

Energy, economy

Germany and other EU nations are seen as threatening Ukraine's status as the major transporter of Russian natural gas to Europe. Ukraine's massive land-based pipelines are capable of moving 120 billion cubic meters per year, but are transporting far less today.

Ukraine's privileged position is being whittled away by German-supported Nord Stream 1 and soon Nord Stream 2, two Baltic Sea pipelines connecting Russian supplies directly to Germany. Together, they will be capable of carrying 110 billion cubic meters of gas. The fear is that Russia will eventually bypass Ukraine's pipelines altogether, depriving the nation of at least \$2 billion yearly in transit fees.

It's not Germany's fault, Reichel said.

"The Russian strategy to work around Ukraine has to do with the experience of the 2008–2009 gas crisis," when Russia shut off gas to Ukraine for three weeks in January in a dispute over debts and price.

"Russia doesn't want to be dependent on transit through Ukraine. It's not a controversial issue," Reichel insisted. "We are believers in the diversification of energy sources and transit routes. Those who froze in 2009 in Europe because the gas didn't arrive, they want to know if

another dispute comes up, there are alternative routes by which the gas can reach them or alternative suppliers. We have no interest in killing the transit through Ukraine. We believe there should be transit through Ukraine and along other routes."

Germany is also criticized for running huge export surpluses, creating global trade imbalances. Critics want Germany to cut subsidies to powerful industries and increase wages to stimulate domestic demand. And, of course, Germany is not keeping its commitment to the 29-member NATO alliance to spend at least 2 percent of its GDP on defense.

Here again, the ambassador said, Germany is not to blame.

"The EU has integrated its trade policy," he said. U.S. President Donald J. Trump "may tell voters not to buy German cars, but they buy German cars. Are we to blame for this? Are we to make worse cars so that General Motors sells more?"

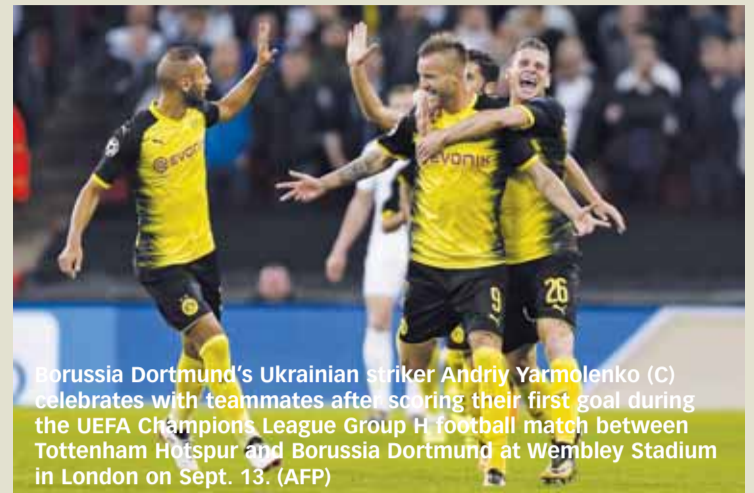
Media woes

The shortcomings of Ukraine's news media haven't escaped Reichel's attention. He told Ukraine's Day newspaper in an article published on Sept. 7 that "there is little journalism in Ukraine which I would trust completely." Elaborating, he told the Kyiv Post: "The problem here is that the owner controls what the paper says. We (in Germany) have editorial independence as a rule."

Ukrainian identity

Reichel said that average Germans need to catch up with their government's recognition of Ukraine's history and its status as an independent nation.

"In government foreign policy, there's no question that everyone understands that Ukraine is a fully independent country and is treated as such," Reichel said. "People need to understand better in Germany and other European countries that Ukraine has its own history and that suffering from the Holocaust and (World War II) is a specific and very important part of Ukrainian history. There's a tendency in Germany to say 'what is to the east is Moscow.' Moscow has always been a major factor in the way Germans saw the world — the Cold War and everything. Now we have independent countries that emerged from the Soviet Union, not by coincidence, but because they have their separate identities. That is something people have to fully grasp." ■



25 reasons to celebrate 25 years of Ukraine-Germany relations

Editor's Note: The following material was edited and translated from information provided by the German Embassy in Ukraine.

- Germany had the first ambassador accredited and living in Kyiv in independent Ukraine. In addition to the embassy in Kyiv and the Donetsk Consulate-General, currently in Dnipro, Germany has four honorary consuls in Ukraine (Odesa, Lviv, Kharkiv and Chernivtsi).
- In Ukraine, 1,200 German companies or joint ventures are registered.
- A German-Ukrainian Chamber of Industry and Commerce started in Kyiv in October 2016.
- Germany is the third largest direct investor in Ukraine.
- Parts for motor vehicles are the largest share of Ukrainian exports to Germany.
- Germany was the largest importer of Ukrainian honey in 2016 and the first half of 2017.
- More than 133,000 Ukrainian citizens live in Germany.
- Germany is giving 26 million euros in humanitarian aid to Ukraine in 2017 and donated 430 million euros between 2014 and 2016.
- Between 2014 and 2017, Germany has spent more than 15 million euros on promoting civil society exchanges between Germany and Ukraine. This year, Germany supports 75 projects of transnational exchanges of civil society representatives in which Ukrainian nongovernmental organizations take part. In 2017, Germany will spend 3 million euros for exchanges between Germany and Ukraine.
- More than 9,000 Ukrainians are currently studying at German universities.
- Every year, some 1,500 Ukrainian students receive grants and scholarships from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).
- There are 160 university partnerships between the universities of both countries.
- Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv had five German rectors. The largest Ukrainian technical college in Kyiv was founded in 1898, following the model of the RWTH Aachen University (Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule Aachen).
- Since Sept. 9, Germany and Ukraine have been holding
- Germany-Ukrainian Year of Languages with more than 50 events in Ukraine as well events in Germany. In Ukraine, more than 700,000 people learn German the language. Ukraine occupies the 5th place in the world in terms of number of people who learn German.
- There are currently nearly 1,000 words in the Ukrainian language borrowed from German (so-called "lexemes").
- There are 41 schools with intensive German lessons in Ukraine.
- There are 40 city partnerships between Ukraine and Germany.
- With German football club Bayern Munich, Anatolii Tymoshchuk won the Champions League, twice the German Championship Bundesliga and twice the German Cup DFB-Pokal. There are three football players from Ukraine's national team playing in the Bundesliga: Andriy Yarmolenko in Borussia Dortmund, Yevhen Konoplianka in Schalke 04 and Vladlen Yurchenko in Bayer Leverkusen.
- Last year, 136,563 arrivals from Ukraine were registered in German hotels and campsites.
- Approximately 650 applications for German-Ukrainian marriages have been submitted since January 2017. Last year it was more than 1,150.
- Kyiv, since 1892, was the second city in Europe after Berlin to have an electric tram thanks to German technology from Siemens.
- Amand Struve, a military engineer with German-Baltic roots, led the gas lighting in Kyiv's streets and built the longest railway bridge across the Dnipro River in Kyiv between 1868 and 1870.
- Viktor Schröter, a German-Baltic architect in the service of the Russian czar, built the city theater in Kyiv, today's National Opera of Ukraine.
- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Alexander von Humboldt are honorary members of Kharkiv National University.
- On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of German-Ukrainian relations, a jubilee stamp was issued.

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Alexander Markus: Ukraine investment boom starting

BY BRIAN BONNER
BONNER@KYIVPOST.COM

Ukraine could be entering the golden age of investment and not yet know it.

At least that is what Alexander Markus, chairman of the German-Ukrainian Chamber of Industry & Commerce, thinks.

Markus, leader of the 105-member association, said that he sees similarities between today's Ukraine and Poland as it was in 2001 – three years before Ukraine's smaller but richer western neighbor joined the European Union and NATO.

Germany didn't take the competitive threat of Poland seriously back then, but has since learned that Polish business "is very competitive, especially in the food processing area," Markus said, and that Poland is also ahead of Germany in some ways.

"Germans only noticed the Polish boom afterwards," he said. "Ukraine is undergoing a situation like Poland did 15–20 years ago. It's very much the same today. Poland is actually a manufacturing platform for the European Union ... Ukraine will go the same way in the future."

In a Sept. 27 interview with the Kyiv Post, Markus described a largely silent investment boom under way in parts of Ukraine, led by German and

other investors, and not completely reflected in official statistics.

Top German sector

"Our estimate is that we have 30,000 workplaces in central and western Ukraine just in the German automotive component industry," Markus said. "Nobody knows about this. We have a huge problem that Ukraine doesn't tell enough about itself in Western Europe."

And, in some cases, German companies like to stay silent about their successes in Ukraine to keep away competitors. "If you found the golden spot, would you go home and tell about this?" Markus asked. "You aren't crazy, are you?"

He said some German companies have hired scouts to explore the regions of Ukraine, looking for promising new places to open factories or plants because of a developing shortage of qualified labor in western Ukraine. He expects that, as Ukraine's roads and other infrastructure improve, companies will migrate from western to central Ukraine.

Decentralization a plus

He said that decentralization of government is a big plus for economic development because it forces regional governments to com-



Alexander Markus is the chairman of the German-Ukrainian Chamber of Industry and Commerce, a 105-member association. He said many German businesses in Ukraine are "absolutely optimistic." (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

pete with each other for private investment.

"Decentralization is the best thing

that can happen in Ukraine," Markus said. "Let's say I'm building a new plant in the region. I get all my permits on the spot. The head of the (local government) administration understands that I will pay taxes, everything 'white.' I pay everything officially. He is struggling to support me because he understands that if he can't convince me this is the right spot, I'm moving to the neighboring region. Decentralization is a good mechanism, and it works."

Biggest investors

Possibly the biggest German employer in Ukraine, with 8,000 people in two plants, is Kromberg & Schubert, which makes complex wire cable networks for Germany's vaunted car manufacturing industry. Kromberg & Schubert have plants in Lutsk and Zhytomyr.

But close behind is LEONI, another Germany automotive components manufacturer, which will open its second Ukrainian plant, in Kolomyia, adding to a workforce that includes 7,000 employees in its plant in Stryi, a Lviv Oblast city of 61,000 people near the western border.

Two other giants among German businesses in Ukraine are: Metro Cash & Carry, the Dusseldorf-based food and retail giant, which has invested an estimated \$500 million; and Knauf, the Iphofen-based manufacturer of drywall and other building construction materials, which has invested an estimated \$350 million.

A strong component of German investment in Ukraine is at the smaller end. Estimates of the number of German businesses in Ukraine range from 1,200, according to the Germany Embassy, to at least 2,000 active companies, by Markus' estimate.

Of the German-Ukrainian Chamber of Industry & Commerce's 105 members, Markus classifies 2/3 as middle-to-large companies and 1/3 in the small business category. The organization gets 40 percent of its funding from the German Ministry of Economy and Energy and the rest from membership dues and service fees.

Any business operating in Ukraine is eligible for membership. Currently, 70 percent are German companies, 20 percent are Ukrainian, and 10 percent are from other European countries.

Studied Russian

Markus first arrived in Ukraine in 2006, working in private business development for the European Commission, and stayed for 18 months. "I liked it quite a lot," he said.

He became deputy head of the German-Russian Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Moscow, where he worked for nearly four years before returning to Kyiv in 2011. From the Lower-Saxony region of northern Germany, Markus has

more Markus on page 9

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- We offer German education system, values and language
- Small classes in our school ensure an individual approach for children and help to develop them
- More information on our website as well as Facebook
- You will get the opportunity to later study / work in Germany



<p>+ Pluses to doing business in Ukraine</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low production costs 2. Close to the European Union 3. Free trade agreement 4. Low wages 5. Education of employees 	<p>- Minuses to doing business in Ukraine</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corruption 2. Currency risks 3. Bureaucracy 4. Unclear security situation 5. Legal uncertainty
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Source: Poll conducted by German-Ukrainian Chamber of Industry and Commerce of member countries operating in Ukraine

'Mood is absolutely optimistic' among German businesses

Markus from page 8

a degree in business administration and also studied the Russian language.

Improve image, brand

Ukraine needs to change its image — and, in part, its reality — of a corrupt country with big security risks.

"Ukraine is not telling the Ukrainian story in Germany, or not enough," Markus said. "You hear much more about the Ukrainian story from other countries telling the Ukrainian story in Germany," including Russia.

And it's hurting business. Markus recalled one German automotive component producer telling President Petro Poroshenko that he could build an additional three or four plants in Ukraine, but automobile manufacturing customers in Germany "do not allow having more projects in Ukraine because of the image of Ukraine, and because the security evaluation is too bad," even though western Ukraine is 1,000 kilometers from the Russian war front.

Markus said that Ukraine needs to be much more active in other areas, including product branding and promoting its strengths abroad. He is a strong proponent of Ukrainian-German cooperation at the regional, rather than capital, levels. He also said that private business, not gov-

ernment, should drive the development agenda.

The next step for private companies is to organize at the regional level and develop cluster initiatives to share experience.

"That's how we're doing industrial development in western Germany," Markus said. "It's not for state to decide what is to be developed. The state is not expert enough in this area."

Moreover, he said, the Ukrainian government simply doesn't have the money to fund an export promotion program "with billions of hryvnia in the nearest future."

Ukraine also needs to develop stronger brands for finished food products, where higher profit margins are made, rather than simply relying on exporting less profitable raw commodities.

Early opportunities

Many German companies came to Ukraine more than a decade ago, long before Ukraine's free trade agreement with the EU, which only went into effect this year, and they stayed. They saw the opportunities early: low production costs, an EU border and wage levels "even more than 10 times cheaper" in some areas than in the EU.

Holding back new German investors is "a very difficult security situation and political situation," Markus

said. "In German business, long-term planning is very important. If they are not sure they can plan for 15–20 years, they might not come in."

But those who dared to come to Ukraine are feeling good.

"What we see today is that the existing German investors are expanding and building new plants," he said. "The mood is absolutely optimistic," he said, fueled by a 25 percent increase in German exports to Ukraine in the last year.

The character of Ukraine-German trade is also encouraging. While Russia mainly exports oil and gas to Germany, Ukraine's exports are more diversified — led by auto components, agricultural commodities, foodstuffs and so on.

