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vol. 21, issue 43

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October 21, 2016

Rinat Akhmetov: Too Big To Tame

He is always No. 1 on the list of richest Ukrainian billionaires. Despite being close to overthrown President Viktor Yanukovich, he's escaped Western sanctions. He appears, moreover, to still have working relationships on all sides of Russia's war against Ukraine. How does he manage this political magic act? Story starts on page 14.



Oligarch Watch Series

Part 1	Oct. 7	Petro Poroshenko: All In The Family – Again
Part 2	Oct. 14	Victor Pinchuk: Ukraine's Friend Or Foe?
Part 3	Oct. 21	Rinat Akhmeov: Too Big To Tame
Part 4	Oct. 28	Ihor Kolomoisky

Ukraine's richest billionaire, Rinat Akhmetov, is also one of the nation's most reclusive oligarchs. (UNIAN)



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Головний редактор Брайан Боннер

Відповідальний за випуск

Люк Шеньє

Адреса видавця та засновника

співпадають: Україна, м. Київ, 01004,

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Реєстраційне свідоцтво

Кв № 15261-3833ПР від 19.06.09.

Передплатний індекс ДП Преса 40528

Надруковано ТОВ «Новий друк»,

02660, Київ, вулиця Магнітогорська, 1,

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Замовлення № 13-8040

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New legal stimulant 'salt' addicting Ukrainians as young as 13 years old

BY MARIA ROMANENKO

MRO@UKR.NET

Graffiti and flyers advertising "salt" are flooding Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities. For most citizens this may seem a mystery, but many young people in Ukraine know these are ads for something other than a seasoning.

This "salt" is actually a synthetic stimulant drug that can be inhaled, smoked or injected.

It has become increasingly popular in Ukraine over the last five years, according to Yevhen Nerukh, the head in Ukraine of the Anti-Drugs Association international non-government organization.

"The danger of this substance is that they make a person addicted in just one month," said Nerukh.

And with its affordability (one small bag costing Hr 280 (\$11.20) is enough for five doses) and accessibility (there are at least two websites in Kyiv that sell it) its users are often school students who can be as young as 11.

"You can come across 13-year-old 'salt' addicts who've been using the drug for two years," said Nerukh.

According to him, the drug is produced in China and brought to Ukraine. The dealers place advertising for it online along with an account number in an online payment system. Once a client pays, he is sent the address of a place where the required batch was planted in advance.

Masha's story

Maria Sushko used to be a teenage "salt" addict. A 19-year-old living in Kyiv, she now works at the Anti-Drugs Association's rehab unit.

Sushko was 13 when she first tried drugs.

"I tried marijuana, but I quickly got bored of the drowsiness it gave me," she recalls. "Later I used spice



Graffiti advertising the legal drug "salt" with a contact number is seen on a sidewalk in Kyiv on Oct. 19. The ads target teenagers and are often found next to schools. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

and amphetamine."

At 18, she tried "salt." A friend from work offered it to her. The first time she tried it, she inhaled too much and felt sick for eight hours.

Sushko was using salt for two months in a row – sometimes as often as seven times a day with her friends. Sometimes they inhaled it in public places.

"Taking 'salt' made us feel happy and active," she recalls. "We threw food around in supermarkets. My friend broke a leg because he had a sudden urge to run and jump over a fence."

But things quickly took a negative turn for Sushko.

"I became paranoid and suicidal. I would accuse my mother of trying to poison me when she offered me dinner. It felt like the whole world was against me," she said.

When she ran out of money, she took her family's valuables to a pawnshop to buy drugs.

"I was going crazy, but it was difficult to ask for help," she said.

A way out

After golden jewelry went missing from the house, Sushko's parents had their first suspicions. But the last straw was when they came back home after being away for two days and found Sushko sleeping next to their white rug with a blue liquor stain on it.

"I was trying to remove the stain, and fell asleep because I was stoned," Sushko said.

Sushko's family called the Anti-Drugs Association in Kyiv to take her away for treatment.

The association's rehabilitation center doesn't use anti-addiction medicines or drugs substitutes, and instead create home-like conditions where patients drink tea, socialize, do sports, and watch therapeutic films.

At first, Sushko agreed to stay at

the center for a month, but then realized she needed the whole one-year course. She was afraid she would relapse otherwise.

But having gone through the whole course, Sushko now feels better, and works at the rehab unit as a chemical addiction consultant. She isn't fully recovered, though.

"I understand that at some point I will start drugs again. But as long as I'm here I won't," Sushko said.

The pattern

Around 1,800 drug addicts go through the rehab center's courses every year, with one-third of them being "salt" addicts. It takes two years for a salt addict to rid themselves of the addiction. The relapse rate, however, is 70-80 percent.

"If out of 10 salt users that we have staying in rehab at the moment, three remain clean for the rest of their lives, then we'll consider this a big success," said Nerukh.

The drugs create long-term problems, such as visual and aural hallucinations, depression, and manic obsessive thoughts. Self-harm is also common.

"Young teenagers don't even have their personality and values formed yet, so a stimulant like salt sticks to them very quickly and firmly," said Nerukh.

The Anti-Drugs Association is now working with the Ukrainian police to fight drug-related crimes. Nerukh told the Kyiv Post that the police are planning to launch an effort to fight the spread of the small online businesses that sell salt.

"The scariest part is that because of drugs like salt, addicts in Ukraine are getting a lot younger," he said.

Ukrainian 24/7 drug addiction helpline:
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Politically, Kharkiv keeps its distance from Russia

BY YULIANA ROMANYSHYN
ROMANYSHYN@KYIVPOST.COM

KHARKIV, Ukraine – In the tense months following the EuroMaidan Revolution in Kyiv, many feared Kharkiv – Ukraine's second-largest city with 1.4 million people – might slip into revolt as the Kremlin-sponsored war against eastern Ukraine began to spread.

Today, Ukraine's former capital, some 570 kilometers east of Kyiv and only 200 kilometers from the conflict-ravaged Donbas, looks to have escaped the turmoil caused by the war. Blue and yellow national flags hang over its streets, the city's old monument to Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin has been toppled and the process of decommunization has begun.

Kharkiv now hosts pro-Ukrainian organizations, allows nationalist rallies and is a new home to thousands of citizens who have fled the fighting in the east. Foreign students from Asia and the Middle East are still coming to study medicine here, despite the war.

And while there are still those with pro-Russian sympathies in the city, they are keeping their heads down, activists say.

Failed takeover

In April 2014, after Russia invaded Crimea and ignited conflict in the Donbas, Kharkiv could well have suffered the fate that befell Donetsk and Luhansk.

Around 70 pro-Kremlin separatists seized the building of Kharkiv Oblast Administration on April 7. But after just a few hours, a special police unit headed by then top cop and current Interior Minister Arsen



A woman walks by a Smerch rocket on Freedom Square in Kharkiv on Oct. 7. The rocket is part of an art installation to mark the shelling of peaceful Donbas settlements by Russian-backed separatists. (Anastasia Vlasova).

Avakov evicted the armed activists from the building and arrested them.

"Only now do I see how lucky we were that the KhPR (the Kharkiv People's Republic) didn't happen here; only now I appreciate that," local journalist Eugene Streltsov told the Kyiv Post.

Today, pro-Russians keep quiet about their political preferences. But Streltsov said that up to 10 percent of Kharkiv's residents may prefer to live

under Russian rule. About 20 percent of the city's people maintain an active pro-Ukrainian position, while the majority – 60-70 percent – are politically neutral.

Despite the war, Kharkiv's citizens haven't stopped visiting Russia: the closest border crossing is only some 40 kilometers from the city. People come and go, to see relatives and look for job opportunities.

Valeriy Popov, a middle-aged build-

er, said the war hasn't influenced his relations with Russians. He and his friends see nothing wrong with going there. Among his acquaintances, at least 100 former Kharkiv citizens continue to work in Moscow, getting "a proper salary," he said.

He also goes to Russia regularly for personal reasons, sometimes visiting friends. "We had normal relations, and they have remained like that," he said of the Russians

he often meets on his trips. "It's the politicians who are fighting. And how about us? This war is useless for us," he added.

Nationalists

"The main problem is that we don't have burning torches," says Yuriy Lyhota, a local leader of the Right Sector radical nationalist organization in Kharkiv. In the conference room of the Nakipelo civil media center, members of radical organizations are hammering out the program of an upcoming event – the national Day of the Defender on Oct. 14, which was first celebrated as a state holiday in 2015.

Finally, a torch-lit rally, the lighting of candles in the shape of the national symbol, the Tryzub (trident), listening to patriotic songs, and speeches from soldiers are included in the event plan. No political parties are invited to address attendees of the event.

The activists expected to around 3,000 people to attend the event, but fewer than 1,000 actually turned up, according to the police.

But nationalists say their organizations have more members and supporters in Kharkiv since the war in eastern broke out Ukraine. "The (increase) is very obvious, because we'd never have heard the hymn of the OUN (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists) in Kharkiv in 2012-2013," said Taras Bortnik, the head of a branch of the Nationalist Youth Congress, one of the organizations taking part in the discussion.

Economic recession and loss of trust in the government has also caused an increase in support for the

more **Kharkiv** on page 5



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Editorials

Reigning oligarch

It's not only journalists who tread lightly around Ukrainian billionaire Rinat Akhmetov. Most find it easier to step around him rather than confront or question him or his motives.

One reason is that Akhmetov is known as a libel lawsuit-happy oligarch. First he deploys public relations specialists, including the Kyiv-based Jock Mendoza-Wilson, to attend events and, when needed, call up news organizations that publish what Akhmetov or his lawyers consider to be potentially libelous information.

The Kyiv Post tried to track down reports that Akhmetov's lawyers demanded that the U.S.-based Hudson Institute's Kleptocracy Institute remove information about the billionaire on its website. Whether it happened or not, the initiative's Akhmetov archive cannot be found online. The institute acknowledged the information is no longer on its website, but would not say why.

Curiously, unflattering information about Akhmetov remains on the website of the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, a Kyiv Post partner.

What is indisputable is that Akhmetov emerged as the nation's richest citizen from Ukraine's 25 years of wasted opportunities, rampant corruption and poverty for millions of citizens. A fortune made in these conditions is not admirable.

But, partly because Akhmetov is so reclusive, it is impossible to know who he is or have any emotional feeling for him. We can only judge by his actions, which leaves us with the impression of someone who puts his personal wealth, his lavish lifestyle (a London house worth more than \$200 million) and privacy above any concern for Ukraine's wellbeing.

Akhmetov was a close ally of his fellow Donbas resident, ex-President Viktor Yanukovich, who fled the country on Feb. 22, 2014, during the EuroMaidan Revolution. Reports suggest that Yanukovich, on his way from Kharkiv to Crimea and then exile in Russia, met with Akhmetov. Nothing is known publicly about that conversation. His association alone with Yanukovich is damning enough. During those four years that Yanukovich's administration was in power, stealing as much as \$40 billion by official estimates, Akhmetov's fortune skyrocketed. Reasonable people can draw their own conclusions.

After Yanukovich fled, Akhmetov appeared to try to play all sides. His representatives deny accusations that he stoked unrest in the Donbas. But his tardiness in condemning Russia's war against Ukraine fueled suspicion. When people justifiably call for de-oligarchization of Ukraine, they should keep in mind who is leading the parade of oligarchs.

Whining loser

We've seen this before in Ukraine: candidates up for election complaining that the vote is being rigged against them. Usually (because votes in Ukraine sometimes are, indeed, rigged), it's a tactic to undermine the legitimacy of the vote and the person who wins. But it's not something we would expect to see in the world's signal democracy, the United States.

Without providing evidence to back up his claims, the Republican Party candidate for U.S. president, Donald J. Trump, has been claiming in late-night rants on Twitter that the election is being rigged against him.

He hasn't provided any evidence because there is none. And the U.S. election system is so decentralized that it is extremely implausible that the vote could be fixed on a nationwide scale.

In recent weeks, Trump has consistently trailed his rival, the Democratic Party candidate Hillary Clinton, in nationwide polls. Since he tweeted on Oct. 11 that the "shackles have been taken off" him, and he could now "fight for America the way I want to," he seems to have spent more time attacking senior Republicans than battling Clinton. If he loses the Nov. 8 election, it will not be because the vote was rigged, but because of his own failings, because voters judge him to be unfit for the presidency.

He has given voters plenty of evidence over this sordid campaign that this is indeed the case. The absurd claim that the vote is being rigged, and his refusal to say if he will accept the result of the presidential election, are just the latest pieces.

So Trump should take the advice U.S. President Barack Obama gave him on Oct. 18, and stop whining. Because with 17 days still to go to the election, he already sounds like a loser.

NEWS ITEM: A UK bank that services Russia Today, the Kremlin's English-language propaganda TV network, shut the accounts of the broadcaster on Oct. 17 with no explanation, according to the network's editor-in-chief Margarita Simonyan.

Simonyan called it an attack on the freedom of speech. Ironically, the Kremlin has destroyed most independent media in Russia.



NEWS ITEM: The first-ever monument to Ivan the Terrible, the brutal 16th century czar who killed thousands, was installed in the Russian city of Oryol on Oct. 14. He isn't the only cruel despot praised in modern Russia: Many monuments of Joseph Stalin were installed in recent years. Meanwhile, a nongovernmental organization in Russian-occupied Crimea started raising funds to install a monument to President Vladimir Putin.

The lustration law on firing top officials who served ex-President Viktor Yanukovich, ex-Soviet security officials and those with undeclared property, adopted two years ago, is scheduled to be fully enforced by December. About 98 percent of Yanukovich-era top officials are out of office now, but President Petro Poroshenko, Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko and others are ignoring the lustration law and retaining Yanukovich-era top officials, while the courts are also reinstating lustrated bureaucrats, Tetiana Kozachenko, head of the Justice Ministry's lustration law, said on Oct. 8.



NEWS ITEM: Representatives of Shakhtar Football Club, which used to be based in Donetsk, said that the club has forbidden Russian-backed separatist fighters, who have been occupying Donetsk since 2014, to use their Donetsk stadium, the Donbass Arena, for their football games.