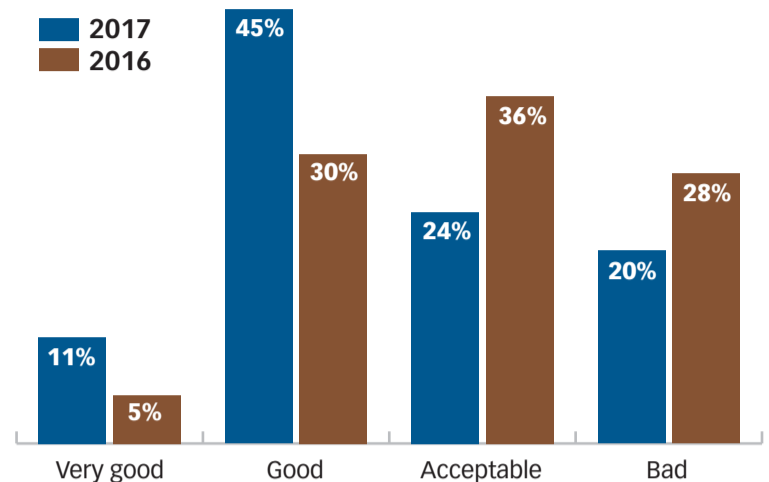
And German investment in Ukraine and Russia is also different.

German businesses are investing in Russia just to sell inside the country while, in Ukraine, "companies that are investing here are investing to export — to get the higher value added in the EU."

Consequently, manufacturing from Ukraine aimed at the EU market "has to be much higher quality" to meet standards. German automakers, for instance, allow "no more than five parts per million in damaged products" in components. "It is one of the highest quality standards worldwide, and this is made in Ukraine."

German exports to Ukraine are led

Assessment of current business situation by German companies



German companies surveyed by the German-Ukrainian Chamber of Industry and Commerce say business has improved in the last year.

by advanced engineering, which is an encouraging sign about Ukraine.

"This shows that Ukrainian industry is modernizing and buying high-end German engineering products," he said.

Challenges ahead

In food, for instance, Germans are "importing more at a cheaper price. That is something Ukraine has to work on. A major task for Ukraine should be not only to deliver half-ready goods that will be processed or packaged in plants in Germany, but to develop their own brands," Markus said. "The (highest profit) margin is in the last meters."

While low production costs and borders with the EU are advantages, Markus said that Ukraine must do more to implement the free trade agreement to realize its advantages.

For instance, he said, "there is no single accredited food laboratory in Ukraine. Every food certificate to import to EU standard has to

be done by a laboratory in the European Union. It's ridiculous."

In another example, he said that Cologne, Germany, each year holds one of the largest international exhibitions on food products and only last year, for the first time, did a Ukrainian representative attend.

Ukraine should make regular appearances, he said, in Germany's regions.

"It is not enough to go to Berlin," he said. "Real business in Germany is not in the capital."

German approach

German businesses, he said, have mostly succeeded in avoiding Ukraine's powerful billionaire oligarchs because the capitalists from his homeland are investing directly, rather than becoming financial investors or buying shares and forming joint-stock companies.

"They have a business idea and have a business model," Markus said. "They are investing 100 percent on their own." To do so, they need a land plot, legal framework, source materials, infrastructure, good workforce and markets. They are not working in areas where the oligarchs are so interested.

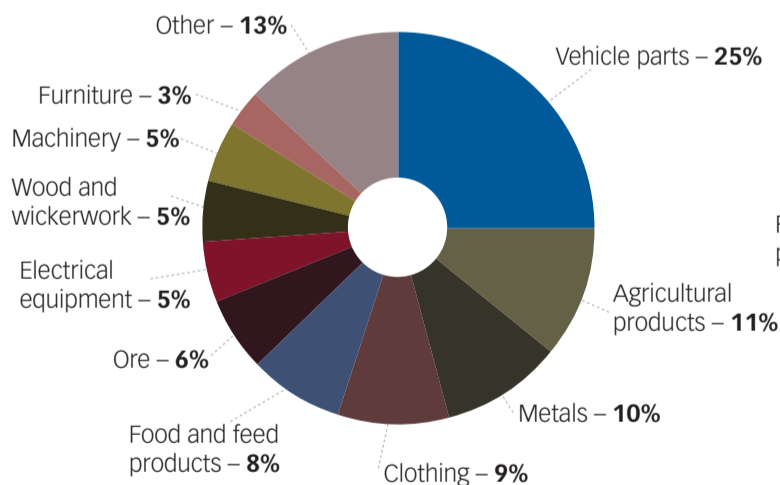
Estimates of Germany's foreign direct investment vary significantly, from \$1.7 billion to \$3.8 billion.

One reason is that some of the investment isn't being counted by Ukraine, Markus said.

He knows companies that supply additives to make food tastier and other products. Some of those companies reported 30 percent growth last year in the food processing industry.

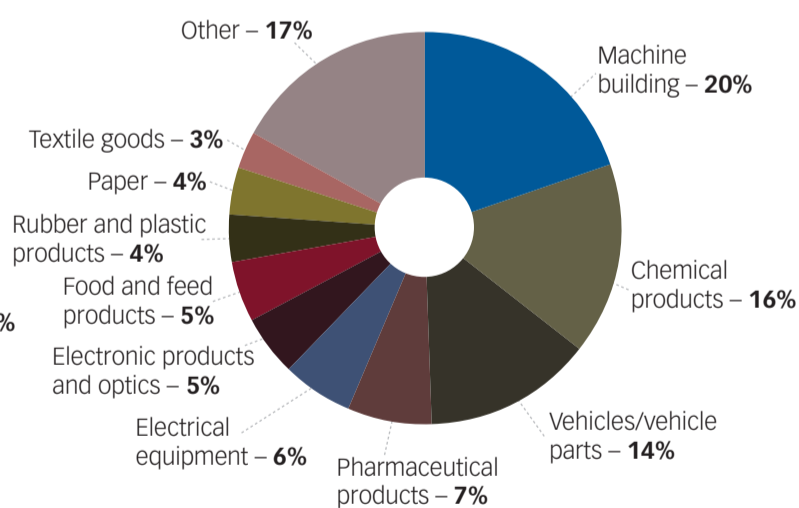
The numbers don't show up in official statistics often because "the middle Ukrainian entrepreneur doesn't report the real figures," Markus said. "The major strategy is duck and cover. I will not be seen because somebody might knock on the door. That's why we may not see the boom." ■

Leading Ukrainian exports to Germany in 2016



Source: Federal Statistical Office of Wiesbaden

Leading German imports to Ukraine in 2016



Ukraine's trade with Germany is picking up in both directions — hitting an estimated \$6.3 billion in bilateral turnover in 2016, with German exports to Ukraine still dominating the trade at \$4.2 billion and only \$2.1 billion in Ukrainian exports to Germany. However, in contrast to recent years in which Ukraine's exports were dominated by steel and metals, automotive components are now Ukraine's top export. On the German side, advanced machine-building equipment takes the top category.

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Siemens: Villain or victim in Crimean turbines scandal?

BY VERONIKA MELKOZEROVA
MELKOZEROVA@KYIVPOST.COM

After Russia shipped four Siemens gas turbines in July to Kremlin-occupied Crimea, where such trade is banned by the West, the Munich, Germany-based global engineering giant claimed it had been deceived.

It launched a lawsuit in Moscow against TechnoPromExport, the Russian company that bought the machines.

But amid the scandal, experts claimed Siemens' outrage might just be a sham — a way to ward off being held to account for breaking international sanctions imposed on Russia in 2014 following the Kremlin's invasion and annexation of Ukraine's Crimea.

Siemens said it would reconsider all of its contracts in Russia after turbines it sold in 2015 for a power station on the Taman Peninsula in southern Russia, just across the Kerch Strait from Crimea, were instead sent to Crimea. Siemens said this was a blatant breach of its delivery contracts, trust and European Union regulations.

However, energy expert Mykhailo Gonchar, president of the Centre for Global Studies Strategy XXI, told the Kyiv Post on Sept. 25 that Russia's intention to send the Siemens turbines to Crimea was known in 2015.

Indeed, Russian newspaper Vedomosti reported on June 30, 2015, that Siemens Gas Turbine Technologies LLC, a St. Petersburg branch, would provide the gas turbines for a new power station in Crimea, using the alleged new power station in Taman as a smokescreen.

Getting away with it?

"Both sides were involved and must bear responsibility for this delivery. For now, only the Russian side has been formally punished," Gonchar



Siemens AG corporation employees insert a turbine rotor to the gas turbine SGT5-400F in a Siemens manufacturing plant in Berlin. (Siemens AG)

said, referring to a European Commission decision in August to sanction three Russian individuals and three companies involved in the delivery of the turbines to Crimea.

If the commission found no grounds to punish Siemens, that would be a signal to many other companies seeking to evade eco-

nomics sanctions against Russia, Gonchar said.

"They're all waiting. If Siemens gets away with it, they'll see that you can always keep trading with Russian officials or companies on the sanctions list, and if you're busted, just put all the blame on the Russians," Gonchar said.

However, German Ambassador to Ukraine Ernst Reichel told the Kyiv Post on Sept. 25 that it was not fair to consider the Siemens case as proof that the international sanctions policy is flawed.

Reichel said that sanctions are clearly defined in scope and forbid doing business in certain restricted areas, such as Crimea.

"It's not a question of whether the government approves or likes what a company does — that is their decision, that is the way the free market economy works," Reichel said with respect to trade in unsanctioned areas of Russia.

"As for Siemens and this particular deal with the turbines: Siemens had it expressly written in the contract that it signed with the Russian company that the turbines were not to be transferred to Crimea," he said. Siemens was "cheated... They've learned their lesson from this, and they've reduced their business engagement in Russia following this incident."

The ambassador said he is not worried other companies will follow the example of Siemens, as the company "has taken tremendous damage from this story, and they're upset about it."

Siemens reacts

Meanwhile, in September, Moscow Arbitration Court postponed its hearings of the Siemens case for a third time, until Oct. 16, at the request of TechnoPromExport.

Wolfram Trost, a Siemens spokes-

man, told the Kyiv Post by e-mail on Sept. 22 that after Siemens discovered that the turbines it built for the Taman power station had been modified in Russia for use in a power station in Crimea, the German company took four decisive steps in response.

According to Trost, Siemens will fully divest its minority interest in the Russian company Interatomatika, which offers products and services for power plants. Siemens has also started to cancel agreements with Russian companies that build Siemens power station equipment under license.

"Siemens will also halt power generation equipment deliveries under existing contracts to state-controlled customers in Russia for the time being," Trost wrote. "In the meantime, Siemens is implementing an additional control regime that by far exceeds legal requirements."

The controls are intended to ensure that Siemens' future deliveries to Russia will only be dispatched after the company gets confirmation that the equipment will be installed only at the final, contractually-agreed destination, Trost wrote.

Siemens has also started an internal investigation into all of its units and relevant partners in Russia, and will review all potential collaboration between its subsidiaries and other entities around the world with regard to deliveries to Russia, Trost wrote.



Berlin Wall comes down

Two West German police officers prevent people from approaching as East German officers stand guard near a toppled portion of the Berlin Wall on Nov. 11, 1989. German reunification followed on Oct. 3, 1990. (AFP)

To critics, Siemens scandal reveals flaws in sanctions

Siemens from page 8

Only business

Although Siemens touts itself as a reliable partner to all customers, the company seems to have favorites – Russian state-owned company Gazprom in particular, Gonchar said.

“Siemens is a long-term partner of Gazprom, working on the Nord Stream undersea gas pipeline and various other projects,” Gonchar said.

Gazprom’s official website reads that in 2015, during a meeting in St. Petersburg, Gazprom chairman Alexey Miller and Siemens CEO Joe Kaeser discussed prospects for cooperation – in particular, the procurement of equipment and technology for the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, the second stage of the Nord Stream project. Together, when Nord Stream 2 is completed in 2019, the twin pipelines will have the capacity to transport 110 billion cubic meters of natural gas – about the same capacity as Ukraine’s pipelines that will be bypassed.

Gonchar said Siemens had picked a side in the Ukraine-Russia gas conflict long ago.

Back in 2013, Siemens canceled a deal to supply equipment needed to modernize the Ukrainian gas transportation system due to fears

it might lose contracts in Russia, Andriy Kobolev, the head of the Ukrainian state-owned gas company Naftogaz of Ukraine, said at the annual Yalta European Strategy summit in Kyiv on Sept. 15.

Naftogaz’s press service told the Kyiv Post on Sept. 25 that in 2013 Ukrtransgaz, the subsidiary of Naftogaz that runs the gas transit pipeline network, signed a contract on April 29, 2013, with Germany’s FerroStaal Industrieanlagen GmbH for the modernization of the Bar compressor station in Vinnytsya Oblast. The modernization was to have included the supply of Siemens turbines.

But four months after the contract was signed, FerroStaal informed Ukrtransgaz that Siemens had refused to supply turbines for the project. As a result, Ukraine had to find another supplier, finally choosing turbines and software from U.S. company General Electric. The first part of the GE software arrived in Ukraine early in September. Ukrtransgaz expects the modernization to be completed by 2018.

Asked if Siemens had refused to supply turbines to Ukraine in 2013 because of its business considerations in Russia, Trost said only: “We looked into these allegations and can



Russian Gazprom board member Alexey Miller (L) and Siemens AG CEO Joe Kaeser (R) speak during a meeting at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum in 2016. (Gazprom)

tell you that we have no indication from our own service division that this is the case.”

Investigate or not?

Reichel said he was not aware if a criminal investigation of Siemens is under way by German law enforcement.

But U.S. newspaper The Wall Street Journal reported in July that the German government had in fact called Siemens officials in for questioning over how their turbines got to Crimea.

“I’m not sure Germany or Europe is going to investigate and fine Siemens,

but the U.S. might,” Gonchar said. “They’ve already done that with the other German company that violated the sanctions – Deutsche Bank.”

In January, U.S. and U.K. authorities fined Deutsche Bank \$630 million for using its offices in Moscow and London to move \$10 billion out of the U.K.

America has fined Siemens before. In 2008, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission accused the German manufacturer of violating the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act by systematically paying bribes to foreign government officials to obtain business. The SEC alleged that Siemens

had paid bribes in Venezuela, Israel, Mexico, Bangladesh, Argentina, Vietnam, China, and Russia.

According to the SEC, Siemens also paid kickbacks to Iraqi ministries in connection with sales of power stations and equipment to Iraq under the United Nations Oil for Food Program, and earned more than \$1.1 billion in profits on these and several other transactions.

At that time Siemens agreed to pay \$350 million to settle the SEC’s charges, and paid a \$450 million fine to the U.S. Department of Justice to avoid prosecution. ■

Advertisement

«If we want to become a prosperous country, we must seriously raise the issue of taking steps to reducing energy consumption and responsible treatment of our natural resources», - Kyrlyo Shevchenko, Chairman of the Board of JSB “UKRGASBANK”



Kyrlyo Shevchenko, Chairman of the Board of JSB “UKRGASBANK”

Green banks are usually established in countries with robust economies such as USA, Japan, Germany and United Kingdom. Unfortunately, we cannot put Ukraine on this list yet. Why do you think it is a topical issue for your country?

It’s important to understand that green-banking is not a fashion trend in the world today, but a very well-calculated financial strategy for the development of entire sectors of an economy. The main objective of establishing any green bank is to finance investment projects aimed at improving the environmental situation in a country. It is well known that air pollution is one of the main causes of morbidity and mortality. And it is not an issue of how developed the economy is, it is a question of every government’s care for its citizens’ welfare as well as for future generations.

And we are not talking about excess capacities of the economy here. After all, Green Bank Network is not some whimsy of the so-called “Golden billion” countries. Such members of the network as Green Technology Corporation from Malaysia, public financial institutions in Chile, Mexico and other countries are also successfully working with the green model of financing. So, the priority is the responsibility for people living in these countries.

According to latest data of two new reports from WHO (World Health Organization), as a result of

environmental pollution, 1.7 million children under the age of 5 die each year. If we are talking about Ukraine, according to WHO in 2016, our country topped the list of the countries by the number of deaths from air pollution. Apart from our country, Bulgaria, Belarus, Russia, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina were among the top five countries on this list.

Moreover, according to the latest World Bank research, there are two large regions with excessively high energy consumption: some of African countries and once again post-Soviet locations. There is nothing surprising in this, as we’ve inherited industrial capacities after the collapse of the USSR. There are plants and factories which were constructed without any concern about harmful emissions and air pollution. And Ukraine has always been a country with developed industry, i.e. machine building and coal industry that directly affect the atmosphere.

We look at the situation realistically. If we indeed want to become a prosperous country with a competitive economy, we must take seriously the issue of reducing energy consumption and responsible treatment of our natural resources. This is not only about economic well-being, it is an issue of national security.

It is understandable why our government is so concerned about the current situation. Like many other post-Soviet countries, Ukraine needs a transformation of its energy sector into green technologies. Moreover, modern technologies help save not only energy resources, but also the funds of entrepreneurs and citizens, which is extremely important for Ukraine today. That is why the decision was made to develop green banking strategy for UkrGasbank.

We are aware that you closely cooperate with IFC. Did they suggest you to become a green bank?

We have been cooperating with IFC (International Finance Corporation) since May 2016. Signing the

agreement with IFC is the next step in pursuing the government’s interests in the field of energy efficiency after the introduction of green banking. In terms of cooperation with IFC, we were the first bank in Ukraine to invest in environmental projects, where each investment is not only profitable, but also has a positive social impact. We ask for the expertise of IFC in green projects. IFC, in turn, assess projects from the world experience’s perspective.

The confirmation of the fact that we are moving in the right direction is that IFC has made the decision to include UkrGasbank in the Global Trade Finance Program which unites the best banks from more than 100 countries. Recently we signed a respective agreement which will help to extend financial support for international trade transactions and open new markets for Ukrainian exporters in order to support our efforts with the aim of modernizing the economy and accelerating its growth. Again, our priority is green projects. Now, our customers will be able to enter new markets and I am sure that Germany will be among them.

In many countries green banks are established by governments in order to implement certain global environmental projects. But usually such banks are unprofitable and therefore there is a need for consistent subsidies and capital injections from its government. UkrGasbank is also a state-owned bank. Does the government help you in some way?

Let’s make it clear. There is no unprofitable business. Otherwise, it will not be viable, no matter how noble the public goals it pursues. Financing of environmental projects is not loss-making. It is rather potentially a highly profitable business, especially in the countries with a small share of implemented energy efficient technologies (the capacity of such a market in Ukraine is estimated about EUR 35 billion). Yes, it is expensive at the start, but it is highly paid back in the process of full use.

Another aspect is how a country approaches the issue of financing energy efficiency. For example, special tax programs are commonly used nowadays (by the all the countries or even by separate states as in the case of the United States) through which the government encourages the development of green projects.

Moreover, UkrGasbank does not need any additional capital from its shareholder. We have enough liquidity to finance green projects. Even in the crisis period of 2015, we were the only state-owned bank that generated a profit. Having

started the year with a loss of USD 2.8 billion, the bank finished the year with a profit of over USD 250 million. And in 2016, UkrGasbank was among the leaders by profit. Now we continue to actively develop in this direction, operating profitably in a sustained way.

Furthermore, contrasted with the current situation in the banking sector, state-owned banks are considered a “safe haven”. This is a good argument in the process of working with customers. In turn, the government represented by our shareholder supports our initiatives in every possible way and welcomes our new business line.

We are supported by other international organizations. For example, we cooperate with the German-Ukrainian Fund in order to help micro, small and medium-sized business in Ukraine. As of today, UkrGasbank is one of the most active partner banks of the Fund. Our cooperation began back in 2012 and during this time we have implemented a lot of good and very important projects for the Ukrainian business.

Recently you participated in the Green Bank Congress that was held during the Climate Week in New York City. Do you have experience to share with Western partners or was it about learning and gaining experience from them?

Sure, we needed to discuss with our colleagues how we can improve green lending and introduce new green banking programs. Green Bank Network was set up as a platform for cooperation and exchange of knowledge among existing green banks from all over the world. This allows green banks to share best practices and, of course, lessons learned. After several years of work in green banking, we have a lot of achievements. But life does not stand still and we need to move forward. It is always useful to adopt international experience and introduce new standards. This year at the Congress we were discussing activities of green banks and adaptation of green bank models for expanding investment opportunities in emerging markets, as well as how to effectively direct public and private capital towards the implementation of green projects. These are very important topics for Ukraine.



www.ukrgasbank.com

Oct. 8



Wizz Air Kyiv City Marathon 2017

Eighth annual Wizz Air City Marathon will once again bring together professional athletes and amateur runners from all over Ukraine. Experienced racers can run a half marathon distance (21.09 kilometers) or a full marathon (42.195 kilometers), while beginners can challenge themselves with a 2-, 5- or 10-kilometer distances. Those who don't enjoy running can still come and cheer the participants.

Wizz Air Kyiv City Marathon 2017. Maidan Nezalezhnosti Square. Oct. 8. 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Hr 770 for participants, free for visitors

Friday, Sept 29

Classical Music

Symphony Concert. Music by Valenty Sylvestrov. National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 80-400

Requiem by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. National Opera of Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 20-400

Live Music

Poetry Letters Jazz. Cinema House. 8 p.m. Hr 50-300

Star & Orchestra: Zlata Ognevich. Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 290-1,490

Jazz on the Roof — Closing of the Season. Bel étage. 7 p.m. Hr 250

Musical Evening with Evgeny Khmara (piano). In-Jazz. 5 p.m. Free

Clubs

Bad Company (DJ set) Indigo Club. 11 p.m. Hr 350-500

Omnia, Ninaro, Azotti DJ set. Forsage Club. 11 p.m. Hr 40-60

After Midnight Show (party).

Caribbean Club. 9 p.m. Hr 150-300

Miscellaneous

Linoleum (animation festival). Dovzhenko Center. 12 — 6:30 p.m. Hr 75-300

Trading Illusions: German Artists in Kyiv (art exhibition). Taras Shevchenko National Museum. 10 a.m.— 6 p.m. Hr 25-200

Edges (art exhibition). Sklo. 12-8 p.m. Free

Sergey Grinevich: The Dialogue (art exhibition). Nebo. 11 a.m.— 7 p.m. Free

Fragile State (art exhibition). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Gray Cube (art exhibition). Center of Visual Culture. 2-8 p.m. Free

Big Results of Small Businesses (photo exhibition). America House. 12-9 p.m. Free, ID required

Anna Mironova. Between Strokes (graphics). Ya Gallery. 10 a.m.— 7 p.m. Free

Festival of Young Ukrainian Artists. Mystetsky Arsenal. 11 a.m.— 8 p.m. Hr 60

Movies

Driving Miss Daisy (drama). America House. 6:30 p.m. Free, ID required

Shows

Dinner Show — Hotel Freedom (dance and magic show). Freedom. 7 p.m. Hr 500-750

Ploho (post-punk). Mezzanine. 7 p.m. Hr 150

Saturday, Sept. 30

Live Music

Jazz Season. Music by Gershwin, Prima, Garland, Porter and others. National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-350

Jamiroquai Tribute Show. Caribbean Club. 7 p.m. Hr 120-490

Miscellaneous

Linoleum (animation festival). Dovzhenko Center. 12-6:30 p.m. Hr 75-300

Olerom Forum (Steve Wozniak, Charles Adler, Adam Cheyer). Palace

of Sports. 10 a.m.— 6 p.m. Hr 1,400-130,000

Made in Ukraine Festival. Kontraktova Square. 10 a.m.— 10 p.m. Free

Big Georgian Holiday (all day party). Gryshko Botanical Garden. 11 a.m.— 10 p.m. Free

Kyiv Food and Wine Festival. VDNH. 11 a.m.— 10 p.m. Hr 80

Trading Illusions: German Artists in Kyiv (art exhibition). Taras Shevchenko National Museum. 10 a.m.— 6 p.m. Hr 25-200

Edges (art exhibition). Sklo. 12-8 p.m. Free

Old Car Land (car exhibition). State Aviation Museum. 9 a.m.— 8 p.m. Hr 50

Sergey Grinevich: The Dialogue (art exhibition). Nebo. 11 a.m.— 7 p.m. Free

Fragile State (art exhibition). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Gray Cube (art exhibition). Center of Visual Culture. 2-8 p.m. Free

FetishX0 (art exhibition). Akt. 11 a.m.— 9 p.m. Free (during the weekends, the exhibition is included in the entrance fee to the ongoing festivals)

Festival of Young Ukrainian Artists. Mystetsky Arsenal. 11

Sunday, Oct. 1

Classical Music

Classics for Everyone. Music by Tchaikovsky, Mozart, Strauss, Bach, Beethoven. Cinema House. 8 p.m. Hr 120-370

Live Music

Juzzy Buzzy Concert. Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 80-170

Oscar Music Awards. Playing Oscar-awarded movie soundtracks. National Opera of Ukraine. 8 p.m. Hr 250-1,000

Miscellaneous

Linoleum (animation festival). Dovzhenko Center. 12-6:30 p.m. Hr 75-300

Made in Ukraine Festival. Kontraktova Square. 10 a.m.— 10 p.m. Free (24)

Kyiv Food and Wine Festival. VDNH. 11 a.m.— 10 p.m. Hr 80

Cheese, Wine and Horses (wine degustation, horse riding). Holosiivska Metro Station. Hr 390-750

Old Car Land (car exhibition) State Aviation Museum. 9 a.m.— 8 p.m. Hr 50

Sergey Grinevich: The Dialogue (art exhibition). Nebo. 11 a.m.— 7 p.m. Free

Sivan Arbel (jazz). Bel étage. 8 p.m. Hr 300-500

Theater

The Nutcracker (ballet). Charity performance. National Opera of Ukraine. 12 p.m. Hr 20-500

Fireflies (shadow play). Freedom. 7 p.m. Hr 150-500

Monday, Oct. 2

Clubs

Karaoke Monday. SkyBar. 11 p.m. Hr 150

Miscellaneous

Sergey Grinevich: The Dialogue (art exhibition). Nebo. 11 a.m.— 7 p.m. Free

Anna Mironova. Between Strokes (graphics). Ya Gallery. 10 a.m.— 7 p.m. Free

Shows

Jeremy Pelt Quintet (jazz). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 250-850

Tuesday, Oct. 3

Classical Music

Accademia Bizantina (Italy). Playing "The Art of Fugue" by Johann Sebastian Bach. National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-300

Sept. 28 - Oct. 29



Festival of Young Ukrainian Artists

"Today that has not come yet" is the main theme of the festival. The organizers invited young Ukrainian artists to reflect on the changes in Ukrainian society such as erasing boundaries between private and public, and identity crisis. The program of the festival consists of 67 art projects.