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Reformer of the week

Oleksandr Lemenov

Oleksandr Lemenov, an anti-graft expert at the Reanimation Package of Reforms, wrote on Oct. 17 that the authorities were likely to choose a government loyalist as head of the State Investigation Bureau, which will take away investigative powers from prosecutors. He said that not a single member of the commission that will choose the bureau's head represented civil society.

Leading candidates loyal to President Petro Poroshenko include Anatoly Matios, a controversial prosecutor and an ex-official of ex-President Viktor Yanukovych's administration, Lemenov wrote. Another leading candidate is reportedly Oleksiy Gorashchenko, an aide to Poroshenko.

Other controversial candidates include Oleh Valendyuk, an ally of lawmaker Oleksandr Hranovsky subject to dismissal under the lustration law; Vasyl Vovk, a graduate of the Moscow KGB School who is also subject to lustration, and Olga Varchenko, a prosecutor accused of links to Hranovsky, Lemenov said.

Among the other candidates are Ihor Tsyuprik, who has been accused by lawyer Yevhenia Zakrevska of failing to pass police vetting and being involved in the persecution of EuroMaidan activists and who denies the accusations, and Ihor Balaban, who used to represent pro-Russian parties, Lemenov said.

Viktor Trepak, an ex-top security official, said in August that Hranovsky, a top Poroshenko ally accused of interfering with law enforcement, had been tasked with choosing the bureau's head. Hranovsky denies the accusations.

— Oleg Sukhov



Anti-reformer of the week

Ihor Kotvitsky

Ihor Kotvitsky, a lawmaker who is under investigation in a graft case, declared purchases of luxury clothing worth about Hr 600,000 earlier this month on the electronic declaration site.

Kotvitsky, an ally of Interior Minister Arsen Avakov, is being investigated by the National Anti-Corruption Bureau over an undeclared transfer of \$40 million to Panama.

Meanwhile, Avakov, who is also being investigated in several graft cases, on Oct. 18 declared Hr 4.2 million in dividends from Italian company Avitalia. According to documents published by lawmaker Sergii Leshchenko, Avakov works as the company's president, which is banned by the law for ministers. Avakov and Kotvitsky deny the corruption accusations.

As of Oct. 20, only 16,798 officials, or 34 percent of those required to file, had submitted their e-declarations for 2015 as time runs out before the Oct. 31 deadline. President Petro Poroshenko has not yet filed his declaration.

Yegor Sobolev, head of the Verkhovna Rada's anti-corruption committee, said on Oct. 20 that the committee would initiate criminal cases against those responsible for the sabotage of e-declarations.

To help corrupt officials evade responsibility, the National Agency for Preventing Corruption will likely try to delay the deadline for e-declarations by 60 days, after which declaration system could be emasculated, anti-graft activist Vitaly Shabunin wrote on Oct. 19.

— Oleg Sukhov



To nominate someone as reformer or anti-reformer of the week, write to news@kyivpost.com

Kharkiv's patriots save city from fate of Donbas

Kharkiv from page 3

nationalists, they said. Plus, the continuing war in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts has shown Kharkiv "what could happen if a person doesn't support one's country."

Support for mayor

While most citizens are apathetic about national politics, there is strong support for the city's mayor, Hennadiy Kernes, who was re-elected in 2015 with 65.8 percent of the vote in the first round. Turnout was 44.4 percent.

Kernes first became the city's mayor in 2010, when he was an ally of former President Viktor Yanukovych. During the EuroMaidan Revolution, Kernes was accused of hiring thugs to attack anti-government protesters. But after Yanukovych fled the country, Kernes pivoted politically and declared loyalty to the new authorities.

In April 2014, Kernes survived an assassination attempt: he was shot in the back by a sniper during a bicycle ride. He now uses a wheelchair because of the injury.

A criminal probe into Kernes and two of his bodyguards was announced in March 2015. They were accused of kidnapping and torturing EuroMaidan activists. Court hearings into the case have been postponed several times, with the latest ones scheduled for October.

Today, Kernes heads the local election list of the Revival Party (Vidrodzhennia), which includes a number of former Yanukovych allies and holds a majority of the seats on the city council. He has criticized for his ties with former government officials and connections in Russian, and has been accused of corruption, including land seizures. He denies all of the allegations.

But almost every citizen the Kyiv Post spoke to (apart from pro-



A woman looks through a tram window as autumn falls on Kharkiv on Oct. 7 (Anastasia Vlasova).

Ukrainian activists) said they support Kernes.

"He's a good mayor," said a middle-aged engineer, Serhiy Lunyo. "I don't know why he's criticized so much."

Lunyo said that the majority of reconstruction work done since Ukrainian independence had taken place under Kernes' management, namely the remodeling of the central park, repairs of roads and traffic lights, the rebuilding of housing entranceways and roofs, and the new stadium and airport — rebuilt for the Euro 2012 football championship.

Taras Sitenko of the Samopomich Party, who came second in the 2015 mayoral election with 12 percent of the vote, is one of the few voices

of opposition to Kernes. A deputy on the city council, he has a tough time opposing the Kernes-dominated body.

The renovation and maintenance of the Maxim Gorky Central Park, the pride of Kharkiv's citizens, costs the city budget around Hr 70 million (\$2.8 million) annually, Sitenko said. At the same time, Kharkiv Oblast Administration plans to spend 12 times less than that on its defense plan — some Hr 5.7 million (\$228,000). Moreover, the city council is yet to allocate a penny for defense purposes from this year's Hr 10 billion (\$400 million) city budget, Sitenko said.

In the city council, Sitenko focuses on land allocation, education, and

social issues. He said all initiatives have first to be approved by Kernes, who heads the leading party in the council.

"Kernes has an obvious advantage, and he sees his electorate very clearly and constantly panders to them," Sitenko said.

Student city

While economic turmoil and war have made many business people leery of investing in Ukraine, the country's problems have not discouraged students from Jordan, Vietnam, China, Turkey, and Africa from choosing to study at Kharkiv's universities.

Turkish citizen Sasan Oglo, 28, moved to Ukraine three months ago

to study medicine at the National Kharkiv University. His brother studies at the same faculty.

"It's bad when a person thinks of war — here life is good, so I'm glad," Oglo said.

Oglo and around 70 of his fellow Turks at the university have a good reason to get a degree in Ukraine — here, tuition fees are \$2,200, while at home the same course would cost a minimum of \$7,000.

Although his Russian is not so good, he said this hasn't prevented him from learning. He said many of his friends had gone to Russia to study medicine, and he had tried to live there himself. But he quit and moved to Kharkiv, where "people are less angry," he said.

Ukrainian Mykhailyna Marchuk studies in Kharkiv too. But for her, the city is now a safe haven from worn-torn Luhansk. Marchuk and her parents are among the estimated 1.7 million internally displaced people, who have been forced to flee their homes in Ukraine because of the war.

She was a school student when the constant fighting forced her and her family to move from Luhansk in 2014. Marchuk first moved to Sievierodonetsk in Luhansk Oblast, and she then applied to the geographic faculty in Kharkiv National University. "It takes just several kilometers (to get away from the war), but you get a normal life," she said of moving from Luhansk.

She and her parents were afraid of lawlessness, with Kremlin-backed fighters walking around with weapons in their hands. A quarter of her 25 classmates have fled the occupied territories, while the rest stayed and now study in local institutions, Marchuk said.

"It's much better here, and I'm in a good mood," she said of living in Kharkiv.

"You know, it's like comparing heaven and hell." ■



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Patients suffer as reforms sabotaged by profiteers

BY JOSH KOVENSKY
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It appears corrupt officials in Ukraine don't mind bilking hospital patients, even if they're dying of cancer.

Crown Agents, a British aid organization, was tasked with purchasing cancer drugs on behalf of the government in November 2015. But months into the project, the non-governmental organization faced a rebellion from its own client, the Ukrainian state.

After a delay in a drug shipment led to months of media stories painting the United Kingdom organization as a murderer of cancer patients and calls from deputies to ban it from pharmaceutical procurement, Prime Minister Volodymyr Groyzman intervened in mid-September to defuse the row.

At its root, the dispute was over who decides how state budget funds get spent -- state officials or the private, independent group.

Christine Jackson, a Crown Agents senior procurement consultant, said that the Ministry of Health signed a contract to give the organization control over spending for cancer drug procurement.

The effort is part of a larger push to eliminate corruption from Ukrainian pharmaceutical procure-

ment, first by transferring control to foreign organizations, and then establishing a Ukrainian government agency for procurement that would be separate and independent of the Health Ministry.

According to Acting Health Minister Ulana Suprun, Crown Agents came under attack because it was seen as the weakest link among other aid organizations working on pharmaceutical procurement.

The other two entities - the United Nations Development Program and the United Nations Children's Fund - have worldwide reputations that Crown Agents lacks.

"It's very difficult to attack a UN organization," said Suprun. "The oncology portion was chosen to be attacked so as to make the entire change in the way we're doing national procurement fail, which would then make creating an independent procurement agency fail."

The Kyiv Post could not find anyone to talk about who was behind the rebellion.

But the implication is that officials who used to be in charge of procurement, and companies and politicians with an interest in the business, were out to thwart anti-graft reform at the Health Ministry by sabotaging Crown Agents' operations.



A pharmacist inspects oncology drugs at the National Cancer Institute in Kyiv on Oct. 19. British aid organization Crown Agents has brought cancer drug procurement costs down by almost 25 percent since taking over last year, it says. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

Tumorous legacy

Crown Agent's work has already had positive consequences.

According to National Cancer

Institute Director Olena Kolesnyk, the organization managed to achieve "significantly lower" drug prices -- up to two times cheaper in some cases.

For Kolesnyk, this help could not have come at a better time.

The surgeon was elected to lead Ukraine's Cancer Institute in April 2015 after reports of mass corruption at the cancer hospital. Since taking office, Kolesnyk said, she had cut food costs by up to 45 percent as part of the ProZorro electronic procurement pilot project - the institute's supplies procurement was one of the first to use the internet-based transparency initiative.

Kolesnyk added that the savings had allowed the hospital to feed its patients meat and fish for the first time in years.

Given that patients are supposed to be guaranteed free access to state-purchased medicine under Ukrainian law, Kolesnyk has made the hospital's pharmaceutical inventory available on the institute's website, updated weekly. This prevents doctors from extorting bribes from patients by telling them that a given medication is unavailable, and that only a payment to the physician will make it obtainable.

"The doctors can no longer resell drugs, or take them away, or tell the patients that the drugs aren't there," said Kolesnyk. "That process has been destroyed."

But Kolesnyk added that the British organization had wanted to procure drugs that were new to the Ukrainian market, adding administrative problems.

The Soviet Union left highly polluting heavy industry scattered around Ukraine. When combined with non-existent environmental regulations and the Chernobyl disaster, which left a chunk of the country irradiated, the frequency of cancer has skyrocketed. None of this is helped by high smoking rates and a diet involving lots of alcohol and fatty foods.

But according to Kolesnyk, the real problem is more that patients die at a higher rate in Ukraine due to a lack of appropriate care.

"The possibility of receiving full treatment in Ukraine is unfortunately lower than abroad," Kolesnyk said.

Crown under attack

Crown Agents was hired to oversee the procurement of cancer drugs and equipment for both children and adults. To that end, the organization can boast results of 25 percent across the board savings on cancer drug procurement since it began operating.

But according to both Crown Agents and Suprun, the organization has been blocked by forces within the Ukrainian government since its

World in Ukraine: Turkey

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more **Corruption** on page 8



Suprun takes health care forward

BY NATALIE VIKHROV
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Corruption and inefficiency have plagued Ukraine's health services for more than two decades, but a fresh push for a series of reforms from a new health minister could see an overhaul of the entire system start in 2017.

Led by U.S.-born doctor Ulana Suprun, who took charge as an acting minister in July, the ministry has been introducing the kind of reforms - like switching focus from treatment to preventative medicine, health insurance and drug purchase cost reimbursement - that would see Ukraine switch to a more Western model of care.

New team

Suprun, who grew up in a Ukrainian community in the United States, moved to Kyiv in 2013 with her husband.

When the EuroMaidan Revolution protests broke out, the pair began helping the protesters out with medicine.

Then in 2014, she founded Patriot Deference, a nongovernmental organization providing medical training and first aid kits to Ukrainian soldiers fighting the Russian-separatist forces in the east. It has provided life-saving training to more than 30,000 soldiers and cadets to date.

Earlier this year, Suprun was appointed acting health minister, succeeding Alexander Kvitashvili, who handed in his resignation - which had been rejected several times in parliament - after his healthcare reform bill got stuck in the Rada following loss of support for it from the Bloc of President Petro Poroshenko faction.

Suprun believes Kvitashvili's plans will be scuppered by a lack of cohesion within his own team.

"He wasn't able to come in with his own team," she said. "Some of

his deputy ministers worked on their own, and there wasn't a lot of coordination."

So when Suprun was offered the position of acting minister, she accepted on the condition that she would come in with her own team. Those who go alone into the system get bogged down by it, she says.

Suprun chose four deputy ministers - a trauma surgeon and Patriot Defence medical director Oleksandr Linchevskyy, Dr. Oksana Syvak, who treated protesters during the EuroMaidan revolution, and two people from the Kvitashvili administration - Pavlo Kovtonyuk and Roman Ilyk.

They have been building on the work of Kvitashvili's team, who had already laid the foundations for their proposed transformation of the health care system, which is planned to begin in 2017.

Preventative care

Among one of the key changes, Suprun's team plans to significantly expand Ukraine's preventative care sector, which currently only receives a small portion of funding.

"That's completely opposite to other countries," Suprun said. "Most of the money and most of the attention is on preventing disease. And then once you have it, then there's about 20 percent that has to be spent on treating the illnesses."

In 2015, a law was passed to establish a Public Health Center, a new state agency that will take charge of all preventative measures, such as monitoring the spread of infections, and vaccination. The center was never actually created, and that's what Suprun is working on now.

Another of the center's functions will be to gather proper statistics about public health - something that isn't done now, Suprun said.

Suprun said that when she asked



Acting Health Minister Ulana Suprun talks about planned health reforms for 2017 during an interview in a Kyiv cafe on Oct. 14. (Anastasia Vlasova)

three departments of the ministry for the number of immunised children in Ukraine, they gave her three different numbers.

"You can't make an impact unless we know we can follow statistics and see if something has changed. In Ukraine, up until now, most statistics are false," she said.