Festival of Young Ukrainian Artists. Mystetsky Arsenal. Sept. 28 - Oct. 29. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 60

a.m.— 8 p.m. Hr 60

Big Results of Small Businesses (photo exhibition). America House. 10 a.m.— 6 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Anna Mironova. Between Strokes (graphics). Ya Gallery. 10 a.m.— 7 p.m. Free

Movies

The Silence of the Lambs (crime, drama, thriller). Kinopanorama. 3 p.m. Hr 50

Kingsman: The Golden Circle (action, adventure, comedy). Zhovten. 3:20 p.m. Hr 65-85

In the Game (documentary). America House. 2 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Shows

Adam Naas (dark soul). Bel étage. 7 p.m. Hr 400-600

Pikkardiyska Tertsiya (a cappella vocals). Palace Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 320-1,200

Druha Rika (pop rock). Freedom. 7 p.m. Hr 300-1,000

Sebastian Mullaert (techno, dance). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 200-280

Theater

Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead. British National Theater Live. Multiplex (Lavina Mall). 3 p.m. Hr 175

Fragile State (art exhibition). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Olerom Forum (Steve Wozniak, Charles Adler, Adam Cheyer). Palace of Sports. 10 a.m.— 6 p.m. Hr 1,400-130,000

Gray Cube (art exhibition). Center of Visual Culture. 2-8 p.m. Free

FetishX0 (art exhibition). Akt. 11 a.m.— 9 p.m. Free (during the weekends, the price of the exhibition is included in the entrance fee to the ongoing festivals)

Trading Illusions: German Artists in Kyiv (art exhibition). Taras Shevchenko National Museum. 10 a.m.— 6 p.m. Hr 25-200

Festival of Young Ukrainian Artists. Mystetsky Arsenal. 11 a.m.— 8 p.m. Hr 60

Movies

Vincent Van Gogh: A New Way of Seeing. Exhibition on Screen. Kyiv Cinema. 3 p.m. Hr 150

The Silence of the Lambs (crime, drama, thriller). Kinopanorama. 3 p.m. Hr 50

Kingsman: The Golden Circle (action, adventure, comedy). Zhovten. 3:20 p.m. Hr 65-85

Shows

Nina Matvienko and Kyivska Kamerata. National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-250

Live Music

Jackson Tribute Show. International Center of Culture and Arts. 7 p.m. Hr 290-790

Clubs

Karaoke Tuesday. SkyBar. 11 p.m. Hr 150

Miscellaneous

Fragile State (art exhibition). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Gray Cube (art exhibition). Center of Visual Culture. 2-8 p.m. Free

Sergey Grinevich: The Dialogue (art exhibition). Nebo. 11 a.m.— 7 p.m. Free

FetishX0 (art exhibition). Akt. 11 a.m.— 9 p.m. Free (during the weekends, the price of the exhibition is included in the entrance fee to the ongoing festivals)

Trading Illusions: German Artists in Kyiv (art exhibition). Taras Shevchenko National Museum. 10 a.m.— 6 p.m. Hr 25-200

Big Results of Small Businesses (photo exhibition). America House. 12-9 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Anna Mironova. Between Strokes (graphics). Ya Gallery. 10 a.m.— 7 p.m. Free

Festival of Young Ukrainian Artists. Mystetsky Arsenal. 11 a.m.— 8 p.m. Hr 60



Beer Festival

Those who missed Oktoberfest beer festival in Germany in September can try some brands of Ukrainian craft beer at Platforma Art Factory on Oct. 7-8. Beer lovers can find more than 13 types of this beverage from Ukrainian breweries from different regions.

Beer Festival. Platforma Art Factory (1 Bilomorska St.) Oct. 7-8. 11 a.m. - 11 p.m. Hr 100-150

Movies

Blade Runner (sci-fi, thriller). Kinopanorama. 3 p.m., 9 p.m. Hr 50-70

Global Warming (documentary). American Library. Free

Theater

Dido and Aeneas (opera by Henry Purcell). Mystetsky Arsenal. 7 p.m. Hr 350-1,500

Titus Andronicus (British Theater Live). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 175

Swan Lake (ballet). National Opera of Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 20-800

Wednesday, Oct. 4

Live Music

Bryats Band. From Mozart to Scorpions. Actor's House. 7 p.m. Hr 100-200

Clubs

Karaoke Wednesday. SkyBar. 11 p.m. Hr 150

Miscellaneous

Fragile State (art exhibition). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Gray Cube (art exhibition). Center of Visual Culture. 2-8 p.m. Free

Sergey Grinevich: The Dialogue (art exhibition). Nebo. 11 a.m.—7 p.m. Free

Live Music

Freedom Jazz. Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 290-1,190

AC/DC Tribute Show. Atlas. 8 p.m. Hr 150-450

Best Hits of AC/DC. Docker Pub. 9 p.m. Hr 125-200

Clubs

Karaoke Thursday. SkyBar. 11 p.m. Hr 150

Miscellaneous

Fragile State (art exhibition). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Gray Cube (art exhibition). Center of Visual Culture. 2-8 p.m. Free

Sergey Grinevich: The Dialogue (art exhibition). Nebo. 11 a.m.—7 p.m. Free

FetishXO (art exhibition). Akt. 11 a.m.—9 p.m. Free (during the weekends, the price of the exhibition is included in the entrance fee to the ongoing festivals)

Trading Illusions: German Artists in Kyiv (art exhibition). Taras Shevchenko National Museum. 10 a.m.—6 p.m. Hr 25-200

Big Results of Small Businesses (photo exhibition). America House. 12-9 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Anna Mironova. Between Strokes (graphics). Ya Gallery. 10 a.m.—7 p.m. Free

songs about love and passion. Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 120-390

Clubs

Kiko (DJ set). SkyBar. 11 p.m. Hr 350

Miscellaneous

Fragile State (art exhibition). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Gray Cube (art exhibition). Center of Visual Culture. 2-8 p.m. Free

Sergey Grinevich: The Dialogue (art exhibition). Nebo. 11 a.m.—7 p.m. Free

Trading Illusions: German Artists in Kyiv (art exhibition). Taras Shevchenko National Museum. 10 a.m.—6 p.m. Hr 25-200

Big Results of Small Businesses (photo exhibition). America House. 12-9 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Anna Mironova. Between Strokes (graphics). Ya Gallery. 10 a.m.—7 p.m. Free

Festival of Young Ukrainian Artists. Mystetsky Arsenal. 11 a.m.—8 p.m. Hr 60

Playing the Past (interactive photo exhibition). Izone. 12-20 p.m. Free

Movies

Oscar Shorts 2017 Animation. Zhovten, Planeta Kino. Screenings



Oct. 6

Sting

British singer and songwriter Sting arrives at Kyiv with his first album in 13 years, released nearly a year ago in November. The artist is known for his world hits "Shape of my Heart," "Rise and Fall" and "Englishmen in New York." Sting describes his new album as "a lot of rock and roll with themes of searching and travelling." **Sting (rock, new age). Palace of Sports (1 Sportyyna Sq.). Oct. 6. 9 p.m. Hr 3,150 - 17,990**

Roman Bondarchuk Stand Up Magic Show

He can separate the head from the body without hurting the person. He can make a woman fly and he is invincible to fire. Roman Bondarchuk, an illusionist who studied Harry Houdini's legacy, will present his new magic show in Kyiv on Oct. 7.

Roman Bondarchuk Stand Up Magic Show. Freedom Event Hall (134 Kyrylivska St.). Oct. 7. 7 p.m. Hr 200-500



Oct. 7

(Courtesy of Roman Bondarchuk)

FetishXO (art exhibition). Akt. 11 a.m.—9 p.m. Free (during the weekends, the price of the exhibition is included in the entrance fee to the ongoing festivals)

Trading Illusions: German Artists in Kyiv (art exhibition). Taras Shevchenko National Museum. 10 a.m.—6 p.m. Hr 25-200

Big Results of Small Businesses (photo exhibition). America House. 12-9 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Anna Mironova. Between Strokes (graphics). Ya Gallery. 10 a.m.—7 p.m. Free

Festival of Young Ukrainian Artists. Mystetsky Arsenal. 11 a.m.—8 p.m. Hr 60

Theater

Dido and Aeneas (opera by Henry Purcell). Mystetsky Arsenal. 7 p.m. Hr 350-1,500

Thursday, Oct. 5

Classical Music

Pieces for Violin and Piano. Playing Schumann, Kreisler, Brahms, Debussy and others. National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-250

Festival of Young Ukrainian Artists. Mystetsky Arsenal. 11 a.m.—8 p.m. Hr 60

Playing the Past (interactive photo exhibition). 7 p.m. Izone. Free

Movies

Blade Runner (sci-fi, thriller). Kinopanorama. 3 p.m., 9 p.m. Hr 50-70

Oscar Shorts 2017 Animation. Zhovten, Planeta Kino. Screenings time and prices are to be announced

Untitled (documentary, in German). Planeta Kino. 6 p.m. Hr 55-115

Shows

Fink (electronic). Sentrum. 7 p.m. Hr 650-1,500

Friday, Oct. 6

Classical Music

20th Century Music. Actor's House. 7 p.m. Hr 250-350

Live Music

Rock Hits of 20th Century. Bel étage. 8 p.m. Hr 250-350

Rigobert Mustelier and Latin band Septimo Sentido. Playing

time and prices are to be announced

Untitled (documentary, in German). Planeta Kino. 6 p.m. Hr 55-115

Shows

Sting (rock, new age, worldbeat). Palace of Sports. 9 p.m. Hr 3,150-17,990

Mini Festival of British Drama

Twelve finalists of theatrical competition Taking the Stage for emerging theater troupe and young directors held by British Council will stage the episodes from their plays during the festival of British drama on Oct. 6 - 7. The jury will choose three directors who will stage their plays in full in spring 2018. **Mini Festival of British Drama. Dovzhenko Center. Oct. 6 - 7. 5 p.m. Free**



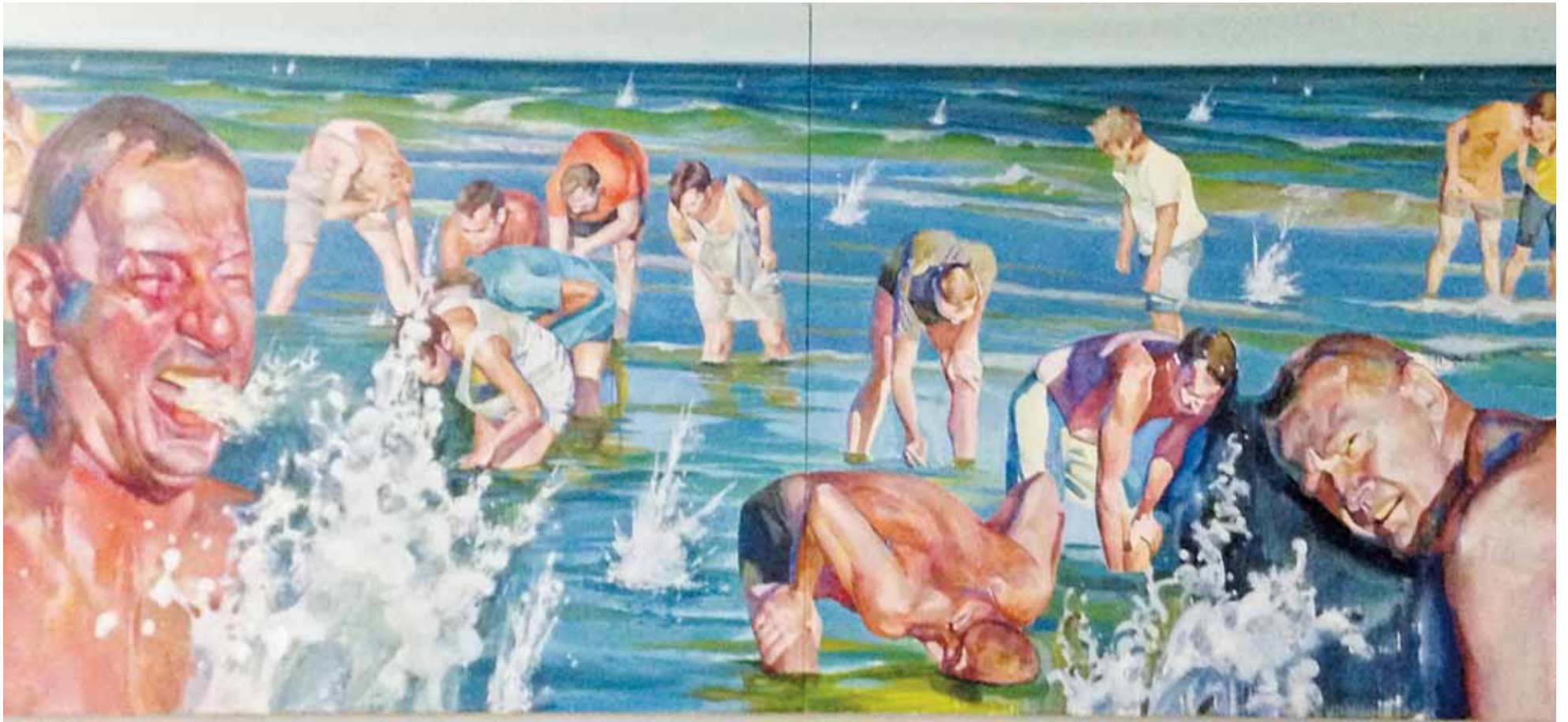
Oct. 6 - 7

(Courtesy)

Venues

Classical Music
 National Philharmonic of Ukraine (2 Volodymyrskyj Descent) +38044 278 1697
Live Music
 Bel étage (16A Shota Rustaveli St.) +38067 171 1616
 Caribbean Club (4 Petliuryi St.) +38067 224 4111
 Freedom Event Hall (134 Kyrylivska St.) +38067 239 8461
 Actor's House (7 Yaroslaviv Val St.) +38044 235 2081
 Cinema House (6 Sakskahansko St.) +38067 155 2255
 Atlas (37-41 Sichovykh Striltiv St.) +38067 155 2255
 In-Jazz musical instruments store (1 Druzhby

Narodiv Blvd.) +38044 451 8615
 Docker Pub (25 Bohatyrskaya St.) +38044 537 1340
 International Center of Culture and Arts (1 Heroiv Nebesnoi Sotni Alley.) +38044 279 7482
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 Mezzanine Club (31 Nyzhniurkivska St.) +38063 873 7306
 Forsage Club (51A Harmatna St.) +38063 497 9606
 Closer (31 Nyzhniurkivska St.) +38067 658 8951
 Indigo Club (3 Kudrashova St.) +38044 500 0011
 SkyBar (5 Velyka Vasylykivska St.) +38044 223 8888
Miscellaneous
 Dovzhenko Center (1 Vasylykivska St.) +38044 201 6574
 America House (6 Mykoly Pymonenka St.) +38063 343 0119
 Pinchuk Art Center (1-3 Velyka Vasylykivska St.) +38044 590 0858
 VDNH (1 Akademika Hlushkova St.) +38044 596 9101(19)
 Izone (8 Naberezhno-Luhova St.) +38050 477 2620
 Nebo Art Gallery (14 Drohomyrova St.) +38044 596 1802
 Center of Visual Culture (44 Hlybochytska St.) vccrc@vccrc.org.ua
 Platforma Art Factory (1 Bilomorska St.) +38044 338 5538
 Kontraktova Square
 Skio Art Gallery (8/14 Turhenivska St.) +38050 833 2300
 Holosiivska Metro Station
 State Aviation Museum (1 Medova St.) +38044 451 8324
 Akt art center (1 Bilomorska St.) +38093 846 0394
 Gryshko National Botanical Garden (1 Tymiriazivska St.) +38044 285 4105
 Taras Shevchenko National Museum (12 Taras Shevchenko Blvd.) +38044 234 2556
 Maidan Nezalezhnosti Square
 Mystetsky Arsenal (10-12 Lavrska St.) +38044 2885225
 Ya Gallery (49 Khoryva St.) +38044 492 9203
 Khreshchatyk Street
Movies
 Planeta Kino (Blockbuster, 34V Stepana Bandery Ave.) 0800 300 600
 Kinopanorama cinema (19 Shota Rustaveli St.) +38044 287 3041
 Zhovten cinema (26 Kostiantynivska St.) +38044 428 5757
 Kyiv Cinema (19 Velyka Vasylykivska St.) +38044 234 7381
 Multiplex cinema (Lavina Mall, 6D Berkoverstka St.) 0800 505 333
 American Library (8/5 Voloska St.) +38044 462 5674
Shows
 Sentrum (11 Shota Rustaveli St.) +38097 115 0011
 MonteRay Club (8 Prorizna St.) +38067 223 0644
 Palace Ukraine (103 Vasylykivska St.) +38044 247 2303
 Palace of Sports (1 Sportyyna Sq.) +38044 246 7405
Theater
 National Opera of Ukraine (50 Volodymyrskaya St.) +38044 234 7165



The painting by Elmira Shemsedinova called "Searching" shows people standing in the sea while being fired at from the sky. (Courtesy)

German-Ukrainian Art Biennale shows illusions in which we live

BY MARIYA KAPINOS
KAPINOS@KYIVPOST.COM

At first sight, the painting radiates peace and happiness: The sun is shining brightly, people in summer clothes stand knee deep in the sea. Yet, looking closer, one notices that the water's surface is disturbed by splashes from the entry of bullets, and the people in the painting are actually under attack. Their safety was just an illusion.

The painting is part of the "Trading Illusions" Arts and Film Biennale that kicked off in Kyiv on Sept. 27. It was initiated by a Ukrainian non-government organization called the Congress of Cultural Activists and the Wilhelm Fraenger-Institut in Germany, with the support of the Ukrainian and German governments. The program of the Biennale includes film screenings, art and photo exhibitions, installations, music performances, public discussions, and

lectures. "Trading Illusions" resulted from cooperation between artists from around Ukraine and from the German village Worpswede, in Lower Saxony. The village is a fabled German artists' colony, suspended in time on a stretch of German moorland. It offers its visitors a rich variety of cultural venues and a vibrant art scene. **Dwelling of artists** "How large the eyes become here!

They want at all times to possess the whole sky," wrote the young Austrian poet Rainer Maria Rilke in 1900 while visiting Worpswede. Artists from around Germany and other countries come to Worpswede to recharge and find inspiration. Walking along the town's streets, surrounded by magnificent landscapes, artists share their experiences and discuss new ideas. No wonder that Worpswede's art is highly praised around the globe, and the village itself has the feel of a surreal piece of fairytale surrounded by the real world. Last year several Ukrainian artists presented their artworks in Worpswede, and this year nine German artists will do the same in Kyiv. Among them is documentary photographer Rudiger Lubricht, 70, painter Sibylle Springer, 42, and lecturer Margaret Kelley, 63, who was born in California in the United States, came to Worpswede on an art scholarship in 1991, and decided to stay there. German artists will share the spotlight with Ukrainian performers, such as sculptor Kateryna Buchatska, 30, born in Kyiv, sculptor and painter Ruslan Tremba, 37, from western Ukraine, and Vitaliy Kokhan, 30, born in north-western Ukraine, who will present his video installations. The main theme of Biennale is people's illusions, says Kateryna Ray, the organizer of the Ukrainian part of the exhibition. As an example, she points to a work by Ukrainian painter Elmira Shemsedinova, called "Searching." This is the image of the people wearing summer clothes standing near the shore, being fired at from the sky. The painting aims to show how fragile the feeling of safety is and how easily it can be destroyed. "Choosing artworks for the exhibi-

tion, I wanted to show the different forms of illusions that we are surrounded with, and how artists reflect these in their work," says Ray. "For example, on social media people seem to be very happy, yet very often this is just a mask to cover their loneliness and lack of positive emotions." The main goal of the exhibition is to connect Ukraine and Germany through art. "People in Germany definitely have heard about the war in Ukraine, and this image dominates over other things, Germans know nothing about Ukrainian art," claims Ray. "We want to change that."

Mentoring culture

But "Trading Illusions" is not just about German artists learning about Ukraine — it is an art platform for artists from two countries, according to Angela Henkel, head of programming at the exhibition. The motto of the exhibition is: "Show and be shown to." "We did not come to Ukraine to mentor you," Henkel says. "We came to exchange the experience, and we very soon became friends with our Ukrainian partners."

Henkel believes Ukrainian culture is in the transitional period, when old paragons are being broken and new ones are about to reveal themselves. This is a time when artists can find inspiration in historical events, and through art tell the story of their country, she says.

"Trading Illusions" Arts and Film Biennale. Sept. 27 — Oct. 17. Taras Shevchenko National Museum (12 Taras Shevchenko Blvd., Hr 25) and Dukat Gallery (8B Reitarska St. Free). Sept. 27–30 are opening days at which both German and Ukrainian artists will themselves present their artworks to the public. ■



Reunited again

Berliner youths wave German flags at Brandenburg Gate to celebrate Germany's reunification on Oct. 3, 1990, only 11 months after the Berlin Wall fell. Germans in Ukraine will celebrate the anniversary on Oct. 4 in Kyiv. (AFP)

Festival time! Germany Weeks in Ukraine coming up Nov. 10-26

BY ANNA YAKUTENKO
YAKUTENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

As many other fans of German language, Kyivan Iryna Lomachynska can't wait for this autumn's Germany Weeks in Ukraine to begin.

Deutsche Wohnen or Germany Weeks in Ukraine is a festival scheduled to take place on Nov. 10–26. It features cultural events devoted to German-Ukrainian cooperation in business, education and culture.

Lomachynska, who founded the German speaking club, Redner-Klub, in Kyiv, regularly attends the festival as well as other German events to practice the language and dive into German culture.

This autumn, she has been to the celebration of the Year of German Language on Kontraktova Square on



The German musical trio Oberon performs during the opening of the Germany Weeks in Ukraine in Kyiv on Sept. 26, 2016. This year, the festival will be held on Nov. 10-26. (Goethe-Institut)

Germany at a glance

Total area: 357,022 square kilometers

Population: 82 million people

Government type: Federal republic

Chief of state: President Frank-Walter Steinmeier (since March 19, 2017)

Head of government: Chancellor Angela Merkel (since Nov. 22, 2005)

GDP, PPP: \$4 trillion (2016)

GDP per capita, PPP: \$48,730

(2017)

Main sectors of the economy:

machinery, cars, electrical equipment, pharmaceuticals, high-tech instruments, plastics

Key advantage: According to Bloomberg, Germany's "\$280 billion trade surplus in goods last year was surpassed only by \$479 billion for China, according to United Nations data. Its exports in recent years represented around 46 percent of Germany's gross domestic product, per the World Bank; the comparable figure for the U.S. is about 13 percent."

Ukrainian-German relations:

Trade: \$6.3 billion (2016)

Exports from Germany to Ukraine: \$4.2 billion

Major exports: Machinery, motor vehicles, chemical and pharmaceutical products, electrical products, plastics, food, feed.

Exports from Ukraine to Germany: \$2.1 billion

Leading exports: automotive parts, textiles and garments, agricultural commodities and processed food products, metals and chemical products.

German foreign direct investment in Ukraine: Estimates range from \$1.7 billion (Ukrainian government estimate) to \$3.8 billion (German government estimate)

Ukrainian foreign direct investment in Germany: \$11 million.

Notable businesses: Metro Cash & Carry, Knauf, Kromberg & Schubert, Bayer, ProCredit Bank.

Sources: World Bank, Central Intelligence Agency, Ukrainian State Statistics Service, Federal Foreign Office of Germany, German Embassy in Ukraine, Ukrstat

Sept. 9–10 and the Open Door Day at the German Embassy on Sept. 16.

"I enjoyed attending those events because I've met lots of people I knew and we had a great time there," she said. During Germany Weeks, she especially enjoys participating in discussion clubs and quizzes.

Preliminary program

Germany Weeks in Ukraine has been held annually since 2013. This year, the festival celebrates 25 years of bilateral diplomatic relations.

During the festival, the German Embassy will hold events in 15 Ukrainian cities, including the Green Economy Forum, presentations of German universities and scholarship programs such as Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, or DAAD, exhibitions devoted to German-Ukrainian history, theater, music and dance performances by Ukrainian and German artists.

This year, the festival will start in Dnipro, a city 391 kilometers southeast of Kyiv, with "Swan Lake" ballet performed by Berlin State Ballet in the Dnipro Theater of Opera and Ballet. Ukrainian ballerina Iana Salenko, 34, who is also a guest artist with the Royal Ballet in London, will perform as Odette.

The full program will be published in the middle of October. Here's the preliminary program:

On Nov. 10–11 German actress Kata Klug, known for her role in the film "Money Can't Buy Me Love," will give a lecture on acting. German youth organization Bukowiner Phoenix based in Chernivtsi will present their theater play "Papierblumen."

In Dnipro, the German Embassy will also present a tourist guide of

German architecture on Nov. 10–11. Buildings mentioned in the guide will have a sign with QR-code that brings one to the website with information about the building and the architects who created it.

Kyiv-based performances include opera "Zueignung" by Richard Strauss, sung by the soloist of Hamburg State Opera Viktor Rud on Nov. 22 and a joint concert of German band Trümmer and Ukrainian 5 Vymir on Nov. 26.

Also, food companies will exhibit their products at the German-

Ukrainian Food Forum in Kyiv on Nov. 13–15.

Sumy, a city north of Kyiv, will hold Bach Festival, a music festival devoted to the German composer Johann Sebastian Bach, on Nov. 15–16.

Zaporizhia, a city 515 kilometers southeast of Kyiv, will host a conference on architecture on Nov. 19–20.

On the same dates, in Ukraine's western city of Lviv, an art exhibition opens devoted to the 25th anniversary of Ukrainian-German diplomatic relations.

On Nov. 20 in Kharkiv, the second largest city in Ukraine 480 kilometers east of Kyiv, a conference and exhibition will be held on Martin Luther and Protestant Reformation. On the same day, street art devoted to Ukrainian-German relations will be presented.

Screenings of German movies are also planned during the festival.

The full program of the festival will be published at www.goethe.de/en/index.html and at www.deutsche-wochen-ukraine.com in October. ■

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Language unites Ukrainians, Germans who meet weekly

BY TOMA ISTOMINA
ISTOMINA@KYIVPOST.COM

Members of a German speaking club in Kyiv call their meetings "Stammtisch," which is translated from German as regulars' table, as they meet every Wednesday in the same restaurant.

The club was launched at least 20 years ago (or even earlier, nobody knows) as friendly meetings of native German speakers. Today it is an open community for anyone who speaks German, including Ukrainians and foreigners from different countries.

They gather every week at the Dom Bergonie art café near Teatralna metro station to discuss news and share knowledge.

Daniel M. Porcedda, one of the members who reorganized the club a year ago, says that he enjoys the meetings. "It connects people that can learn something from each other and that makes life beautiful," he told the Kyiv Post.

History, reorganization

The club has been meeting since at least 1997. Around 10 years ago, when Porcedda started attending, they gathered at Muka restaurant on Khreshchatyk Street. He says that it was the first regular German-speaking meetings in Ukraine. "It was a spot, where German people met to talk, have some food, drink and sometimes play cards," he said.

Porcedda, 58, moved to Ukraine in 1998 for business reasons. Since then he has lived in Kyiv and worked in many different fields. Today he provides foreign companies that do business in Ukraine with management and corporate services.

Coming from Luxembourg, Porcedda speaks German, French and Luxembourgian as native languages.



People practice German language in the speaking club Stammtisch in Dom Bergonie café on Sept. 27. Members gather every Wednesday at 7 p.m. (Volodymyr Petrov)

In the fall of 2016, the usual venue, Muka restaurant, closed down, so they had to find a new place. That was when Porcedda took the initiative to find a suitable venue and change the club's concept to invite Ukrainians also.

"We live in this country," Porcedda said. "I don't understand why some foreigners remain in their closed communities."

One thing that remained the same: time and day of meetings –

Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

Stammtisch today

There are more than 200 people in the club's group on Facebook and, on average, 15 people attend each meeting.

Porcedda says that people of different occupations meet at Dom Bergonie – artists, lawyers, journalists, entrepreneurs and students. Some of them live here, others stop by while visiting Ukraine, he says.

There are no set topics or any rules, except for one: knowledge of German.

"They don't have to know the language perfectly, nobody does, but they need to be able to follow conversations and take part in them," Porcedda said.

Apart from that, the club's curator makes sure that every member feels comfortable.

"What I take care of is that people are polite, they don't start political debates or promote any ideology in a way that it hurts somebody. Because this would break apart the group."

Stammtisch members sometimes stay late into the night, closing the restaurant down.

"Sometimes we have such funny discussions that we have tears in our eyes from laughing and sometimes very serious conversations but in a very friendly relaxed manner," he said.

German for beginners

While Stammtisch is a perfect get-together for those who are fluent in German, there is another speaking club in Kyiv suitable for beginners and those who don't feel confident yet talking to native speakers.

They as well meet every Wednesday at 7 p.m. at Puzata Hata restaurant near Lva Tolstoho Square metro station.

This club was founded in May 2009 by the Language Exchange Club community that coordinates many speaking clubs around Kyiv.

Roman Rybakov, 26, found out about the club eight years ago back in his student years when he started to learn the language. He has attended meetings on a regular basis since then.

He believes that such speaking clubs help to break the language barrier. He says that often people know grammar and write well, yet are afraid to speak, especially with native speakers.

"Talking to those whose language is imperfect helps. They will give you time, listen to you, while you can think how to formulate something and then say it," he told the Kyiv

Post.

Today Rybakov gives private German lessons and knows the language well. He attends stammtisch, but still visits the club at Puzata Hata to meet old friends.