Drug policy

From next year, the Ministry of Health is also planning to start conditionally reimbursing patients for the cost of medicine.

According to the ministry, more than 90 percent of medicine is currently purchased by patients themselves. Furthermore, 60 percent of the medications bought in pharmacies are vitamins or supplements, rather than properly tested and provably effective medicines.

The ministry wants to narrow the number of registered drugs that can be prescribed from more than 1,000 to just 250, the medical effectiveness of which must be recognized by the

World Health Organisation.

"That's going to take a big bite out of the pharmaceutical industry," Suprun said. "We're not taking them off the market, (but) we will not be recognising them for prescription. We will not be reimbursing (the costs of) them."

The ministry plans to start regulating drugs prices, too. A ceiling and a bottom price will be established, and pharmacies will be able to price the medicine in between.

Drugs used to treat the three diseases that affect Ukrainians the most - cardiovascular disease, type two diabetes and asthma - will be reimbursed fully if prescribed by a primary health care physician.

This will mean that the Ukrainians will be spending much less on their medications.

"There is a lot of opposition to it, because the 'pharma Mafia' is not happy with those changes," Suprun said.

The changes have received support from the prime minister, and

the Health Ministry plans to bring them into effect from Jan. 1.

Money follows patients

Over the past two-and-a-half decades, more than 20 healthcare reform bills have been introduced to parliament. None of them have ever passed.

So Suprun's team has taken a different strategy.

"We're not making another new strategy, another new plan, another new anything," she said. "We're taking what everybody has been saying for 10 years - that Ukraine needs to change from the system we have now, where financing goes to pay for walls and heating and the pay of the medical workers, but no money actually goes to patient care at all."

Currently the money in the healthcare budget is given to regions, who choose how it is allocated. Under the ministry's plan, the money will instead be placed into a national health insurance fund.

"That money will then follow the patients, and services will then be paid for as the patients go," Suprun said.

She said it will also help establish quality health insurance.

"We are taking Western medical protocols and translating them into Ukrainian protocols, and Ukrainian physicians will be required to follow those protocols. We will only be reimbursing those doctors that follow the protocols," Suprun said.

This plan is expected to run from 2017 to 2020, and has recently been backed by Deputy Finance Minister Serhiy Marchenko.

Furthermore, the ministry is planning to streamline the medical licensing process so that healthcare professionals will be required to hold a license, as opposed to simply working for a licensed institution.

"In the end we want universal access of all citizens to quality healthcare," Suprun said. ■



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SELF-MEDICATION MAY BE HARMFUL TO YOUR HEALTH



Old guard in medical procurement fighting to sabotage reform drive

Corruption from page 6

contract period began.

Crown Agents cannot buy medicine until the Health Ministry approves a request. Government officials dragged their feet on this, Jackson said, partly because the ministry was understaffed and lacked a minister from April, when Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman started to form the government, until Suprun's appointment in late July.

"Shortly after we started, (former Health Minister Oleksandr) Kvitashvili submitted his resignation," said Crown Agents Ukraine Representative Tetiana Korotchenko. "The ministry was actually without any top management for some time."

A number of minor issues with Crown Agents' operations in Ukraine appeared to irritate the organization's Ukrainian counterparts, Jackson said. Chief among these issues was Crown Agents' use of Ukrainian distributors to import drugs.

While Crown Agents itself had

received an exemption from the government from having to pay customs duties, it opted to sub-contract the import of the drugs it procured to private distributors – who ended up having to pay taxes on the shipments.

Ludmila-Farm, a distributor that had been "vocal" on the issue, according to Jackson, took matters to a head in June when the company refused to pay taxes on a \$5.1 million cancer drug shipment.

"To use this particular program with oncology drugs maybe is a bit unfair to people," Jackson said. "Immediately when the situation occurred, we informed the ministry, saying there was a need for their ruling."

According to Suprun, the government offered to transfer the drugs to a different warehouse where different customs regulations applied, but the distributor refused, saying it didn't believe that the tax service would back down.

Ludmila-Farm's intransigence on the issue led to a summer-long

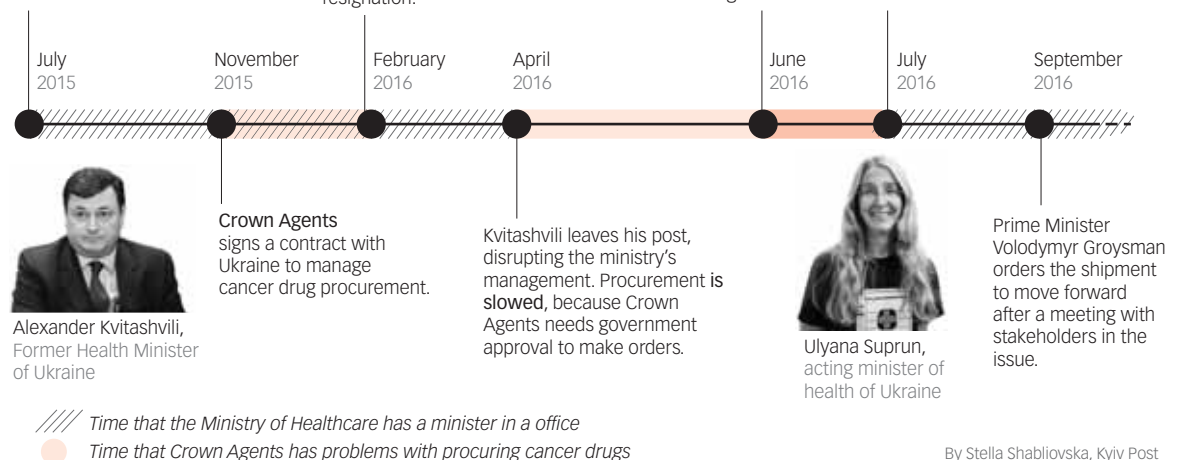
How Ukraine procured cancer drugs over the past year

In July 2015 Health Minister Alexander Kvitashvili announced his resignation, but parliament did not vote to release him until April 2016.

Alexander Kvitashvili withdraws his resignation.

One of Crown Agents's cancer drug distributors holds up a shipment of drugs over a tax dispute, having little material effect on procurement but causing a scandal.

Ulyana Suprun is named acting minister of health.



By Stella Shabliovska, Kyiv Post

media circus in which Crown Agents was painted as a callous murderer of Ukrainian cancer patients.

Ludmila-Farm has been on the drug distributing market in Ukraine for over a decade. In July 2012, Ukrainska Pravda reported that the company was awarded an Hr 28.6 million (\$1.1 million) contract as part of the same tender in which then-Health Minister Raisa Bohatyreva's son and a friend of former Prime Minister Mykola Azarov received Hr 40 million (\$1.5 million) in contracts.

Ludmila-Farm did not reply to a request for comment.

Exerting influence

On July 28, Rada health committee chairwoman Olha Bogomolets issued a press release calling on Crown Agents to "take responsibility" for delays in medicine delivery. Bohomolets later came out with a

bill that would have removed the British organization from the project.

"We've met them, we've given them the facts, they've made an accusation and we've said that's not true, but it makes no difference whatsoever," Jackson said.

According to Korotchenko, some parliamentarians may have been more worried about losing certain levers of influence on the Health Ministry than having any specific financial interest in procurement.

"It's just an attempt to intervene in the operational work of the ministries," Korotchenko said. "Politicians (were) exerting the power to be allowed to intervene."

Bohomolets did not reply to requests for comment.

The delay continued for 90 days, until September, when a meeting was convened between all stakeholders, including Prime Minister Volodymyr

Groysman, allowing all parties to "duke it out," Suprun said.

At the same time, Ludmila-Farm continued to deliver other shipments of drugs, making the delay in the supply of cancer drugs - and the related press and political furor - seem more like an orchestrated plot to subvert reform, Suprun said. She said Crown Agents had been "the fall guy" in an attempt to preserve the old procurement process.

Some say the British nongovernmental organization could have done better with certain aspects of the process. The organization was extremely reluctant to respond publicly to the allegations against it, meaning that for the first few months of the conflict, there was no information coming out of it in support of the project.

"If you're not communicating, somebody will be communicating instead of you," said Korotchenko. ■



National Cancer Institute Director Olena Kolesnyk in her Kyiv office on Oct. 19. Though Kolesnyk has succeeded in cutting costs, around one third of patients at the institute still need to pay for their own equipment and medicine. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

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UKRAINIAN HEALTHCARE — will investors get their chance?

Tetyana Gavrysh

Managing partner of ILF (INYURPOLIS Law Firm), Coordinator of the Kharkiv expert group on implementation of medical reform


Serhiy Silchenko

partner of ILF

The Revolution of Dignity paved the way for reforms in many areas of social and business life in Ukraine, the reform of healthcare being of special importance.

Low quality of medical services, especially in primary healthcare, obsolete equipment, unmotivated personnel, rampant corruption, inefficient use of budget funds — the list of challenges the reform is facing goes on. Semashko system is obviously unable to revive healthcare in market economy.

Nevertheless, the reform is already underway. Private healthcare market is expanding, new funding mechanisms and expert teams are being formed. Moreover, local reform-related projects are blooming, such as the one in Chuguyev District of Kharkiv Region. After presenting the Concept of Ukrainian healthcare funding reform in February 2016, a new team of reformers at the Ministry of Healthcare started implementing the plan with the aim of changing the model and principles of healthcare funding and laying the groundwork for improving the quality of medical services.

A number of influential politicians connected with the medical community are against such a revolutionary transformation of healthcare. They fear the loss of existing infrastructure and qualified personnel, citing Article 49 of the Constitution of Ukraine that makes it the state's

duty to create favorable conditions for medical services that are readily accessible to all citizens. In addition, the number of public and municipal clinics shall not be reduced, and their services must be provided free of charge.

However, preserving status quo is a road to nowhere, which is why the government, Parliament and active members of the public are discussing options for a new healthcare model that will efficiently gather funds, cover the health-related risks of the populace and allocate them for acquiring medical services. This system can be either insurance-based (i.e. mandatory health insurance) or based on the tax revenue. The idea is to create a brand new approach where the state buys medical services for the patients, thus stimulating infrastructure and competition and providing the true control of the quality of medical services.

Ukraine's healthcare market is highly promising. Private healthcare has been a success in dentistry, reproductive technologies, psychology, and clinical trials. Insurance medicine is also on the rise. No matter what shape the Ministry of Healthcare picks for the reform, we should expect the emergence of primary healthcare market no later than 2017, and 2018 will see changes in secondary and tertiary specialized healthcare. Therefore investors eyeing this industry should actively prepare for the new game rules.

Special attention must be paid to the primary healthcare reform and preparing the infrastructure for the future competition in the family healthcare. Some highly qualified doctors are already doing well in private practice or starting their own small clinics. That is why, with newfound access to budget funding programs and mandatory health insurance, those who contribute to the creation of medical infrastructure, such as a network of out-patient clinics, will get a strategic advantage over public and municipal clinics that have already discredited themselves.

The government allows investing in public and municipal healthcare within the framework of public-private partnerships. During socialism a large number of specialized hospitals and research institutes were built to provide in-patient treatment and medical research. These institutions take up space and personnel that could be put to good use by private business. So, with the support of local authorities and territorial communities, it is possible to implement some of the PPP models, particularly lease and concession.

Making public and municipal clinics self-sufficient and transforming those into non-commercial enterprises will give rise to more competition in healthcare market. Patients will get more options, which in turn will bring more money, both from the state and the insurance. The smart move is to start preparing for tenders and training actuaries in advance.

Ukraine's healthcare is in a unique place right now — we are witnessing the birth of a real market. And while the course of the reform is still unknown, it is clear that without a significant rise in private healthcare it will never happen. Patients today are forced to vote with their money to get decent medical treatment. However, after the government changes the approach to the healthcare funding, investors will get a chance to start a business and provide quality medical services using public funds. The changes are just around the corner.



A doctor checks a woman's eyesight in Kyiv in April 2014. The quality of care received at different Kyiv clinics can vary greatly. (UNIAN)

How to choose best health care services


DR. RICHARD STYLES

As medical director of a clinic providing health care in Ukraine and Georgia, I am sometimes asked by potential clients what they should look for in an international clinic and in providing good health care for themselves and their families. What clients look for are also the quality issues that I try to deliver.

Perhaps this question can be easily answered by saying that they should choose a comprehensive service that is delivered in either their native language or more commonly in English.

I choose English not because it is my own language but because nearly all medical information and up to date guidelines are available in English, and doctors working in such an environment should be able to provide international care to the highest standards.

A comprehensive service is not just about the medicine practiced. Like a good hotel, patients need an intelligent reception staff who can administer appointments but also deal efficiently with emergencies and have both protocols and training to work with ill and often scared patients. Providing good reception services helps to create an atmosphere in which patients can prepare for their consultations.

The most important features of good doctors are those that have a strong commitment to their own education and to being able to communicate with, and listen to, patients from many differing cultures.

Patients should look for a service that provides them continuity and teamwork rather than a single physician they like. Accessibility is also important and they should look for

→ Before choosing a clinic, visit premises and talk to director

doctors who have good administrative skills, so they are quickly made aware of their results and future care. The clinic that they choose should have a carefully selected network of specialists, laboratories and imaging clinics. Again these should have some English-language skills and are chosen for their own quality of care, reporting and accessibility. A comprehensive and holistic service is also important with doctors who can co-ordinate care across a large range of specialties and who have international contacts for referral. The clinic should be able to provide flexible vaccination programmes for children that fit into their own national programmes, as this is important when children return to school.

Emergency care is important and patients should look for evidence of equipment and protocols for dealing with common emergencies. International medical care often needs to reference and communicate with the patient's home doctor and it is important that all reports, laboratory results and imaging can be in English and exist in an electronic format. The clinic should have experience in such communications, report writing and collation of results. The clinic should have working knowledge and experience of casualty evacuation procedures and how to co-ordinate these.

A good clinic should be able to demonstrate its own quality control through patient questionnaires and robust complaints procedures that actually change policy — a good question to ask is what complaint recently changed your operating policy! Check that your clinic has a number of international clients — embassies, banks, NGO's that all have exacting standards of care and choose their providers carefully.