Rybakov says that they usually talk, discuss how everyone is doing and play games like "associations" or "words."

The club connects students, beginners and those, like Rybakov, for whom the club has become a tradition.

Stammtisch. Dom Bergonie (17 Pushkinska St.) Wednesday, 7 p.m. Free

www.facebook.com/groups/1725996007727870

German speaking club. Puzata Hata (40 Velyka Vasylkivska St.) Wednesday, 7 p.m. Free

www.facebook.com/groups/82542151162 ■



People who attend Stammtisch meetings don't have to be fluent in German, but have to be able to follow conversations. (Volodymyr Petrov)

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Negligence could be factor in blasts

Kalynivka from page 3

“The guards reported a noise in the sky, then shells located in the open started exploding,” Misiura wrote. “It’s confirmed – there was a drone, and there was a terror attack.”

However, Ukraine’s chief military prosecutor, Anatoliy Matios, said during a press briefing in Odesa on Sept. 28 that the investigation had found no signs of any drone activity at the scene, and no enemy saboteurs had been captured.

With no evidence to back any of the claims of sabotage, the possibility that the blasts were caused by an accident seems equally likely.

According to Ukrainian Defense Minister Stepan Poltorak, the Kalynivka arsenal contained some 83,000 tonnes of military stocks, of which 63,000 tonnes was assembled ammunition, while the rest consisted of explosives, ammunition parts, and scrap metal. Much of the ammunition was stored in the open, with no protection from the elements.

As at the Balakliya depot, which was similarly hit by a fire and then massive explosions of ammunition in late March, ammunition at the Kalynivka depot in some cases appears to have been stored in large stacks of wooden crates in the open.

There are other signs that negligence, rather than sabotage, might be to blame for the disaster.

On April 26, Kalynivka district

court convicted the then depot commander, Igor Malezhyk, of negligence in the acquisition of fire safety equipment. The trial papers say that in late February 2016 the commander paid budget funds worth Hr 188,740 (\$7,127) for fire-fighting equipment, but confirmation of the delivery of the equipment to the depot was never confirmed.

In a plea bargain deal, the officer was sentenced to a cut of two years from his service record and a 10 percent reduction in his monthly salary, instead of two years of imprisonment.

In fact, funding for fire safety at the Kalynivka depot has grown since the start of Russia’s war on Ukraine.

According to figures provided by Presidential Adviser Yuriy Biryukov, in 2014, the state budget allocated Hr 562,000 (\$21,000) to the unit, while in 2017 the amount of funds increased by Hr 6.4 million (\$242,000), and another Hr 19.1 million (\$721,000) was allocated in the wake of the catastrophic fire and explosions at the Balakliya ammunition depot in Kharkiv Oblast in March.

In total, Ukraine’s ammunition depots received Hr 300 million (\$11.3 million) in 2017, although the army had requested Hr 5 billion (\$189 million) for technical and security improvements at its ammunition depots, in particular for deploying anti-drone equipment. ■

History of disasters

BY ILLIA PONOMARENKO
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Explosions at ammunition depots are nothing new in Ukraine. Even before the start of Russia’s war on Ukraine in the Donbas, they occurred every few years. However, since the war started, the pace has picked up, with four depots suffering catastrophic fires and explosions in the last three years — three of them within the last six months.

Many suspect the hand of the Kremlin to be behind the latest disaster at Kalynivka, especially as it occurred in Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko’s political powerbase of Vinnytsya Oblast (from where Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman also hails), and on the same day as the president’s birthday.

But since 2003, Ukraine has seen as many as 10 major incidents involving ammunition detonations at its military depots throughout the country, with many of them causing deaths and destruction, and most being caused by negligence.

2003 — Bakhmut (formerly Artemivsk), Donetsk Oblast.

On Oct. 10, the 52nd Mechanized Brigade’s ammunition depot, which were situated in close proximity to the city, caught fire. Ten out of 17 of the depot’s storage units were destroyed, and over 3,000 tons of munitions detonated. The blasts damaged 186 residential houses, five schools, and three hospitals.

Two local residents were hurt.

2004–2007 — Novobohdanivka, Zaporizhia Oblast

The village of Novobohdanivka



People evacuate from Kalynivka in Vinnytsya Oblast after explosions at a nearby military depot on Sept. 27. (AFP)

suffered from four series of massive explosions at the local army depot each year between 2004 and 2007. In 2004, up to 90,000 tonnes of shells detonated in a fire, killing five people and wounding 81. There were more blasts in following years due to hot weather or fire safety violations, killing two more persons and injuring six in a series of less powerful single explosions through 2007.

2008 — Lozova, Kharkiv Oblast

At least 95,000 tonnes of ammunition caught fire at a local army arsenal, resulting in massive detonations and an explosion at a gas-distribution station. All civilians living inside a 3-kilometer danger zone around the depot were evacuated, and one person was wounded.

2015 — Svatove, Luhansk Oblast

In late October, an army depot with 3,500 tonnes of various types of ammunition caught fire some 300 meters away from one of the city’s residential districts. In the resulting explosions, three soldiers and one civilian were killed.

The huge explosions also damaged over 600 houses and 21 other buildings.

2017 has been Ukraine’s worst ever year for ammunition depot explosions.

In March, the country’s biggest ammunition depot, in the city of Balakliya, in Kharkiv Oblast, started exploding overnight. Some 36,000 civilians had to be evacuated, over 300 houses were damaged, and the army lost some 70 percent of the ammunition in the depot.

The massive blasts killed two women and wounded five other people.

Another series of blasts at an ammunition base took place on Sept. 22 near the town of Novoyanisol in Donetsk Oblast some 30 kilometers northeast of Mariupol. The military say the unit’s depot was set on fire due to arson. Local residents reported sporadic detonations of small arms ammunition and shells. However, the fire was extinguished by the end of the day, with no casualties reported.

The fire and explosions at the ammunition depot in Kalynivka in Vinnytsya Oblast on Sept. 26–27 is reported to have injured two people, with six neighboring houses being destroyed by fire, and many others being seriously damaged.



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Powerful SBU answers only to one person: Poroshenko

BY OKSANA GRYTSENKO
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AND SUKHOV@KYIVPOST.COM

Since Russia launched its war against Ukraine in 2014, the Security Service of Ukraine, or SBU, has accumulated massive powers designed to protect the nation. But SBU officials are often accused of using Russia's war to persecute government critics and enrich themselves.

Activists, businesspeople and international watchdogs say the agency is a tool for President Petro Poroshenko to achieve his political

and business goals. The Presidential Administration did not respond to a request for comment.

"Poroshenko sees the SBU as his own fiefdom that he uses to redistribute market shares and persecute political opponents," reformist lawmaker Sergii Leshchenko wrote in a recent column for weekly news magazine *Novoye Vremya*.

Shrouded in the secrecy afforded by war, the service has become effectively uncontrollable and unaccountable. SBU employees are blocking access to their asset declarations, while investigative journalists have found plenty of evidence of their

SBU officials boast extravagant wealth, but refuse to declare it

BY OLEG SUKHOV
SUKHOV@KYIVPOST.COM

The secrecy linked to the Security Service of Ukraine's intelligence duties has enabled it to escape what almost all other officials have to do — publishing their electronic asset declarations.

SBU officials' declarations are unavailable to the public and were also unavailable to the National Agency for Preventing Corruption until recently, because the SBU deems them state secrets. However, critics argue that SBU officials are just trying to hide their ill-gotten wealth. SBU spokeswoman Olena Hitlianska declined to comment on the issue.

But the scale of incumbent SBU officials' wealth becomes clear from the electronic declarations of former SBU officers, which are available to the public.

Even rank-and-file officials can boast extravagant possessions. The family of Dmytro Khrystosenko, an SBU pensioner in Lviv Oblast, have an 800-square-meter land plot, a 122-square-meter apartment worth Hr 575,547, an 82-square-meter apartment, and commercial real estate worth Hr 1.9 million with an area of 1,021 square meters. They also have a Hr 442,587 Volkswagen, a Hr 1 million BMW, Hr 239,226 on bank accounts, and \$207,000 in cash.

SBU salaries can't provide such wealth. While payroll is kept secret, representatives of the SBU's Kyiv branch told Radio Liberty in 2015 that monthly salaries in their department range from Hr 4,000 to Hr 16,000.

The family of Roman Semenchenko, an ex-SBU official in Kyiv, have land plots with an area of 3,262 square meters, a 115.4-square-meter apartment, a 204-square-meter apartment, a 498-square-meter apartment and a 194-square-meter house. They also have a Hr 400,000 Skoda, a Hr 2.5 million Toyota, a Porsche Cayenne (with market equivalents worth Hr 1.4 million), and a Mercedes Benz (with market equivalents worth Hr. 2.6 million). They have \$84,000,

Hr 1.8 million and 27,000 euros in cash.

Some insights into the current SBU officials can be found in their old paper declarations. While being less informative compared to the electronic declarations, they still show the officials' wealth.

According to SBU Chief Vasyl Hrytsak's declaration for 2015, he has a 413-square-meter house and a Toyota (with market equivalents of Hr 1.3 million), while his deputy Vitaly Malikov's family declared income from the sale of property worth Hr 759,960, income from business worth Hr 1.5 million and a Toyota whose market equivalents are worth Hr 355,000.

Hrytsak's deputies Oleh Frolov and Vadym Poyarkov declared a Volkswagen Touareg and Toyota Land Cruiser, respectively. Their market equivalents are worth Hr 500,000 and Hr 900,000.

Meanwhile, Hrytsak's wife Olga founded Olvia, a firm that supplies meat to state agencies, according to a 2015 Radio Liberty investigation.

Hrytsak's deputies Vitaly Malikov and Oleg Frolov had acquired premium land plots from the state for free, Radio Liberty reported.

Malikov and his wife used to own several businesses, including in Crimea, according to a 2016 report by the Slidstvo.info show. Malikov and SBU spokeswoman Hitlianska denied that she owns businesses.

The common-law wife of SBU First Deputy Chief Pavlo Demchyna owns a \$100,000 Range Rover, a \$100,000 Mercedes Benz, a Hr 10 million luxury mansion, as well as land plots that Demchyna has not declared, according to a Slidstvo.info investigation released in March. Demchyna told Slidstvo.info that he regularly visited the mansion but was not living in it. He refused to explain who owns it and how the house's purchase was financed. Radio Liberty has also produced investigations on the high-end cars of SBU officials in Kyiv. An investigation released in June listed such cars as a Volkswagen (\$50,000), an Acura (\$25,000) and a Toyota (\$60,000).



Activists on March 28 protest against the SBU raid at the YouControl IT company. Earlier in March, the SBU broke into the company's office under the pretext of unlawful sale of software made by Russia. YouControl denied those accusations, blaming the SBU of attempts to extort money from business. (Anastasia Vlasova)

extravagant wealth.

SBU spokeswoman Olena Hitlianska refused to answer specific questions and rejected the Kyiv's Post's request for interviews with top SBU officials, who command a law enforcement force of 33,500 employees.

"Why did you collect all the garbage that is dumped upon our service?" she said. "... All of this is wrong and is being promoted by paid people, including by those paid by Russia."

Unreformed

In contrast to other state agencies, there have not even been attempts to reform the SBU since the 2013–2014 EuroMaidan Revolution to reduce corruption and make the service more professional and independent.

One stillborn reform project was developed by the SBU back in January 2015 with the help of the European Union and NATO. The project envisages stripping the SBU of the power to investigate economic crimes and focusing its resources into counterintelligence and counterterrorism.

"Less than 10 percent of the SBU staff is involved in counterintelligence," ex-SBU Chief Valentyn Nalyvaichenko told the Kyiv Post. "This is critically low."

Oleksandr Lemenov, an expert at the Reanimation Package of Reforms, said that presidential allies, including SBU First Deputy Chief Pavlo Demchyna, had blocked the reform.

Demchyna is an associate of Poroshenko's top allies Ihor Kononenko and Oleksandr Hranovsky, several sources told the Kyiv Post. Hranovsky told the Kyiv Post that he knows Demchyna.

Politicized agency

The SBU faces accusations of cracking down on the government's political opponents.

"Currently the SBU is a tool of the country's political leadership," Viktor Trepak, an ex-deputy chief of the SBU, said in an interview with LB.ua news site in May.

In 2016 the agency opened an investigation into Kateryna Vezeleva-Borisova, a top executive of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine.

The investigation was initiated by Demchyna. The move came amid a bitter conflict between the NABU and presidentially-controlled prosecutors. The SBU accused Vezeleva-Borisova of violating the anti-corruption law by lecturing at the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.



Pavlo Demchyna, a deputy chief of the Security Service of Ukraine

"They set the task of cracking down on someone from the NABU," she told the Kyiv Post. "Probably they were aiming to cast a shadow of corruption on the NABU."

In February, Demchyna also initiated a case against former reformist customs official Yulia Marushevska, an ally of Poroshenko's opponent and ex-Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, over an \$18 bonus payment.

In March, Marushevska said the SBU and prosecutors had also tried to search her apartment as part of an investigation into her customs reform initiatives that State Fiscal Service Chief Roman Nasirov, a Poroshenko

ally and himself a suspect in a graft case, interpreted as corruption.

In 2016 the SBU and prosecutors also searched Odesa Oblast Administration in connection with a case against another Saakashvili associate, Timur Nishnianidze.

Anti-corruption activists have also complained about alleged SBU harassment.

Alexandra Ustinova, an expert at the Anti-Corruption Action Center, said in May that she had been followed by SBU employees and people hired by the SBU.

Lawmaker Leshchenko said in May that he had been harassed by a person who he claims was hired by the SBU.

In April Radio Liberty published evidence of the SBU's involvement in organizing a protest against Vitaly Shabunin, head of the Anti-Corruption Action Center's executive board. The SBU denied organizing the protest, but admitted that one of its employees had been present near Shabunin's house.

"Those who give such orders commit a crime," Nalyvaichenko told the Kyiv Post, referring to the use of the SBU to attack government critics.

Unfree speech

Russia's war has become a convenient excuse not only for the persecution of political opponents but also for restricting the freedom of speech, the SBU's critics say.