It is important to choose a clinic that works efficiently with insurance companies, both national and international, and has a working knowledge of the insurance market and claims procedures. Some illnesses can be expensive and an expert can help to quickly provide advice and guarantees of payment through direct billing, when these services are available.

Many expatriates also require medicals for their jobs, relocation and for preventative measures and a good clinic should be able to provide these and their reports and electronic data for the patient.

Finally a good clinic should have a sense of medical ethics, ensuring the strictest confidentiality and other high standards of ethics. Social media is an important source of information about your provider and should be consulted.

In choosing your clinic, do visit the place, talk to the medical director and ask questions that relate to some of these standards. Hopefully in so doing you will feel happy and confident with your choice and be well looked after, if you are unfortunately unwell.

Dr Richard Styles is a physician with 40 years of experience as a doctor during which time he was active in the development of medical standards in the United Kingdom. He is medical director of American Medical Centers and is responsible for the development and quality of care in five medical centers across Ukraine and Georgia. ■


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World in Ukraine

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60 years later, Hungarians recall ill-fated revolution

BY DENYS KRASNIKOV
KRASNIKOV@KYIVPOST.COM

When Peter S. Ujvagi was 7, he and his brothers and sisters emigrated with their parents from Hungary to the United States. They fled their motherland after Soviet troops invaded the country to crush the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.

In the summer of 1956, with Hungary's mismanaged economy in tatters, the Hungarian government began to signal to the United States that it wanted to improve trade ties. Unrest began to rise in the country, which at the time had one of the most repressive communist regimes in Eastern Europe.

"I remember listening to Voice of America and Radio Free Europe... before the revolution, in a darkened apartment with the shutters shut," Ujvagi told the Kyiv Post.

On Oct. 23, 1956, a crowd of 20,000 people, mostly students, staged a peaceful demonstration in Budapest. The night before, their leaders had drawn up a list of 16 demands. Among them were demands for a new government and free, multi-party elections.

The rally grew into a nationwide uprising against Soviet domination. The revolt almost succeeded, but the Soviet Union on Nov. 4 sent in its troops to re-establish the Kremlin's control, and the revolution was quashed by Nov. 10. Some 2,500 Hungarians and 700 Soviet troops were killed.

After the Soviet invasion, Ujvagi's family made three attempts to flee Hungary – on the third attempt they made it to Nikolsdorf in Austria, arriving there on Dec. 25. After a short stay in an Austrian refugee camp, the family travelled on to Toledo, Ohio.

"The days between Oct. 23 and when we arrived in America on June 4, 1957 are very much engraved in my mind," Ujvagi said. "We talked about those days a lot with my parents and brothers and sisters."

Revolution fallout

At the time of the failed Hungarian Revolution, the United States offered asylum to 30,000 Hungarians. This quota was entirely filled in less than four months, by March 1957. The refugees have since become valuable assets to the countries that gave them asylum.

Ujvagi, for instance, grew up to be a U.S. politician – a state representative of Toledo, Ohio. He also played a significant role in helping the U.S. government establish trade with Hungary after the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe in 1989.

Now he's still working in the Toledo City Council. He says he's lived a decent life on foreign soil, as have many of his compatriots whose families emigrated to other countries after the revolt. And this October, many will mark the 60th anniversary of the failed Hungarian Revolution – an event that changed their lives and separated them from their homeland.

Proud holiday

"People with rifles against tanks – it was uneven fight," First Counselor at the Hungarian Embassy in Ukraine András Deák told the Kyiv Post. "We still have a few survivors. Those people were very heroic. It was not possible to be successful, because (Hungary) was a small country, occupied by the huge Soviet Union."

Over the years, Oct. 23 has become a Hungarian national holiday and "in fact, it is one of the proudest ones in Hungary," Deák said.



This picture taken on Nov. 6, 1956, shows a Soviet tank on Saint Joseph Boulevard in Budapest. The uprising broke out on Oct. 23, 1956 and was bloodily crushed by Soviet tanks on Nov. 4, sealing the country's fate as a satellite state of Moscow until the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989. (AFP)

Balázs Jarábik, a Hungarian visiting scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace think tank, who specializes in Ukraine and Eastern Europe, says there are many reasons for this.

"It's because it was bloody, desperate, and anti-communist – and because it was not successful," Jarábik told the Kyiv Post. "Hungarians – similarly to the Ukrainians – are proud of their rich but often tragic history. As the Hungarian national anthem says: 'God bless the Hungarians, they who have suffered all sins.'"

According to consul general of Hungary in Berehove, Endre Szalipszki, the revolution was a turning-point – Hungary started changing.

"There were a few days when Hungary reckoned the revolution had won," Szalipszki told the Kyiv Post. "This was a glorious page in our history. It was the first nail in the coffin of the Soviet system."

Refugee influx

Commemoration of the failed uprising only became possible once the Soviet Union had collapsed – before that, the revolution was a forbidden topic. Children were taught that what happened in 1956 had been a counterrevolution that had to be suppressed.

After the Soviets crushed the

revolt, there was a massive outflow of intellectuals from the country. Most moved to Austria first – as did Ujvagi's family – and then looked for a place to settle down permanently.

According to NATO documents that were declassified in 1996, by March 1957, four months after the failed revolution, approximately 120,000 people had fled Hungary as refugees to Austria alone. It is estimated that in total 200,000 Hungarians fled the country – to Yugoslavia, France, the United Kingdom and even Ukraine.

The 2001 census of the Ukrainian population recorded more than 150,000 Hungarians living in Ukraine, including descendants of the 1956 refugees and Hungarians who have been living on what is now Ukrainian territory, in Zakarpattia, since it was part of the Kingdom of Hungary, which was founded in the year 1000.

Now, according to Hungarian Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó, the country faces an influx of refugees to its own soil – people fleeing the war-torn Middle East, seeking a new life in the European Union, which Hungary joined in 2004.

"International law says very clearly that the right to a safe life is a human right," Szijjártó said in a speech at the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly

on Sept. 23.

"But it is not a human right to pick the country you would like to live in."

Ukrainian parallels

Revolutions have their common features, but these are few in the case of Ukraine's EuroMaidan Revolution and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, according to Ukrainian political scientist Taras Berezovets.

"In contrast to Ukraine, Hungary did not receive any support," Berezovets told the Kyiv Post. "And, of course, there weren't any reforms in Hungary until 1991. On the contrary, there was a toughening of the ruling regime."

Jarábik agrees: "You can draw some parallels, but these may sound artificial – for many Hungarians at least."

He told the Kyiv Post that for him the main difference is obvious. "The 1956 Hungarian Revolution ended with occupation, while the EuroMaidan sparked Russian aggression – not occupation."

And while Hungarians like Peter Ujvagi and his family, and hundreds of thousands of others, were left with little choice but to move abroad, Ukrainians can stay and build their own country, Jarábik said.

"Compared to Hungarians in 1956, Ukrainians can decide their own future." ■

Hungary at a glance

Total area: 93,028 square kilometers

Population: 9,874,784

Government type: Parliamentary republic

Head of state: Janos Ader (since May 10, 2012)

Head of government: Viktor Orban (since May 29, 2010)

GDP: \$258.4 billion (2015)

GDP per capita: \$26,200 (2015)

Main economic sectors: Mining, pharmaceutical production, construction materials, cars, metallurgy, tourism, food processing

Ukraine-Hungary relations

Trade: \$3.1 billion (2014)

Exports from Ukraine to Hungary: Electric machinery, mineral fuels, oil, electricity, ores, lumber, clothing

Exports from Hungary to Ukraine: oil, gas, plastics, drugs, cereals, machinery, construction materials

Hungarian foreign direct investment in Ukraine: \$561.9 million (2015)

Main business partners: OTP Bank, Kesz, Mol Dynamic, Egis Pharmaceuticals, Gedeon Richter

Hungarians in Zakarpattya seek unity, not separatism

BY VERONIKA MELKOZEROVA
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BEREHOVE, UKRAINE — On arriving in Berehove, a city of 24,000 people in Zakarpattya Oblast some 800 kilometers west of Kyiv, a person could be forgiven for thinking they'd crossed the border into Hungary by mistake.

Most of the street signs in Berehove (or Beregszasz, as the city is named in Hungarian) are in both Ukrainian and Hungarian, the Hungarian language can frequently be heard being spoken on the streets, and 50 percent of the population identifies as ethnic Hungarian.

Out of a population of more than 1 million people in Zakarpattya Oblast, more than 150,000 belong to Ukraine's Hungarian-speaking minority, living mostly in the oblast's Mukacheve, Tyachiv, Hust, Vynohradiv, Berehivsky and Uzhhorod districts. Berehivsky district has the highest concentration of Hungarians — 80 percent of the population.

In fact, the territories of modern Zakarpattya Oblast (12,777 square kilometers) belonged to Hungary until 1945, when, as a wartime ally of Nazi Germany, Hungary was on the losing side of World War II. After the war, the Soviet Union included the territories of Zakarpattya in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. After the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, Zakarpattya became part of modern, independent Ukraine.

But despite changing countries three times in the last 70 years without moving an inch, Ukraine's Hungarian population has no desire to separate from the rest of Ukraine today, local experts say.

"This is a multicultural land of peace. It's a very big mistake to think that we're separatists," said Karolina Dorcsi, a political scientist and a professor at the Ferenc Rakoczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute, told the Kyiv Post.

Rumors of Hungarian separatist feelings in Zakarpattya began to spread in 2014, when the radical Hungarian party Jobbik declared in its party program that the lands of Zakarpattya should be returned to Hungary.

"We continue to demand full territorial autonomy and the related rights of self-governance in terms of language use, education and culture in Zakarpattya," read the policy statement on Jobbik's website.

But Dorcsi and her fellow Hungarian Ukrainians aren't Jobbik supporters.

"There is a miscommunication problem," said Dorcsi. "Jobbik is a radical pro-Russian party. Here in Zakarpattya they have no support. (Jobbik) are in opposition in the current Hungarian parliament."

Jobbik won 23 seats in the 199-seat Hungarian parliament in the last elections to the legislature, in 2014.

Endre Szalipszki, the Hungarian consul general in Berehove, also dismissed fears of separatism.

"See if those who scream about separatism actually have any power," Szalipszki told the Kyiv Post. "Every



Citizens of Berehove, Ukraine, wait for a green light on the sidewalk near a road sign that shows distance to the nearest checkpoints on the Ukrainian-Hungarian border on Oct 18. (Volodymyr Petrov)

country has its radicals," he added.

He also said that since Hungary is a member of the European Union and NATO, nobody could seriously believe that Budapest could have any territorial claims against Ukraine.

"There's no such thing as Hungarian separatism," he added.

Yaroslav Galas, a spokesperson of Zakarpattya Governor Hennadii Moskal, told the Kyiv Post many people in Zakarpattya have Hungarian and Ukrainian passports, although Ukrainian law does not allow dual citizenship.

"A couple of years ago Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Orban hinted that Hungary would protect the rights of its people living in Ukraine," said Galas.

"But they're not getting Hungarian passports for political reasons. They just want to earn money in the European Union."

Neighbors' help

The Hungarian authorities and their Ukrainian counterparts in Zakarpattya cooperate well, Szalipszki said. There are eight ethnic Hungarian lawmakers with seats on the oblast's council.

During a tour of the consulate building in Berehove, Szalipszki stops to talk to dozens of Ukrainians and ethnic Hungarians who have come to fill in documents needed to obtain Hungarian citizenship, or to apply for a border zone permit, which allows them to cross into Hungary without first having to obtain a visa.

"Every Ukrainian who lives near the Hungarian border can apply for such permit, which simplifies the process of getting into Hungary and working in the EU," said the consul general, gesturing to a meter-high stack of folders with applicants' documents.

More and more Hungarians and Ukrainians in the area want to do just that — Russia's invasion and

annexation of Crimea, the start of the Kremlin's war on Ukraine in the Donbas, and the ensuing economic turmoil in Ukraine have slashed the value of earnings in Ukraine, and made working abroad even more attractive.

"In 2016 alone, 68 health workers from Berehove's central hospital have left Ukraine and found work in the European Union," said Dorcsi.

"Soon there might be no one able to give us proper medical treatment here."

The average wage in the region is only Hr 2,000 (\$76) per month. Ten kilometers away, across the Hungarian border, Ukrainians can earn 100,000 forints (more than \$350), she added.

To encourage people to stay and work in Zakarpattya, Hungary has set up a program of special benefits for ethnic Hungarians in the oblast.

The consul-general said the Hungarian parliament has created special business grants for people who want to start a business in Zakarpattya. With a detailed business plan, written in Hungarian, and a 20 percent contribution to the cost of setting up a business, residents of Zakarpattya can win business grants of 15,000 euros or more from the Hungarian parliament.

"Of course, all of the money has to be transferred to bank accounts. A special commission checks the applicant before giving the money, and then closely monitors the devel-

opment of his or her business here," said Szalipszki.

Hungary is also supporting Hungarian education and culture in the region. Hungary fully finances the Ferenc Rakoczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute, an educational institution that was created in 1994, supporting it through a special fund. Dorcsi said Hungary pays the salaries of all the staff of the institute.

"We have a license from Ukraine's Education Ministry as a private higher education institute," said Dorcsi. "The teaching language here is Hungarian. In the first year, students can also take exams in Ukrainian. But from the second year they have to learn Hungarian. We offer special language courses for everybody."

Szalipszki said Ukrainian health and education workers at state institutions who speak Hungarian can apply for special grants of 100,000 forints (more than \$350) a year as a bonus to their wages.

There are 90 Hungarian schools and kindergartens in Zakarpattya Oblast. The parents of kids enrolled in them can also qualify for financial compensation from Hungary.

"The (Hungarian) authorities reimburse the money parents pay for school meals," said Dorcsi. "My Ukrainian friend even put her kids into a Hungarian kindergarten because of that."

Local power

With the new bill on the voluntary unification of communities, which was adopted in 2015 as part of the decentralization of government process in Ukraine, ethnic Hungarians in Zakarpattya Oblast asked the local government to create a special Hungarian district that would include all the main population centers where Hungarian communities live.

more **Berehove** on page 13



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Hungarian tour operators using lower prices to lure Ukrainians

BY RAHIM RAHEMTULLA
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In spite of tough economic conditions, Ukrainians continue to look to Hungary as an affordable vacation destination. The central European neighbor is consistently among the nations of the European Union's borderless Schengen zone which issues the most visas to Ukrainians.