In July Vasyl Bedriy, head of the SBU's Rivne Oblast branch, sent a letter to journalists of the *Chetverta Vlada* (Fourth Power) investigative journalism project in Rivne, demanding that they send him financial documents detailing the funding they receive from Western donors.

"There were multiple cases when Russian secret services finance pub-

Critics say SBU's abuses are covered by secrecy, lack of accountability to anyone except president

SBU from page 18

lic initiatives that secretly conduct anti-Ukrainian activities under the cover of Western European and U.S. non-governmental organizations," Bedriy wrote, referring to "the sacred duty of every citizen to defend his Motherland."

Volodymyr Torbich, the chief editor of *Chetverta Vlada*, said he had started receiving letters from the SBU after a *Chetverta Vlada* journalist investigated the assets of Demchyna.

Meanwhile, Demchyna has filed 16 libel lawsuits against journalists for investigating his property. Five of them were rejected by a court. No rulings have yet been made in the remaining ones.

In September, the Security Service of Ukraine also started an investigation into the *Ukrainska Pravda* newspaper, accusing it of divulging a state secret in an investigation on graft in the defense industry.

In 2016 *Kyiv Post* journalist Vlad Lavrov was attacked while investi-

gating construction in Kyiv on land allocated to the SBU for veterans of Russia's war against Ukraine. Lavrov found that only 10 percent of the apartments would be given to war veterans and their families, while the rest of them would be sold on the market.

When filming the construction site, Lavrov was attacked by a construction firm executive. Nobody has been held responsible for the incident, and Lavrov is planning to seek justice at the European Court of Human Rights.

In 2015, SBU officers assaulted journalists of the Schemes investigative show who were investigating SBU employees' luxury cars. The officers detained them and tried to force them to confess to being spies.

The SBU has also initiated bans on numerous websites, citing Russian aggression as justification, and a wide-ranging ban on Russian books, but some of the measures were criticized as disproportionate and aimed at government critics rather than Russia.

In June SBU Chief Vasyl Hrytsak

issued a statement lambasting what he called "the fifth column" in Ukrainian media and proposed adopting legislation to introduce criminal penalties for media involved in "hybrid warfare."

Business unfriendly

Another sphere where Russia's war against Ukraine could be used as an excuse for abuses is business: The SBU is accused of regularly raiding businesses to extort money from them.

From 2015 to 2016, Demchyna and other SBU officials blocked exports of nuts. Nut exporters and then Odesa Oblast Governor Saakashvili accused the agency of using this measure to extort money from the companies.

In 2016 prosecutors charged Oleh Nazaruk, a deputy head of the SBU's Rivne Oblast branch, with taking a bribe to turn a blind eye to illegal amber production. Prosecutors filed a notice of suspicion against Nazaruk, but it was subsequently canceled by a court.



The SBU officers participate in the military drills at the agency's training ground on Oct. 12, 2016, in Kyiv. Critics say that only 10 percent the SBU staff is involved in counterintelligence, the agency's main task. (Ukrinform)

Last year the SBU's anti-corruption unit, headed by Demchyna, also blocked imports of liquefied petroleum gas by 16 independent traders, accusing them of tax evasion and financing Kremlin-backed separatists.

Leshchenko interpreted this as an effort to remove from the LPG market competitors of Nisan Moiseyev, an associate of pro-Russian politician Viktor Medvedchuk, in the interests of Medvedchuk and Poroshenko. The SBU and Poroshenko denied the accusations.

In late March, the SBU raided the offices and apartments of some employees of IT firm YouControl, which runs a database about Ukrainian companies and is used as a source by anti-corruption activists.

The SBU seized computers, documents and money owned by the company's staff, accusing them of the unlawful sale of equipment and

software made by Russia.

"We think for (the SBU) this is a way of extorting money from businesses," said Antonina Rakhovska, a spokeswoman for YouControl.

In late April the SBU searched eight companies, including Dragon Capital, looking for allegedly Russian-produced software. But Dragon Capital CEO Tomas Fiala said the SBU searches could be an effort to pressure the bank in its corporate conflict over Kyiv's Sky Mall with Hranovsky, an ally of Demchyna.

"If you are investigating cyber security issues, you need information, which you can copy from a server. You don't need the hardware. It makes no sense to take away servers," IT expert Volodymyr Flonts told the *Kyiv Post*. "If you take away servers, you simply paralyze the company's work. So it looks to me like a case of racketeering, not an investigation." ■

Activists say SBU is top human rights violator

BY OKSANA GRYSYENKO
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Human rights activists accuse the Security Service of Ukraine of beating and torturing people that its suspects may have links to Russian-backed separatists.

On the other hand, the service is ignoring evidence that some of its own officers could have links to Russia and Kremlin forces.

SBU spokeswoman Olena Hitlianska declined to comment on the accusations.

Human rights abuses

The Kharkiv Human Rights Group called the SBU "the biggest violator of human rights" and accused them of illegally capturing and torturing people.

The group's leader Yevhen Zakharov told the *Kyiv Post* he couldn't remember any case of SBU officers being prosecuted for violating human rights since the agency's creation.

The Prosecutor General's Office told the *Kyiv Post* it had charged 59 SBU employees in criminal cases from February 2014 through May 2017. However, the *Kyiv Post* could not find evidence of any SBU officials being convicted for any crimes since the EuroMaidan Revolution.

On Nov. 14, 2014, the police stopped a car near the city of Izyum in Kharkiv Oblast driven by Donetsk resident Oleksandr Agafonov, who

was traveling with his wife and a small child.

The police detained the man, suspecting him of having links to Russian-backed separatists. Later SBU officers drove him away in a minivan and brought him back barely alive after a beating. Agafonov died soon after that.

The two SBU officers were put on trial, but as of now they are not in custody, and one of them is still in his job.

In March, the police charged an SBU counterintelligence officer of murdering a 43-year-old resident of Avdiivka in Donetsk Oblast, whose mutilated body had been found in a forest.

The police said that the SBU officer and two soldiers picked up a random man in Avdiivka during a raid for drug traffickers. They drove the man by car to a forest where the officer beat him to death, demanding that he confess to being a drug trafficker, according to the police.

The two soldiers were witnesses of the alleged murder and asked for protection as they feared retaliation, the police said. Later they started retracting their testimony.

A suspect of such a grave crime cannot be released on bail under Ukrainian law. However, a court released the SBU officer on \$12,000 bail.

Prison terms for phone calls

People detained by the SBU, however, face much harsher treatment

than prosecuted SBU officers, and often for much lesser crimes.

In December 2015, a Bakhmut court sentenced a woman from the town of Myronivsky in Donetsk Oblast to eight-and-a-half years in jail for having a phone conversation with her cousin, who serves with Russian-led forces, according to the investigators.

She was accused of creating a terrorist organization — the usual charge brought against those who call people in Russian-occupied areas.

The court charged her with being a separatist artillery spotter for telling her cousin that "on the way to Pakhar (Ukrainian troops) are standing on a hill in the field."

The woman denied the charges and said the police and SBU officers were beating her for several hours.

Meanwhile, a woman in the city of Toretsk in Donetsk Oblast received four years in jail in April after a court decided that she had given information on Ukrainian military positions by phone to an "unidentified person" in the Russian-occupied area. Despite being disabled, this woman spent two years in preliminary detention.

Prosecutors opened an investigation into allegedly illegal methods of investigation applied to the woman by the SBU, but subsequently closed it.

In January, a Sloviansk court sentenced two young men to five years in prison for posting pro-separatist messages on the VK social network. The men, who were charged with infringing on Ukraine's territorial

integrity, denied the charges and said they had been tortured.

Meanwhile, actual Russian-backed separatist fighters are usually sentenced in Ukraine under a milder Criminal Code article on "the creation of an illegal military or armed unit," and given prison terms of at least two years.

Pro-Russian leanings

In contrast to detainees accused of having pro-Russian sentiments, some SBU officials suspected of having links to Russia are not facing any problems.

Alexei Kiselyov, an ex-member of Sevastopol City Council, has accused SBU Deputy Chief Vitaly Malikov of backing pro-Kremlin separatist Alexei Chaly and the sham referendum on Crimea's annexation held in 2014 — accusations which Malikov denies.

In 2014 Malikov, then a member of Sevastopol City Council, voted to call on then President Viktor Yanukovich to crack down on the EuroMaidan protesters, according to Sevastopol's sevas.com news site. Malikov's daughter welcomed Russian dictator Vladimir Putin when he visited Crimea after the annexation, according to her social networks.

Malikov and his wife used to own several businesses in Crimea, which is currently occupied by Russia, according to the Slidstvo.info investigative show.

Under Yanukovich, the SBU was headed by officials accused of hav-

ing links to Russia's Federal Security Service.

In May ex-SBU Deputy Chief Viktor Trepak said in an interview with the *LB.ua* news site that the SBU had become more patriotic since the EuroMaidan but "for many years they had been influenced by Russian intelligence agencies, who infiltrated the SBU, and it's impossible to cleanse them in one day."

Oleksandr Dovzhenko, head of Odesa Oblast's SBU branch, is subject to the lustration law on the dismissal of Yanukovich's top officials, but has escaped being fired due to gaining the status of a war participant — a common way of evading lustration. He was reportedly a close ally of Yanukovich's SBU Chief Oleksandr Yakymenko, who is suspected of having ties to the Russian intelligence agencies.

Meanwhile, Vasyl Burba, a former top SBU official and currently chief of military intelligence, participated in the crackdown on EuroMaidan demonstrators on Feb. 18–20, 2014, which led to the murders of some 100 people, according to a document published by Zakarpattia Oblast Governor Gennady Moskal. Burba was not available for comment.

"There are still people in the law enforcement agencies who did not respond to investigators' questions on whether they committed crimes during the EuroMaidan," ex-SBU Chief Valentyn Nalyvaichenko said in a reference to the SBU. "Most law enforcers were involved in the crackdowns on the EuroMaidan."

Take a challenge and run from 2 to 42.195 kilometers at the 8th annual Wizz Air Kyiv City Marathon on Oct. 8. Those who don't enjoy running can come and cheer the participants. For more details, go to page 12.



Old, abandoned Ukrainian castles have secrets to tell



A two-story Von Meck manor, built in 1888, is now in a poor state, but a century ago it used to be a favorite place of one of the most celebrated composers Pyotr Tchaikovsky. (Ukrinform)

BY MARIYA KAPINOS
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Pyotr Tchaikovsky, one of the world's most celebrated composers, loved to visit his friends — the von Mecks — a Ukrainian family of German origin. In his diaries, he praised their manor in the village of Kopyliv in Kyiv Oblast.

Some 150 years later, the building is still there, now sadly uninhabited and neglected.

And it's just one of about 500 abandoned castles and manors in Ukraine, of which 300 are in very poor condition, according to Art Ukraine Foundation.

Yet despite lacking financing and much in need of repair, these

Ukrainian castles and manors still attract tourists fascinated by the stories of the wealthy families that used to live in them.

The Kyiv Post has listed four such places in Kyiv, Zhytomyr and Khmelnytsky oblasts.

Von Meck manor: Tchaikovsky's favorite

Location: Kopyliv village, Kyiv Oblast
Distance from Kyiv: 48 kilometers

The manor used to be owned by the von Meck family, who were friends and relatives of Tchaikovsky. It was built in the village of Kopyliv, Kyiv Oblast, in 1888. The von Mecks used to host the composer quite often, and Tchaikovsky would constantly repeat in his letters how

inspiring the village of Kopyliv was.

"I like Kopyliv very much," the composer wrote. "The house is very pretty: a charming village view opens up from the second floor."

Old photos show a two-story manor with an attic and a porch, built in the country-house style. But after the October Revolution in 1917, which overthrew the Russian imperial family and brought the Communist Party, led by Vladimir Lenin, to power, the manor slowly went to wrack and ruin.

During World War II, the manor housed a military hospital and a music school. Now the building is in disrepair and is in private ownership. The local authorities will not reveal the name of the owner but say that

no one is maintaining the building.

Tourists cannot enter the manor due to its dangerous state, but they can walk around the building to get an idea of what a country house used to look like before the October Revolution, and imagine the times when a famous composer used to stay there and play piano every night.

How to get there:

By car — take Chop highway, the M06, from Kyiv to Kopyliv.

By bus — take a mini bus (marshrutka) No. 373 from Svyatoshyn metro station to Kopyliv.

Osten-Sacken palace:

more Castles on page 22

City Life

WITH ORYSIA HRUDKA

4 Kyiv cafes with English-language books

Reading a book while drinking hot cacao on a rainy autumn day is a cliché. But it's probably one of the most pleasant clichés possible. Here's four places the Kyiv Post has found for bibliophiles to enjoy hot beverages.

Kharms

Hidden in one of the backyards in the center of Kyiv near Zoloti Vorota metro station, Kharms is an inviting place for a good read. The owners call Kharms, a place called after Soviet writer and poet of the 20th century Daniil Kharms, "an indie bookstore." It sells snacks, vinyl records, notebooks, magazines, and books. The selection of English literature is not large but has good quality in gastronomy, art and design. There is also a TED books series, published by the American non-profit media organization famous for the lectures by expert speakers on education, business, science, technology and creativity.

On its menu, Kharms has sandwiches, soups, desserts, coffee, tea and cacao. A cup of cacao costs Hr 57.

Kharms. 45, Volodymyrska St. 10 a.m. — 10 p.m.

Moya Knyzhkova Polytsia

This place is tiny but manages to hold an enormous amount of books with its floor-to-ceiling shelves.

Moya Knyzhkova Polytsia (My Bookshelf) offers books mostly in Ukrainian, but there are also options in English. In English, one can find the series of world classics, various guides to Ukrainian cities, books on Ukrainian people, history and art, as well as children's books.

While leafing through a book, order a hot beverage and a dessert, sit at one of the small cozy tables and enjoy a street view of Kyiv's central Pushkinska Street.

The bookstore also sells stylish postcards, stickers, sketchbooks, pins and bookmarks.

A cup of cacao costs Hr 40.

Moya Knyzhkova Polytsia. 7, Pushkinska St. Mon-Fri 9 a.m. — 9 p.m., Sat-Sun 10 a.m. — 9 p.m.