Last year, at least 116,000 Ukrainians received short-term visas to visit Hungary.

These facts have not gone unnoticed by Hungarian tour operators, of which there are an abundance in the Ukrainian capital. To judge by their advertisements, Hungary, which shares an 85-mile border with

Ukraine, has something to suit every traveler: from spa holidays for relaxation and revitalization, to city tours to Budapest and other metropolitan centers.

Low costs appear to be keeping Hungary a top vacation spot, with the country offering Ukrainians a slice of Europe at prices comparable to those they might find at home. Hungary still uses its own currency, the forint, having chosen not to join the euro.

"Of the inexpensive European options, tourists prefer Hungary because it's beautiful, rich in culture and has great food and wine," says Tatyana Kazakova, director of the Ukrainian branch of Hungarian tour operator 1000 Roads. "Prices are



A fireworks display is held next to the Hungarian parliament building and the oldest Hungarian bridge, the "Lanchid" (Chain Bridge), crossing the Danube River in Budapest on Aug. 20. The display was part of the celebrations of Hungary's national day. (AFP)

reasonable given the high level of service."

The numbers appear, at least partially, to bear out those assertions. User-contributed data collated by website Numbeo shows the average

cost a 1.5-liter bottle of water in Hungary in a supermarket is around 100 forint, roughly equivalent to Hr 9. A cheap meal will set you back 1,500 forint, Hr 137, and a pint of beer 320 forint, or Hr 29. The relatively expensive sectors are those which will be of less concern to tourists. They include rent (33 percent more expensive than in Ukraine) and the overall cost of living, which is nearly 63 percent more expensive in Hungary, according to Numbeo.

But even with such prices, given the current tough economic conditions at home, holidays are one area that Ukrainians are likely to be cutting back on. That presents challenges to tour operators who entered the Ukrainian market in better times.

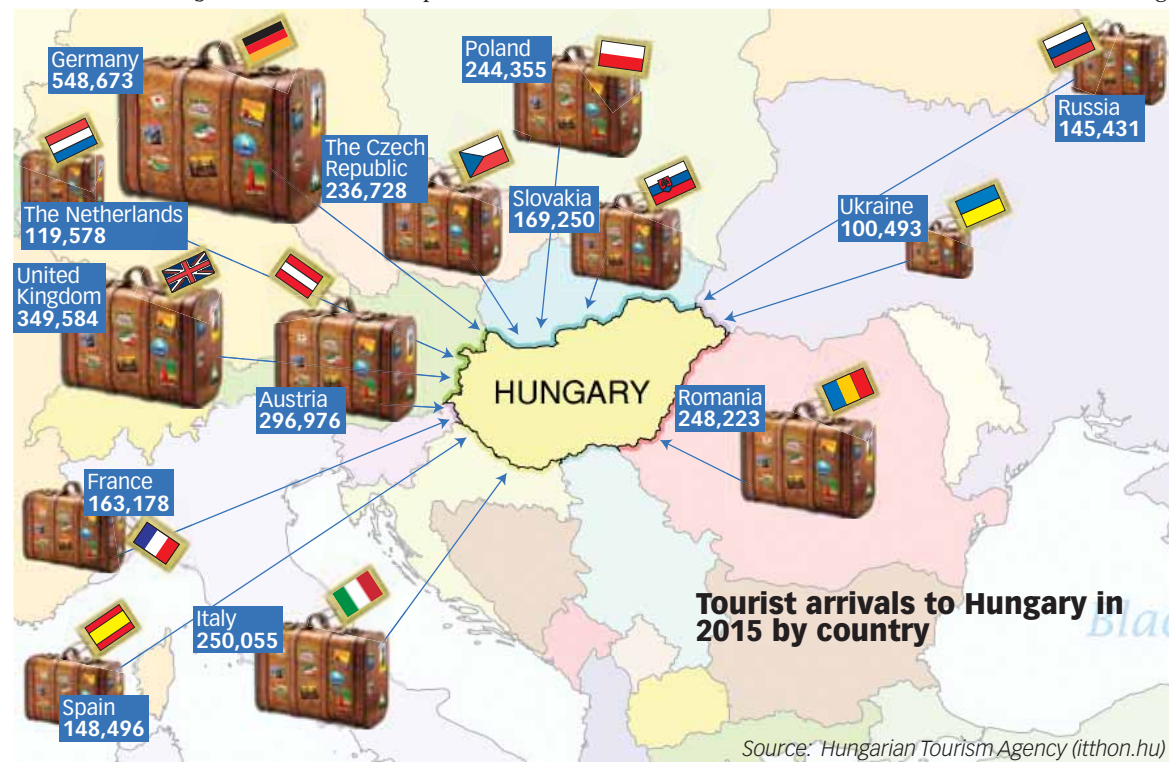
1000 Roads is a tourist company that opened its Kyiv office in 2011. Since then, Ukraine has known the corruption of ex-President Victor Yanukovich's era, a revolution that forced Yanukovich out and Russia's war against Ukraine. All of that combined to put Ukraine in recession in 2014 and 2015. This year, economic growth is expected – but still the gross domestic product has dropped from \$180 billion to \$90 billion since 2013.

In spite of the gloomy numbers, the Ukrainian branch of 1000 Roads is still enjoying robust growth. That, according to Kazakova, is thanks in large part to a selection of tours and holiday packages that are in step with the economic situation.

"Even during the difficult times we see today, our company is developing dynamically and our network of agencies is growing. We have something to offer for every taste and budget. We do VIP travel but also offer options which are highly economical," she said.

Given its convenience and cost, Hungary is sure to remain a popular option for Ukrainians seeking to vacation abroad. And that means the presence of Hungarian tour operators is unlikely to diminish. But apart from a poorly performing economy, a new challenge is on the horizon in the form of visa-free travel for Ukrainians to the European Union.

If and when that comes into force, Hungary will lose its position as one of the top visting-issuing nations to Ukraine. With 26 Schengen Zone nations then at their fingertips, Ukrainians may seek new places to spend their tourist hryvnias. ■



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As the weather cools, it's time to prepare your car for the winter weather.

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The "Friendship" pipeline in Zakarpattia Oblast in January 2007. The pipeline carries gas from Russia across Ukraine to Hungary and Slovakia, and has reverse capability to bring gas from Europe to Ukraine. (Ukrinform)

Energy, banking still dominate Ukraine-Hungary business ties

BY JOSH KOVENSKY
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Possibly the biggest question around Hungarian business in Ukraine is why there isn't more of it.

Sharing a 137-kilometer frontier with Ukraine, relatively little of Hungary's comparatively booming economy makes it across the border, with Hungarian direct investment totaling only \$561 million - 1.3 percent of total FDI in the country - in 2015, according to Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

But certain areas see a thriving Hungarian presence. The country's west exports tens of millions of dollars worth of electricity to Hungary each year, while Hungarian contractors build factories for some of the country's largest companies and largest foreign investors.

The Hungarian Embassy declined to provide any information or make any of its representatives available for this story.

Energy

After the start of the Russia-orchestrated war against Ukraine in 2014, the government made it a priority to wean the country off Russian gas.

Kyiv has trumpeted the move as a success in its effort to claw its way out of Russia grip. Hungarian gas supplies have played a significant role in the project, providing reverse gas flow to Ukraine since April 2013.

In 2014, Hungarian gas imports accounted for nearly half of Ukraine's European gas imports to Ukraine, at 5.2 million cubic meters of gas each day.

In 2015, Ukraine received roughly 500 million cubic meters of gas from Hungary.

But this is a small part of the overall total that Ukraine receives from the EU, with Ukrtransgaz recording 9.7 billion cubic meters of gas coming in from Slovakia.

So why the low amount?

The gas delivery relationship between Ukraine and Hungary has been strained since the EuroMaidan Revolution. In September 2014, Hungary stopped delivering gas days after Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller visited Budapest.

Hungary restored deliveries to Ukraine after an outcry. But the relationship has sputtered, with Ukraine's western neighbor periodically cutting off supplies, often citing a lack of payment - in spite of there being EBRD funding for Ukraine's gas purchases from Europe.

Some accuse Russia of being behind the issue.

"I think it is exaggerated," said Tamas Pletser, an energy analyst at Erste Bank in Budapest. "Gazprom tries somehow to include in the agreements that you cannot resell the gas to third parties, but after they've sold it they cannot really control it."

Pletser added that a significant portion of the gas that transits through Hungary originates in Russia.

"The gas gets mixed in the pipes, so we never know the source for sure," Pletser said. "Most likely it's Russian."

The gas element of the business would be unlikely to benefit anyone in western Ukraine. Rather, traders in Vienna or Budapest profit as the EBRD funds Naftogaz to pay higher prices for gas that often winds up being Russian anyway.

"That definitely is a big business for some traders - they buy the gas in Hungary or Austria, and then they deliver it via Hungary to Ukraine," Pletser added.

Ukraine's west also has a power surplus, allowing it to export electricity to Hungary.

The Burshtyn coal plant in Ivano-Frankivsk oblast has been separated from the main Ukrainian power grid since 2002. Instead, the plant has been linked to the European grid via a substation in Mukacheve.

Hungary buys around 75 percent of Burshtyn's energy exports, with Ukraine earning around \$56 million from electricity sales to the country in the first six months of 2016, according to the State Fiscal Service.

Building

The largest Hungarian companies operating in Ukraine focus on two sectors: building and banking.

Many of these businesses are concentrated in the country's west, where proximity to Hungary and the west's current economic dynamism

are assets.

One company, Kesz, has been operating in Ukraine since 2005. Kesz was one of the main contractors for President Petro Poroshenko's candy company Roshen in the early 2010s. Kesz built a number of factories for Roshen, including the company's main plant in Vinnytsia.

Now, the company focuses more on working with foreign companies operating in Ukraine. Kesz will open a cable-making factory for German firm Leoni in the Ivano-Frankivsk town of Kolomyia in 2017, for example.

"Our activity is across Ukraine," said Yuri Zinchenko, Kesz CEO. "But we work in the west partly because our clients want it, partly because of the workforce there."

He added: "We don't work very closely with our Hungarian parent company, but the Hungarian Embassy helps us with information, networking, with meeting international companies working in Ukraine."

Banking

Following Ukraine's 2014 economic collapse, OTP Bank, Ukraine's 13th largest bank, with assets of \$1.47 billion, faced many of the same problems as its Ukrainian competitors, with non-performing loans and declining deposit rates. Its Hungarian backers were not faring much better, with more than 11 percent of the bank's loan portfolio allegedly not being serviced - a percentage that, while normal for Ukraine, is dangerous for a Western bank.

OTP's Ukraine branch lost \$40 million in the first quarter of 2015, the financial institution's toughest period.

But the bank now claims to have turned a corner.

"There is growing demand based on stable, well-grounded economic growth," said OTP Deputy CEO Laszlo Bencsik at the Eastern Europe Investment Summit.

The bank's Ukrainian operations have benefitted from the lack of confidence of the Ukrainian public in its local competitors, with OTP seeing \$3.2 million in profits in the first quarter of 2016. ■

Zakarpattia's ethnic Hungarians remaining faithful to motherland, respectful of Ukraine

Berehove from page 11

"All the Hungarian organizations in Zakarpattia came together, created a map for our unification, and submitted an appeal to the oblast council. They have been considering it for six months already," said Dorcsi.

Galas, however, said that according to the decentralization reform plans the 13 districts of Zakarpattia Oblast will be re-divided into 38 unified communities. The law stipulates that towns and villages can unify with a local population center, for instance Berehove, if they lie within a 20 kilometer radius of it. But since the main population centers of the Hungarian community in Zakarpattia are more than 20 kilometers apart, it would be against the law for them to form a single unified community, according to Galas.

Dorcsi said Hungarians want to be united at the local government level because they have been living in this land for a thousand years, and have a shared culture and traditions.

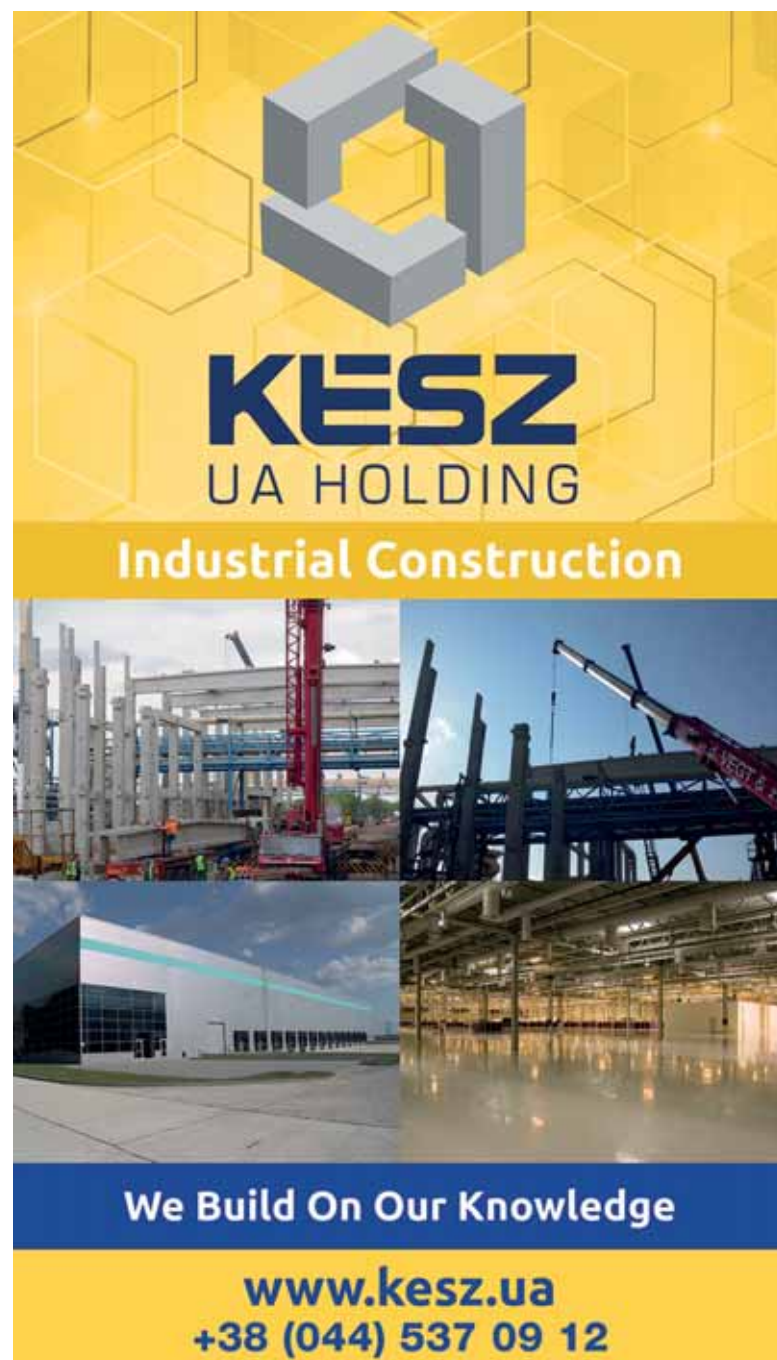
"We'll see how the situation with special status for Donbas ends. If the Russian minority gets special rights, all the minorities will get them," she said.

Szalipszki said because of the EU's sanctions against Russia for its illegal annexation of Crimea and aggression in eastern Ukraine, Hungary has lost millions of dollars, and a powerful trading partner.

However, as a member of the EU, the state will continue to support Hungarians in Ukraine, just as it supports Ukraine. All Hungary wants in return is less corruption in Ukraine, and more respect for European values, such as protecting ethnic minorities' rights, he said.

"There's no threat of a 'little Hungary' (in Ukraine)," Szalipszki said. "Ukraine should grant self-rule to all the ethnic minority regions, and take into account the historical and cultural traditions of their peoples. If Crimean

Tatars can be granted autonomy, why not to give more power to the Romanians of Chernivtsi Oblast, or to the Hungarians in Zakarpattia?" ■

Rain or shine, this guy's always got a shiny dime

Ukraine's richest man has lost more than half of his net worth since the EuroMaidan Revolution nearly three years ago, but he's been able to straddle extreme political divides: keeping his influence in Ukraine, his businesses in Russian-occupied Donbas and his working relationships with both Russia and the West.

Story At A Glance

Rinat Akhmetov has long been Ukraine's richest oligarch, even after his wealth plunged in recent years and his longtime ally, Viktor Yanukovich, fled power in 2014.

He is reclusive and rarely grants interviews. Sightings of him in Ukraine have been few and far between since Russia's war began in 2014.

Akhmetov straddles all political divides – keeping working relationships with the West, Kyiv, Moscow and Russian-occupied Donbas. His spokespeople deny accusations that he stoked the Kremlin-backed separatist war in the east. He considers himself a Ukrainian patriot.

Even though he has had trouble getting a visa to America, Akhmetov has been welcomed for talks at the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine to help resolve Russia's war against Ukraine.

He gained much of his wealth during an era of crony capitalism, rent seeking and rigged privatizations. He owns some of the most expensive real estate in London, buying a luxury building at One Hyde Park for more than \$210 million in 2011.

Editor's Note: The following article is part of the Ukraine Oligarch Watch series of reports supported by Objective Investigative Reporting Program, a MYMEDIA project funded by the Danish government. All articles in this series can be republished freely with credit to their source. Content is independent of the donor.

BY OKSANA GRYTSENKO and
OLEG SUKHOV

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His close ally, President Viktor Yanukovich, fled power nearly two years ago.

He's lost most of his fortune since then.

But, all things considered, Rinat Akhmetov is doing more than fine.

He remains Ukraine's richest man,

even though his estimated net worth wealth has tumbled from \$11.2 billion in 2014 to \$2.9 billion now, according to Forbes.

While he has had trouble getting a U.S. visa, he meets with officials in the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine and other diplomats to discuss the Minsk peace process, elections in Russian-controlled Donbas and humanitarian aid in eastern Ukraine.

Unlike other allies of Yanukovich, Akhmetov has also managed to

Rinat Akhmetov

Date of birth: Sep. 21, 1966.

Place of birth: Donetsk

Wealth: \$2.9 billion according to the current Forbes ranking, the richest Ukrainian for many years.

Key Assets: System Capital Management, which incorporates more than 100 mining, metal, energy, finance, media and other companies; Metinvest mining and steel company; DTEK energy company; Ukrtelecom, the country's fixed-line telephone monopoly; the First Ukrainian International Bank; Media Group Ukraine, which includes Ukraina TV channel, Segodnya national newspaper and some regional media outlets.

Personal: Married to Lilia Akhmetova (Smirnova); two sons, Damir and Almir.

Praised for: Since the beginning of the war, his charity foundation delivered more than 10 million food packages to people in the Donbas. His foundation has also supported tuberculosis and cancer treatment programs and media development projects.

Criticized for: Amassing wealth thanks to long-time ties with Ukraine's top officials, including ousted President Viktor Yanukovich; alleged links to separatist forces in Donbas, accusations that he denies.



Former President Viktor Yanukovich (L), then lawmaker and leader of the Party of Regions, talks to Rinat Akhmetov, then also lawmaker in parliament hall in July 2006. (UNIAN)

escape economic sanctions and arrest, but not criminal investigations.

While he left the Donbas, he is free to stay in Ukraine despite accusations – denied by his representatives – that he had links to separatists, if not a role in stoking the conflict that blossomed into a war killing 10,000 people.

In fact, Akhmetov continues to perform the amazing feat of having working relationships with Ukraine, the West, Russia and finally, in the

Kremlin-controlled separatist zones, where he operates much of his businesses.

How does he do it?

He won't say. The reclusive billionaire – who is known to be litigious if he thinks he's been libeled – refused to be interviewed for this story, while his spokespeople only responded to written questions.

Dominating force

Money buys power and, since he has more of it than anybody else in the nation, Akhmetov is a force to be reckoned with like no other. The nation's gross domestic product is only \$100 billion, and its national budget is \$30 billion yearly – less than half the size of the one in Poland, which has 7 million fewer people.

Akhmetov also has large media holdings, including daily newspaper Segodnya and Ukraina TV, with which to wield his power. But whether he is capable or interested in using this influence to bring peace between Ukraine and Russia remains to be seen.

Akhmetov, who was the most influential person in the Donbas before fleeing in 2014, has held on to much of his business empire there, even after Russian troops and local militants took over.

On Feb. 16, Akhmetov appeared to play a significant role in keeping ex-Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk in his job, when at least five lawmakers from the Opposition Bloc that pundits say are loyal to him refused to support a vote of no-confidence in

the government at the last moment. Eventually Yatsenyuk was voted out of power and lost his job on April 14 to presidential loyalist Volodymyr Groysman, who was speaker of the Verkhovna Rada.

From coal mines

Born in Donetsk in the family of a coal miner, Akhmetov, 50, amassed his fortune during the wild 1990s into the early 2000s, when non-transparent and uncompetitive privatizations of state-owned assets were the norm after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

Today his empire controls more than half of Ukraine's steel, mining and thermoelectricity production.

He has also had a long-time interest in sports, taking over as president of the Donetsk Shakhtar soccer team following the

October 1995 explosion that killed his former mentor, Akhat Bragin. The crime remains unsolved.

The fastest estimated growth in his net worth, in 2010, coincided with the election of his long-time friend Yanukovich as Ukraine's president. That year Akhmetov's wealth more than tripled – to \$16 billion, from \$5.2 billion, according to Forbes.

When Yanukovich's regime collapsed on Feb. 22, 2014, following the EuroMaidan Revolution, Akhmetov lost his most powerful base of influence, the Yanukovich-led Party of Regions. But he survives, mostly unscathed.



**OLIGARCH
WATCH**



A canvas covering Kyiv's central shopping mall, which belongs to Rinat Akhmetov, bears a critical slogan reading "Want to make money – first make peace." The slogan, which was written by activists in 2014, refers to Akhmetov's alleged role – denied by his representatives – in the Donbas conflict. (Pavlo Podufalov)

After Yanukovych flees, some question actions of Akhmetov as war starts

Whose side is he on?

But Akhmetov's reputation took a hit during and after the EuroMaidan Revolution among people who saw him as playing both sides.

As a Yanukovych ally, he became a target for demonstrators, some of whom protested outside his One Hyde Park luxury home – which he bought for more than \$150 million in 2011 – in London.

On Dec. 31, 2013, Akhmetov – without his ever-present security entourage – got out of his car and approached EuroMaidan activists who were picketing his residence in Donetsk.

"If you want Ukraine to be strong, I'm with you," he told them.

But by the following spring, with Yanukovych no longer in power, he

turned his attention to Kremlin-backed separatists.

A YouTube video shows that, when Russian-backed protesters captured the building of Donetsk Oblast's administration, Akhmetov approached them late on April 8, 2014 and pledged to prevent law enforcement agencies from storming the building.

"If there is a crackdown, I will go together with you there," he said in trying to win over the hearts of hundreds of protesters who were calling for Russia to annex the Donbas, as it did with Crimea weeks earlier.

But he also took a pro-Ukrainian line, stressing that the region's future was best under Ukraine. "For me, Donetsk, Donbas, Ukraine are in my heart forever," he said at the meeting with Yatsenyuk on April 11,

2014. Yatsenyuk promised to keep the law granting special status for the Russian language, and Akhmetov argued that Donbas should remain Ukrainian.

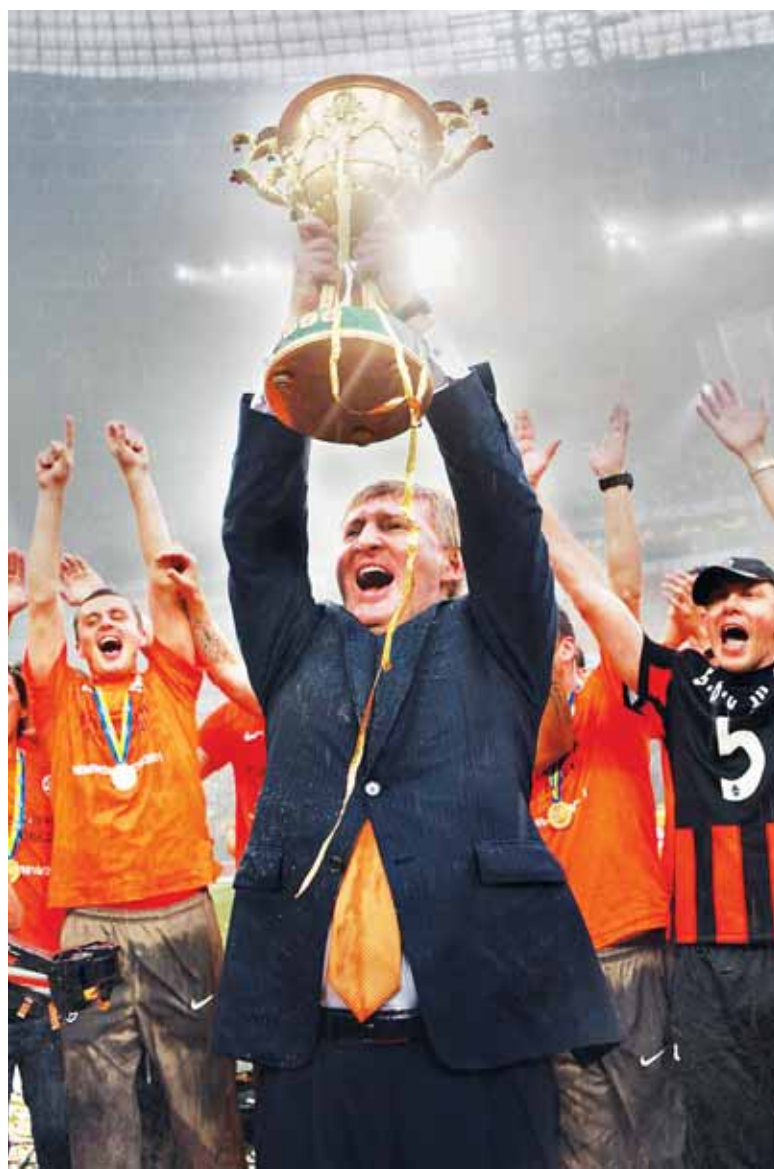
But on the very next day, retired Russian intelligence officer Igor Strelkov captured police offices in the cities of Sloviansk and Kramatorsk in Donetsk Oblast, sparking the military conflict that continues to this day.

Taras Chornovil, a former member of Yanukovych's party who claims to have been acquainted with Akhmetov, said the billionaire appears to have initially – before Russia took full control in the Donbas through direct military intervention and proxies – tried utilizing

more Akhmetov on page 12



The One Hyde Park, the most prestigious residential complex in London, where Rinat Akhmetov bought a luxury penthouse for £136 million in 2011. Many of the world's wealthiest people invest in London real estate, prompting the British government to change rules that allow anonymous purchases through offshore companies. (Borys Trotsenko.)



Rinat Akhmetov, the owner of Shakhtar Donetsk soccer club, holds the Ukrainian Premier League trophy, which his club won in May 2011 in Donetsk. (UNIAN)

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Rinat Akhmetov attends a meeting on April 11, 2014 with then-Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk and other officials. The participants attempted to find a solution to the Russian-instigated conflict, but the war goes on with no end in sight today. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)



Akhmetov retains influence, even in separatist-controlled Donbas

Akhmetov from page 15

separatist sentiment in the region to gain leverage with the new authorities in Kyiv.

"Apparently (Akhmetov) wanted to lead the local forces to bargain with the authorities in Kyiv... He believed he could keep it all under control, but a Russian scenario was launched instead," Chornovil said. "He was shown who is the boss in the region... So he decided to play for neither of the sides."

It took Akhmetov until May 20, 2014 to speak out against the separatists and accuse them of "genocide against Donbas."

But the statement didn't erase the opinion of some people that he had a role in the stoking of the conflict.

In early March 2014, shortly after Yanukovich fled power, then-Donetsk Oblast Governor Andriy Shyshatsky met with regional mayors and advised them to create "self-defense units" out of local hunters and veterans of the Afghanistan War to fight Ukrainian nationalists, said Denis Kazansky, a popular pro-Ukrainian political blogger from Donetsk.