One Love Coffee

This venue at the sixth floor of Pinchuk Art Center, a Kyiv center for contemporary art, has an elegant white design, a panoramic view over the Kyiv's center, and a decent selection of

more Cafes on page 22

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Western films, books, TV shows with notable Ukrainian portrayals

BY OLGA RUDENKO AND
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Ukraine is a big part of the European continent, but still mostly terra incognita to the Western entertainment industry. Good luck finding a mainstream movie set in Ukraine — Autobots never fight Megatron on the streets of Kyiv in a “Transformers” movie. Julia Roberts didn’t go to Odesa in “Eat Pray Love.”

Still, the rarity of Ukrainian appearances in Western popular culture makes it more entertaining when the occasional Ukrainian character turns up in a U.S. television show, movie or book.

Here are some memorable Ukrainian characters that sneaked into the mainstream Western media.

Yuri Orlov, ‘Lord of War’

It is rare when a Ukrainian-American man is the protagonist. Yuri Orlov, played by Nicolas Cage, is the son of Ukrainian refugees who gets into the illegal arms trade in the 1980s and succeeds, to put it mildly.

Throughout the movie, Cage does everything an American might imagine a Ukrainian arms lord would do. That includes walking around Brighton Beach, buying arms from corrupt generals in Ukraine and channeling an immigrant’s nostalgia.

The nostalgia gets out of control in a memorable scene, where Orlov’s younger brother, played by Jared Leto, lays out a map of Ukraine in cocaine.

“I start with Odesa and I work my way up to Crimea,” Leto says, only for Cage to interrupt him: “You’d be dead before you reach Kyiv.”

The epic cocaine map is a mirror image of Ukraine — either to highlight how badly Jared Leto’s character knows his homeland, or because the film crew didn’t care too much.

Oleg, ‘2 Broke Girls’

Oleg was a regular character in the CBS sitcom “2 Broke Girls,” canceled in 2017 after six seasons.

A Ukrainian migrant living in New York, Oleg works as a chef in a shabby Brooklyn diner and some-



In a scene from the “Lord of War” movie, the main character’s younger brother, played by Jared Leto, lays out a map of Ukraine in cocaine. (Courtesy)

times goes in for small “business” ventures — like smuggling cigarettes.

Oleg’s defining quality is his obtrusive sexuality. He often hits on the women around him, saying, in a thick Slavic accent, things like: “You know what they say: Once you go Ukraine, you will scream from sex pain.”

He was paired with a Polish character. It made for a little geopolitical humor. “Look, Ukraine’s going to try to invade Poland,” one character says when the two hook up.

The show’s creators mixed up Oleg’s Ukrainian background in season five though, when they put a portrait of Russian President Vladimir Putin on the wall of his apartment.

Valentyna, ‘Transporter 3’

In the 2008 action-movie star veteran Jason Statham was filmed fighting bad guys and jumping out of an Ukrzaliznytsya train into a black car in Odesa Oblast in “Transporter 3,” the third installment of the Luc Besson Transporter franchise.

Statham’s mission is to guard

Valentyna Tomilenko, the daughter of the Ukrainian ecology minister, from bandits who want to kidnap her and then blackmail her father to get permits to bury radioactive waste.

Valentyna is a beautiful young woman with red hair, freckles and a short temper. She doesn’t want to go back to Ukraine from elsewhere in Europe and at first she doesn’t trust Statham’s character, but can’t escape from him, as they are wearing special bracelets set to explode if they are farther than 10 meters from each other.

Valentyna likes drugs and is always prepared for the worst. Like many Westerners, Statham’s character, Frank, doesn’t see the difference between Russians and Ukrainians.

When he asks Valentyna why Russians are so cheerless, she immediately responds “I’m not Russian, I’m Ukrainian. We’re different here (points to her heart) and here (points to her head.)”

Ironically, an American actress of Russian descent, Natalya Rudakova, portrayed the Ukrainian Valentyna in this movie.

Vasilii Fet, ‘Strain’

Vasilii Fet, played by U.S. actor Kevin Durant, is one of the protagonists of the Guillermo del Toro’s TV series “Strain,” based on the trilogy of books with the same name that he wrote with Chuck Hogan.

It is a story of a mysterious old vampire, who comes to New York from Romania and turns almost everyone in the city into blood-lusting vampires, using parasitic worms.

Vasilii is a child of Ukrainian immigrants, who works as an exterminator, and then joins the main characters Dr. Ephraim “Eph” Goodweather and Abraham Setrakian to kill the vampires instead of rats.

Although Vasilii is shown as a strong and courageous man, he isn’t proud to be Ukrainian. His par-

ents immigrated from Ukraine after World War II, although they claimed to be Russians. They lied because were both ashamed of the actions of Vasilii’s grandfather, who served the Nazis as a guard in a concentration camp in Poland.

Vasilii becomes a perfect vampire killer, and Setrakian takes a shine to Fet — although he thinks the Ukrainian might be a little fond of killing.

Boris, ‘The Goldfinch’

“The Goldfinch” is a bestselling novel by American author Donna Tartt, which won her the 2014 Pulitzer Prize in fiction. The book, which spent 30 weeks on the New York

Times bestsellers’ list, is a first person narration by a teenager, and then a young man, who accidentally ends up with an extremely valuable painting after falling victim to a terrorist attack in an arts museum.

The narrator’s best friend, Boris, is the son of Ukrainian migrants. He is a free-spirited, distressed teenager who likes to drink and swears in Russian — not the gibberish Russian one might encounter in a Hollywood movie, but perfectly accurate Russian obscenities, such as like “vali otsyuda.”

Warner Bros. and Amazon Studios will co-produce the film adaptation of “The Goldfinch,” but no one has yet been cast to play Boris. ■



Vasilii Fet, played by U.S. actor Kevin Durant, is one of the protagonists of the Guillermo del Toro’s TV series “Strain.” (Courtesy)

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In time for Halloween, go and visit Ukraine's empty castles

Castles from page 20

Residence of a noble Baltic German family

Location: near the village of Nemishaeve, Kyiv Oblast

Distance from Kyiv: 43 kilometers

Russian diplomat and entomologist Carl Robert Osten-Sacken built the manor in the 19th century. The Osten-Sackens were Baltic Germans, with the family tracing its roots back to the 15th century.

At the beginning of 20th century, the manor consisted of a palace, two wooden houses and a park. The park, which had a lake on its territory, was adorned with fruit trees.

After the October Revolution, the palace was nationalized and slowly fell into decay. A fire in the 1980s nearly destroyed the entire building, and it was never reconstructed.

Today the manor has been placed at the disposal of the local church.

How to get there:

By car — take the Kyiv-Warsaw highway, the Mo7, towards the village of Nemishaeve. Before reaching Nemishaeve, take the turn to the village of Myrotske. The palace is about 300 meters from the road.

By bus — take a mini bus No. 817 from Kyiv's Akademyshchyn metro station to the village of Nemishaeve. The palace is less than a 10-minute walk from the bus stop.

Sangushko Palace: The private residence of Volyn princes

Location: Izyaslav, Khmelnytskyi Oblast

Distance from Kyiv: 318 kilometers

Izyaslav in Khmelnytskyi Oblast is one of the oldest cities in Ukraine. It has not only rich history, but is also very interesting from an architectural point of view.

Sangushko Palace was built between 1754 and 1770 as a govern-



Abandoned Tereshchenko castle, built in the early 19th century and located in Zhytomyr Oblast, is now a favorite spot for street theater performances. (Arkadiy74)

mental residence for the Sangushko Princes of Volyn. Back then, Volyn used to be a very influential historical region.

In various times it hosted Russian Tsar Peter the Great, Austrian Emperor Joseph II, and the last Polish king, Stanislaw August Poniatowski.

While now only the ruins of this baroque palace remain, the site is located near a river, and it still offers very picturesque views.

How to get there:

By car — take the E40 highway from Kyiv to Novograd-Volynsky,

and once there take the turning to Izyaslav.

By bus — take a bus to Izyaslav from Vokzalna metro station in Kyiv.

Tereshchenko castle: Rumors of hidden treasure

Location: village of Denyshy, Zhytomyr Oblast

Distance from Kyiv: 161 kilometers

Ukrainian tycoon and sugar factory owner Mykhailo Tereshchenko built his palace on the banks of the Teteriv River in the early 19th century.

Legends say that Tereshchenko hid treasure somewhere in the castle, but so far no one has found any evidence of this.

The palace was built using technologies that were advanced at the time — the whole building was made of brick. A three-story tower crowned the palace and it still stands over the remains of the building.

After the October Revolution, the house's owner moved out and the building was looted and slowly became a ruin. However, even now the ruin is known as

a favorite spot for street theater performances.

How to get there:

By car — take the Chop highway, the Mo6, to Zhytomyr. Pass through the city, then turn onto the Zhytomyr-Chernivtsi highway, Ho3, and drive another 20 kilometers to Denyshy.

By bus — take a bus to Zhytomyr from Zhytomyrska metro station in Kyiv or from the bus station near the Kyiv Central Railway Station, and then in Zhytomyr take a mini bus No. 109 to Denyshy. ■

City Life: Where to go in Kyiv to indulge in 2 of life's great pleasures

Cafes from page 20

English-language books.

One Love café offers stylish large-format color editions on people's success stories, traveling, as well as Ukrainian and world culture.

Considering coffee and cacao, the place's personnel say that they add a drop of love to every cup.

Also, don't miss a chance to stop at Pinchuk Art Center's bookstore three stores below.

A cup of cacao costs Hr 57.

One Love Coffee. 2, Bessarabs'ka Sq. Mon-Fri 10 a.m. — 11 p.m., Sat-Sun 10–12 a.m.

Bookstore at Pinchuk Art Center's second floor. Tue-Sun 12–8 p.m.

Chasopys

Libraries don't usually serve beverages, but this one does, since it's a name of a room in one of the Kyiv's so-called anti cafes, venues where a client pays not for an order, but for the spent time.

Library, one of the rooms at Kyiv's Chasopys, offers English-language books on economics, marketing, political science, as well as fiction books, cookbooks, and some magazines.

Chasopys also offers board games, and has a separate cinema room where guests can watch movies.

Unlimited cups of cacao are included in a price of stay, as well as tea, coffee, cookies, and sweets.

One hour costs Hr 40.

Chasopys. 3, L'va Tolstoho. 8 a.m. — 11 p.m. ■



Customers of Moya Knyzhkova Polytsia (My Bookshelf) in Kyiv can buy a book, connect to Wi-Fi, order a dessert and a hot beverage, and sit at one of the small tables to work or just to relax. (Oleg Petrasiiuk)



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Global Communities is seeking qualified short-term Consultants to Create and Implement Training focused on How to Attract and Work with Investors for the five-year USAID-funded Decentralization Offering Better Results and Efficiency Program (DOBRE):

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- At least five years of practical training experience (skill training as opposed to theory/lectures);
- A demonstrated understanding of rural economies in Ukraine;
- Experience in providing consultancy services to municipal governments is desired but not required;
- Proven track record of professionalism and ethical conduct;
- Ukrainian language skills (Some English language skills are desired but not essential)

Full Scope of Work is available at:

Consultant to Conduct Training focused on How to Attract and Work with Investors <https://www.kyivpost.com/classifieds/jobs/619635>

To apply please send your CV as well as cover letter with summary of your experience and three references to UkraineHR@globalcommunities.org indicating **Consultant to Conduct Training focused on How to Attract and Work with Investors** in the subject line by October 15, 2017.

No telephone inquiries will be accepted. Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for the interview.



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'School No. 3' offers candid look at teenagers in Ukraine's war zone



Film Critic

WITH OKSANA GRYTSENKO
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"School No. 3," a Ukrainian-German documentary that won an award at this year's Berlinale Film Festival, doesn't show any typical signs of war, like holes from shells, wounded people or destroyed buildings.

But the war is invisibly present like a monster in a good horror movie, unseen but terrifying by its existence nearby.

Mykolayivka, a city of 15,000 people in Donetsk Oblast some 640 kilometers southeast of Kyiv, was severely shelled in early July 2014, when the Ukrainian army was storming the Russian-backed separatists who dug in there.

Many houses were demolished and many residents were killed. So when the city was liberated, the locals were hostile and suspicious towards Ukraine.

It took a while for a group of Ukrainian theater performers, who arrived in Mykolayivka several months afterwards, to build a dialogue with the children of local School No. 3, also damaged by shelling.



Two protagonists of "School No. 3" enjoy summer swimming in the river by their home town of Mykolayivka in Donetsk Oblast. The documentary received the Grand Prix in the Generation 14+ category at the 67th Berlinale Film Festival. (Courtesy)

But the efforts paid off.

At first, it was a documentary theater project "My Mykolayivka" that was staged in the city.

Later it was extended to a documentary film "School No. 3" by Ukrainian director Yelizaveta Smith

and German director Georg Genoux, which made the city known around the world.

The film received the Grand Prix in the Generation 14+ category at the 67th Berlinale Film Festival in March. The jury championed it for

the special bond of sincerity which the movie crew managed to build with its protagonists.

The 13 teenagers, in turn, tell their most memorable stories, being filmed in some familiar environments like a school gym, a classroom

or a local park.

They speak about a motorbike, a dog, a former girlfriend, an arms shelling, love, loss, a drug experience, plans for the future, sharing the very intimate details of their childhood memories and current fears.

One girl remembers when her mother called her "daughter" instead of by name when their house came under shelling. She dreams her mother never calls her this again. She also dreams to take her father to Paris. A big fan, he has collected dozens of small Eiffel towers.

One boy sits on a bench next to a grim-faced stuffed toy monkey, his favorite childhood toy, and says how a string of unlucky love affairs led him to drugs and alcohol.

The teenagers also drive a motorbike, swim in a river, walk up a hill or picnic with a view to the industrial city.

They interact with each other, joking, laughing and arguing, without paying attention to the camera and so honestly that the film sometimes looks like a reality show.

These stories strike emotional chords for two hours and linger.

"School No. 3" will be shown in Kyiv cinemas starting Oct. 26 in Russian with English subtitles.

Follow the Kyiv Post lifestyle section online at www.kyivpost.com for updates and times. ■



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References, extract: • BMW showroom • Leoni cable plant II • Ave Plaza SOC • KWS corn seeds plant • Imperial Tobacco high bay warehouse • BILLA Green Building Supermarket Kyiv

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