"Shyshatsky is an Akhmetov

protégé," Kazansky said, adding that Shyshatsky had served as head of Khartsyzsk pipe plant, which is owned by Akhmetov. "None of it could have happened without Akhmetov's knowledge."

Akhmetov's spokesperson did not respond to these claims.

Ruling by proxy

On May 25, 2014, a group of outraged Russian-backed separatists marched to seize Akhmetov's residence in Donetsk. But separatist leader Oleksandr Zakharchenko and militants of his Oplot group prevented the seizure, according to Kazansky, who witnessed the incident.

A YouTube video shows another pro-Russian militant leader, Muscovite Alexander Borodai, telling the crowd that Zakharchenko will take custody of the house as long as they negotiate with Akhmetov.

As of June 2016, Akhmetov's residence still remains intact and is maintained by employees, several independent sources in Donetsk told the Kyiv Post.

According to an investigation published by the Insider news site in 2014, Zakharchenko used to work for companies linked to former lawmak-



A woman shows one of the rooms in her house destroyed by severe shelling which continued for 13 hours on June 3, 2015, in Maryinka during an attempt to take over the town. (Volodymyr Petrov)

er Serhiy Kiy, a longtime associate of Akhmetov.

Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta wrote, quoting a Kremlin source, that Akhmetov had lobbied for the

nomination of Zakharchenko as head of the Donetsk separatists when speaking with Vladislav Surkov, an influential aide of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"A source close to the Novorossiia project claims that the richest Ukrainian oligarch Rinat Akhmetov asked Vladislav Surkov for (the nomination of) Zakharchenko," the news-



**OLIGARCH
WATCH**

Akhmetov's people: He never backed separatists

paper wrote in December 2014.

Akhmetov's spokesperson did not respond to questions about the oligarch's alleged relations with Zakharchenko and alleged meetings with Surkov. Zakharchenko's spokeswoman told the Kyiv Post by phone she had no information about his relations to Akhmetov or Kiy.

Militants of the separatist Vostok Battalion have been seen defending the Donbas Arena soccer stadium, which is controlled by Akhmetov, and his other businesses. Chornovil said Vostok, at Akhmetov's request, had also helped to release journalists and activists taken prisoner by Russian-backed militants in Donetsk.

Vostok's former commander, Aleksandr Khodakovsky said sarcastically and evasively in an interview with Forbes in 2015: "If I'm Akhmetov's man, then he is the biggest patriot of the Donetsk People's Republic, because in such a situation, he is financing the unit which allows the republic to exist."

He added: "I am not Akhmetov's man directly, but because my position lies in preserving his business, it's to the benefit of Akhmetov ... playing into his hands."

Akhmetov's spokeswoman said that Akhmetov had never financed any separatist groups.

On Feb. 20, activists of the OUN nationalist group, whose members were defending Ukraine in the Donbas war as a volunteer battalion, smashed the windows of Akhmetov's company in Kyiv, blaming the oligarch for provoking the military conflict.

"We promised not to let him alone," OUN leader Mykola Kokhanivsky told the crowd before rushing to Akhmetov's office. "It was him in particular who caused this war, in which Ukrainian blood is still being spilled."

Separatist leaders have said since 2014 that they have not nationalized Akhmetov's businesses in regions under their control as they need to keep the local population employed and to pay salaries. But on June 1, Zakharchenko banned Akhmetov along with some other former Yanukovich allies from entering the separatist-controlled areas.

A split empire

The tycoon's alleged dealings with Russian-separatist forces are linked to the state of his assets in eastern Ukraine.

Since the beginning of Russia's war in 2014, Akhmetov's businesses have been split between Ukrainian-controlled and separatist-held areas, with Systems Capital Management companies having to transport their products across the war's frontlines.

The hardest time for Akhmetov's business was in August-October 2014, when some steel plants stopped working because of heavy fighting, analysts say. But the output of most businesses improved in 2016.

According to estimations of Concorde Capital investment bank, in September the Akhmetov-owned Yenakiyev Steel Mill was making 71 percent of its pre-war output, which is 3 percent better than in September 2015.



Billionaire Rinat Akhmetov talks with activists who protested outside his residence in Donetsk on Dec. 31, 2013, during the EuroMaidan Revolution. (UNIAN)

Ukraine's reclusive billionaire rarely seen in public; aides answer for him

BY KYIV POST

Rinat Akhmetov has barely been seen in public since fleeing his hometown Donbas region, which he once ruled almost as a personal fiefdom.

"On May 20, 2014 Rinat Leonidovich left for three days from Donetsk to Kyiv, and since then, unfortunately, has never returned to the Donbas. All this time, Mr. Akhmetov has lived and worked in Kyiv," a spokesperson said in written responses to Kyiv Post inquiries.

The oligarch reportedly owns a luxury flat in downtown Kyiv and an estate outside of the capital.

"As soon as it becomes possible for him to return to his native Donetsk, I can assure you ... there will be maximum public information," the spokesperson added.

In Donetsk, Akhmetov often resided at a vast estate protected by high cement walls. Reporters visiting the occupied region in 2014-2015 witnessed that the road towards it's entrance was guarded by militants identifying themselves as members of the Vostok Battalion,

headed at the time by Alexander Khodakovsky.

Khodakovsky served as "national security chief" of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic by January, when he announced he had become an opposition figure to Alexander Zakharchenko, leader of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic. Khodakovsky used to head the elite Alfa special forces unit of Ukraine's SBU state security services in Donetsk region and has in interviews admitted to being part of security forces that clashed with Euromaidan Revolution activists during Viktor Yanukovich's last weeks as president.

Despite lingering suspicions that Akhmetov's Donetsk estate was under the control of a militant group headed by a man who is suspected of having ties to the oligarch, his spokesperson insisted that "No battalions have ever defended the residence of Rinat Akhmetov. Any information spread regarding this is total nonsense."

The spokesperson added: "Please don't believe rumors or wild guesses. Nobody has lived or has been based

in the house of Rinat Leonidovich since he left. The guards and gardeners are watching the house as they did before. They have worked there for many years, and continue to work there now."

The Kyiv Post was unable to corroborate the presence of these guards and gardeners at the estate through reports, or its own on-ground reporting in Donetsk during 2014-2016. Akhmetov was rarely seen in public after he left Donetsk in May 2014.

Nonetheless, the spokesperson insisted: "Rinat Leonidovich, from the first days of the conflict, is constantly communicating with various people who are able to influence the establishment of peace in the Donbas. Rinat Leonidovich knows many people. And he is known by many. And I am deeply convinced that all that Rinat Akhmetov says publicly, he also voices on numerous personal meetings: that Donbas can be happy only in a united Ukraine; that it should be achieved only in a peaceful way; that people must not suffer; (that) people must not die; that blood must not be shed."

The spokesperson added: "Rinat Akhmetov has held hundreds if not thousands of meetings over the past two years. Diplomats of the world's leading countries, including the representatives of the U.S. Embassy, are also interested by the position of Mr. Akhmetov, by the results of his humanitarian activity, the amount of (his) aid."

That may be so, but it appears Akhmetov is still struggling to get a visa to the United States. In 2011, the Kyiv Post reported that he was unable for several years to obtain a visa to the world's most powerful country. Asked if the visa had been issued yet, in February the spokesperson said "as far as I know, the visa application of Mr. Akhmetov is

now being processed by the U.S. State Department."

In October, Akhmetov's spokesperson refused to comment on the status of the businessman's visa, saying this information was personal.

The spokesperson did not answer other specific questions on what could be sensitive issues for Akhmetov.

The spokesperson did not answer a question asking why Russian-backed separatists make an exception by allowing his foundation to directly disburse humanitarian aid in the occupied regions, while not allowing Ukraine's government and other organizations to do the same.

The spokesperson did not answer questions regarding the relations Akhmetov may have had with Khodakovsky, the other separatist leader Alexander Zakharchenko and Andriy Shyshatsky, the former Donetsk Oblast governor who allegedly took part in separatist activities.

The spokesperson did not answer a question asking when he had last visited Russia.

The spokesperson did not answer a question inquiring on whether he had held discussions with Vladislav Surkov, an adviser to Russian President Vladimir Putin on the Kremlin's annexation of Crimea and its war in the Donbas.

The spokesperson also didn't respond to a question asking how often Akhmetov may have discussed the Donbas conflict with Viktor Medvedchuk, a former Ukrainian presidential chief of staff who is personally close to Putin and is involved in the Minsk peace process, formally in the area of exchanging hostages.

Likewise, the Kremlin press service didn't respond to a Kyiv Post inquiry on whether the Russians held discussions with Akhmetov about the war. ■



Activists picket Rinat Akhmetov's office on April 13, 2014, in Kyiv. The writing on the wall reads: "Your money is our blood." (UNIAN)

War splits business empire, prompts increase in charity

Akhmetov from page 17

Akhmetov's Komsomolets Donbasa coal mine had an output at 72-percent of its pre-war level in September, 12 percent better than a year ago.

Although Akhmetov's companies deny it, analysts don't see how he can keep doing business in Russian-occupied Donbas without making payments to the separatist leadership.

"As rational people, we understand that it's impossible to transport coal from Luhansk Oblast without getting approval from those who control it," Oleksandr Parashchiiy, head of research at Concorde Capital, told the Kyiv Post.

On the other hand, separatists are not preventing Akhmetov's companies from paying taxes to the Ukrainian budget and are allowing them to operate.

Parashchiiy attributed this to the separatists' understanding that they needed SCM companies because they provide employment and contribute to social stability in an economically depressed region.

Akhmetov's businesses could cease to function if Kremlin-backed separatists seized these companies or forced them to quit Ukrainian jurisdiction.

"They can't afford working under norms that contradict international law," Parashchiiy said. "What sane country would accept products that were produced (in the occupied territories)?"



Rinat Akhmetov kicks a ball during the symbolic opening of a new soccer field at Donetsk School No 63 on Sept. 1, 2013. Akhmetov, who studied at this school, has financed it for many years. (UNIAN)

Akhmetov's troubled Donbas businesses

Russia's war against Ukraine disrupted billionaire Rinat Akhmetov's business empire, which is concentrated in the Donbas.

Corum Group, his engineering business, said two of its plants were captured by separatists in Donetsk and Horlivka in August 2014. In December 2014, the separatists also seized the Corum Donetsk Energy Plant.

Parallel gas stations were closed in July 2014 in the separatist-held parts of Luhansk Oblast. In July-August 2014, the company's gas stations were closed in Horlivka, Yasynuvata, Debaltseve and Heorhiyivka in Donetsk Oblast. The 32 remaining gas stations were closed in the separatist-held part of Donetsk Oblast on May 18, 2015.

On the fence: Akhmetov's main businesses in Donbas



ing and dairy farms, which were in areas taken over by armed groups. The company said it no longer collects the farms' products and is not investing money into them. In July 2015, one of the leaders of the Russian-backed armed groups, Alexander Zakharchenko, announced plans to "nationalize" these farms.

Source: System Capital Management, media reports

Another sideline, Brusnichka supermarkets, were closed in separatist-held parts of the Donbas on May 18, 2015.

Media Group Ukraine closed its offices in Donetsk in June 2014.

First Ukrainian International Bank, in August 2014, closed 31 offices in parts of the Donbas where armed groups seized control, following a decision by Ukraine's government to shut down banking activity in the area.

HarvEast agrarian holding lost control of and ceased managing the bulk of its breed-



Rinat Akhmetov (R) talks to the wife, sons, and daughters in law of the former President Viktor Yanukovich at a party to celebrate 10 years since the creation of his SCM company. (Ukrainian photo)

Akhmetov's aid

Russian-backed separatists have repeatedly prevented Ukraine's government from directly providing humanitarian aid to the civilian population of the war-torn Donbas region under their control, but have curiously allowed Akhmetov's aid to flow in and be freely disbursed. Supplies of humanitarian aid to the region also enable Akhmetov to retain support among the region's population.

Since the war started, his charity has delivered more than 10 million food packages to people in the Donbas.

In a survey by the International Republican Institute released in January, Akhmetov was number one in popularity in Ukraine-controlled Donbas, with 35 percent support – far ahead of other politicians or business people.

Doing business in Russia

As Russia's war in the Donbas cut off railways and other logistical routes that were vital to supplying Ukraine's electricity generators with fuel, Akhmetov's companies somehow managed to keep coal supplies flowing amid peak battles.

Coal was shipped into Ukraine from mines also owned by the oligarch in Russia's Rostov Oblast. Coal was also temporarily shipped by rail

Backroom dealer who was close to Yanukovich evades Western sanctions

out of Ukraine's war-torn regions through Russian territory and back into Ukraine. Russia allowed it.

"It was leaving Ukraine, passing over a small part of Russian territory and then entering Ukraine," Anton Kovalyshyn, a press secretary with Akhmetov's DTEK energy company, told the Kyiv Post.

In late 2014, however, Russian railway officials stopped the shipment of coal to Ukraine. They didn't explain the reasons.



OLIGARCH WATCH

With Ukraine and West

On Jan. 22, 2015 Akhmetov was interrogated for several hours at the Prosecutor General's Office as part of a criminal case into the financing of separatists. Through a spokesperson, Akhmetov has denied the claims.

The Prosecutor General's Office told the Kyiv Post that it was still investigating the case, but no notice of suspicion had been filed. Last year, then-Prosecutor General Viktor Shokin said that "there are no grounds for arresting Akhmetov for the time being."

Sergii Leshchenko, a lawmaker of the Petro Poroshenko Bloc, wrote in a blog for Novoye Vremya magazine that Yatsenyuk had regular meetings with Akhmetov and had defended the oligarch's business interests over the two last years. "Today Akhmetov is the strongest backstage ally of Yatsenyuk," Leshchenko wrote.

Yatsenyuk has denied this widely

held view.

This opinion is shared by Yegor Firsov, a former lawmaker who was ejected from parliament after quitting the faction of President Petro

Poroshenko. Firsov, who used to work as journalist in Donetsk and was called as a witness in Akhmetov's investigation, said Akhmetov is escaping justice thanks to his control of a handful of lawmakers in parliament and friendship with top officials.

"It's no secret that Akhmetov is on good terms with (former) Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk," Firsov added.

Volodymyr Fesenko, head of the Penta political research think tank, attributed the lack of progress in investigations against Akhmetov to an informal agreement among the Ukrainian elite that political foes would not jail each other.

Vitaly Bala, an analyst at the Situations Modeling Agency, also believes there could be agreements between Akhmetov and the Poroshenko administration that the oligarch would not be touched.

But Akhmetov's relations with Poroshenko are rather cold, analysts say.

Chornovil said that difficult relations between them are the reason why Akhmetov's people are not appointed to government posts in Ukrainian-controlled Donbas.

Nevertheless, Akhmetov, who has a coal mine in the United States and



Tycoon Rinat Akhmetov visits the Zaporizhstal steel mill in Zaporizhzhya on May 16, 2013. The mill, which is part of Akhmetov's Metinvest group, is one of Europe's largest steel producers. (UNIAN)



Rinat Akhmetov's charity foundation delivers food packages to the residents of the embattled Donetsk city on Nov. 3, 2014. The food delivery was held at Donbas Arena soccer stadium, also owned by Akhmetov. (Anastasia Vlasova)



Rinat Akhmetov and Petro Poroshenko (L) are shown on March 19, 2008, in Kyiv. (UNIAN)

two rolling plants in European Union countries, has had open doors to Western decision-makers, including former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey R. Pyatt.

Despite his close relations with Yanukovich, Akhmetov has avoided coming under any Western sanctions.

The Americans are trying to negotiate with Akhmetov to broker a peace deal with Russia and reintegrate the occupied territories back into Ukraine, LigaBusinessInform, a news agency, reported last September, citing sources in Poroshenko's

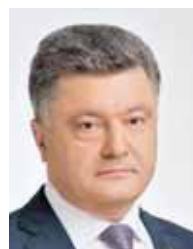
administration.

Akhmetov wants to see the occupied territories back under Ukrainian control, political analyst Volodymyr Fesenko said. As the largest employer in the region, he could play a big role in winning over the hearts and minds of the local population by providing them an alternative to a devastating war: stable jobs, higher wages and other prospects.

"People in Kyiv, Moscow and I think many in Berlin understand that Akhmetov may become a key figure in this process," Fesenko added.

Balázs Jarábik, a visiting scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said the Donbas conflict, which now involves Ukraine and Russia and is a security issue for Europe, is now too big for Akhmetov. Still, the oligarch could be and wants to be an important factor in finding a solution.

"Akhmetov is someone who is going to be in backroom deals and willing to be in backroom deals," he said. "It's a funny situation for the king of Donbas to be kind of back, but in a back room." ■



Oct. 7 – Oligarch Watch, Part 1

Petro Poroshenko:
All In The Family – Again



Oct. 14 – Oligarch Watch, Part 2

Victor Pinchuk:
Ukraine's Friend Or Foe?



Oct. 21 – Oligarch Watch, Part 3

Rinat Akhmetov:
Too Big To Tame



Oct. 28 – Oligarch Watch, Part 4

Ihor Kolomoisky

Future installments will be published in the Kyiv Post until Dec. 22 and available freely for republication in English, Ukrainian or Russian languages.

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WITH MARIA ROMANENKO
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A tour of
architectural
masterpieces
in the capital

Ukraine's capital has its fair share of Soviet-era crumbling, concrete catastrophes - the works of architects who obviously hated life - but Kyiv also boasts some fine architecture that's well worth taking a look at on an afternoon off. The buildings in this walking tour represent some of the best examples of works from what was arguably Kyiv's architectural heyday - the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Distance: 5.5 kilometers approx.

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

The tour starts on Andriivskiy Uzviz, one of Kyiv's most famous streets. Slightly more than midway up from the start of the street on the corner of Kontraktova Ploshcha in the city's Podil district, there is the The Castle of Richard the Lionheart, at 15 Andriivski Uzviz.

The castle (despite the name, the building has nothing to do with the late 12th century king of England) is one of the main architectural attractions on Andriivskiy Uzviz, towering above the tourist-filled street. Its architect, Dmytro Orlov, borrowed ideas for the exterior design from a house that caught his attention in St. Petersburg, Russia. After its construction was completed in 1904, the castle caught a fire for reasons unknown. From then on, the building has had a bad reputation. Nobody could stay in it for too long: people said that at night they heard footsteps and children's cries, as if the building was haunted. Later it turned out that eggshells stuck in a chimney were making these sounds, and when they were removed the "cries" stopped. But rumors and legends around the castle continue to spread, and it remains empty to this day.

Ascending Andriyivskiy Uzviz, we pass another famous Kyiv landmark, St. Andrew's Church. Next, walk along Volodymyr Street, passing through Sophivska Ploshcha, and continue down the road until it meets Prorizna Street. Turning right, walk up Yaroslaviv Val for about 100 meters, and there we find The Castle of Baron Steingel, at 1 Yaroslaviv Val.



People eat in Ostannya Barykada, a Ukrainian nationalistic-themed restaurant located in Globus shopping mall at Kyiv's central Independence Square. To get to the restaurant, one has to give the administrator the password, "Boritsya i poborete." (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

BY ANNA YAKUTENKO
YAKUTENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

The elevator in the Globus shopping mall on Kyiv's central Maidan Nezalezhnosti Square now has a mysterious new button, marked "OB."

Press that button, and the elevator rises to a hidden third floor under the glass dome that tops the center. The elevator doors open to a coffee shop with a long bar, and large windows overlooking the

shopping mall. It looks like an average café, but it has its secret.

At the far end of the coffee shop, opposite the elevator doors, there is a large mural in the style of a QR code. Scan that code, and it reveals a password “Boritesya-poborete!” or “Fight, and you’ll win,” in Ukrainian.

Repeat the password to an administrator, who should be hovering nearby, and they will remove a section of the bar and open a hidden doorway into an antechamber. (For foreign visitors, it's not obligatory to

know the password by heart – it's enough to read it aloud from a card provided the receptionist.)

Once inside the antechamber, you have to find another hidden doorway. It is in the wall to the right, which is covered with sculpted metal hands (which symbolize the years Ukraine spend under Russian rule). Look up – the section of the wall that contains the hidden doorway has a hammer stuck to the wall near the ceiling.

Push open the hidden door, and

you will enter a fancy new restaurant owned by the successful Ukrainian restaurateur Dmytro Borysov. Named Ostannya Barykada, which in Ukrainian means “the Last Barricade,” this place specializes in Ukrainian national cuisine and serves dishes prepared only from local products.

Ostannyya Barykada has three stylish dining rooms, each with different

more **Restaurant** on page **22**



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Kyiv's 'castles' and architectural masterpieces grace city streets

Tour from page 20

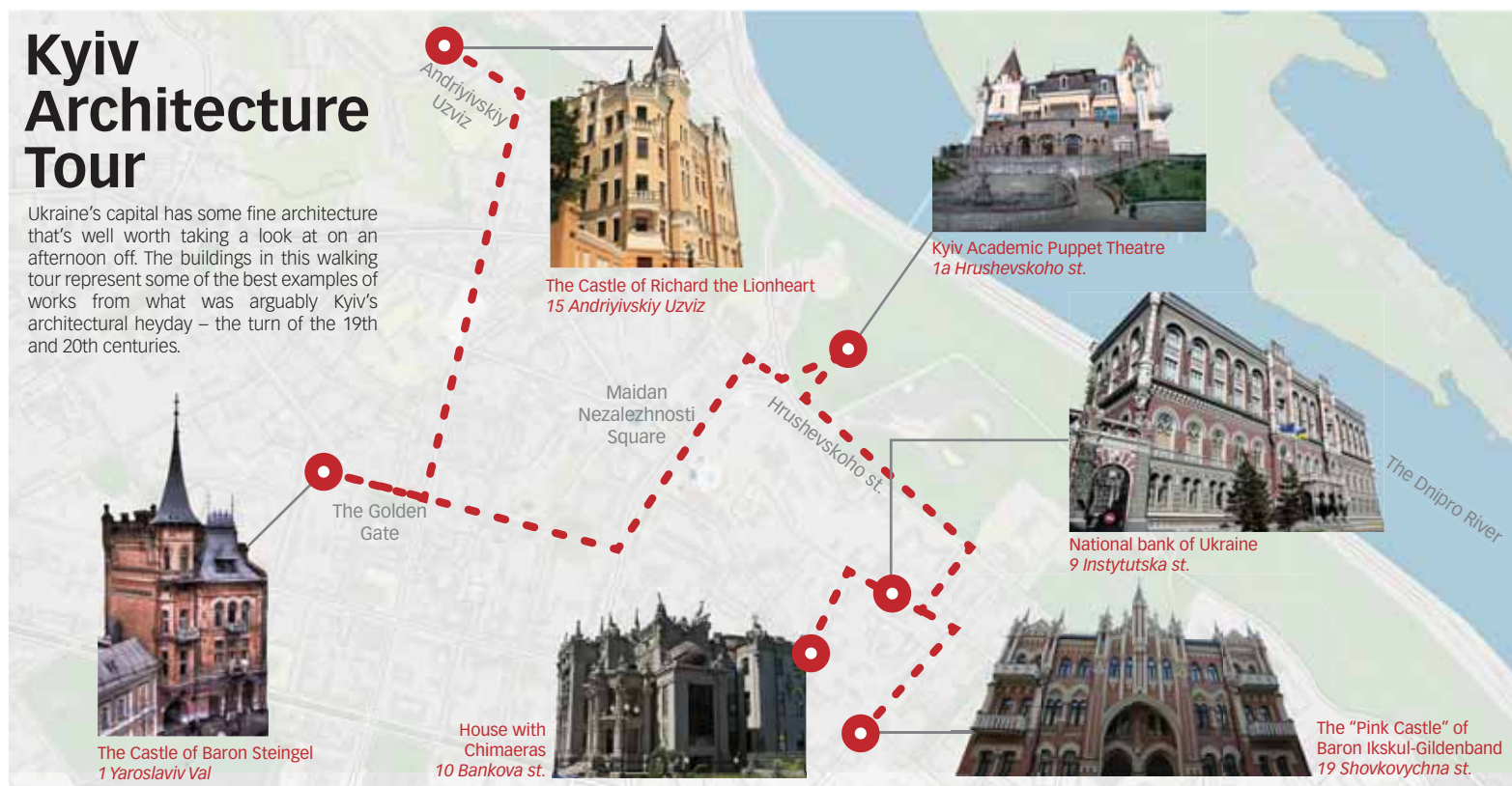
This imposing bright building was built by the architect Nikolay Dobachevsky at the end of the 19th century. Despite the name of the castle, Baron Steingel actually never lived there, residing next door instead; but the castle is so impressive that people at the time were sure it must belong to the baron. Over the years many other famous people have been said to have lived in the building: including barons and rich merchants. But one thing is definitely true: the historic Yaroslaviv Val street would not be the same without this pearl of architecture. The tall, slender building stands out from the two-story buildings next to it, and two sculptures buttress the second-floor balcony over the arched access way to the rear courtyard. The main entryway features Corinthian columns.

Heading back down Prorizna Street until it reaches Kreshchatyk, turn left, and head along Kyiv's famous central street, past Maidan Nezalezhnosti (Independence Square), to European Square. Turn right onto Hrushevskoho St. and walk along it to the entrance to the Valeriy Lobanovskyi Dynamo Stadium, opposite which is a road that leads uphill to the Kyiv Academic Puppet Theatre, at 1a Hrushevskoho St.

From the outside, the theatre looks rather like a fairytale castle, and inside its three floors each contain various attractions and surprises, such as an antique dolls exhibition, a children's café, two theatre halls and cartoon paintings on the walls – a great place for kids. The grounds around the theatre have sculptures of cartoon characters and a Thumbelina-themed musical fountain. Despite Kyiv Academic Puppet Theatre being the oldest puppet theatre in Ukraine (established in 1927), it didn't have a permanent home until the "castle" was built and

Kyiv Architecture Tour

Ukraine's capital has some fine architecture that's well worth taking a look at on an afternoon off. The buildings in this walking tour represent some of the best examples of works from what was arguably Kyiv's architectural heyday – the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.



gifted to the establishment in late 2005, which makes it the youngest building in our tour.

Descending back down the hill to Hrushevskoho St., continue walking away from European Square, up the hill, and take a right turn opposite the neo-classical, Stalin-era Verkhovna Rada building, onto Sadova St. Then walk down Sadova St. until its end, and turn right to Instytutska St., where after a short 140 meter walk, there is the building of the National bank of Ukraine, at 9 Instytutska St.

The National Bank of Ukraine's current home is a luxurious mixture of gothic and renaissance styles in burgundy and beige. Construction started in 1902 to a design by Kyiv architect Oleksandr Kobelev, who won a competition to design the building. Oleksandr Verbitskyi designed the building's main façade, and Italian sculptor Emilio Sala cre-

ated its interior decorations. Two more floors were added to the building, taking it to four floors, in 1933 when Ukraine was preparing to change its capital from Kharkiv to Kyiv.

Continue walking along Instytutska Street for another minute and then take the first turn left to Bankova St., where the House with Chimaeras is located on the right, at 10 Bankova st. On a weekday, it is best to skip this building, as access to it is only open on weekends; and for a most extensive view, book a tour of it in advance at www.primetour.ua.

House with Chimaeras is one of the most famous buildings in Kyiv, located in the very heart of Ukraine's capital. But at the time of its construction in 1902-1903, the site was unkempt and completely unsuitable for building, being on a steep slope,

which caused problems for its architect, Vladyslav Gorodetsky. Despite the difficulties, Gorodetsky managed to build a spectacular landmark that retains its beauty and significance to this day, serving as a presidential residence for official ceremonies. The building has three floors on one side, and six on the other. Its walls display concrete heads of rhinos, giraffes, lions, crocodiles, antelopes and drainpipes in the form of elephant trunks; on its roof there are statues of huge frogs, sea monsters and nymphs with chains instead of hair.

Next, head back to Instytutska St. and turn right, passing the National Bank of Ukraine again until Instytutska meets Shovkovychna St. Then turn right and walk along Shovkovychna for 5 minutes to the "Pink Castle" of Baron Ikskul-

Gildenband on the left at 19 Shovkovychna st.

The building is located next to another landmark, the "Chocolate house" on Shovkovychna street. The "Pink Castle" was built in 1891 using architect Mykola Vyshnevsky's project and belonged to the Ikskul-Gildenband family. At that time it consisted of six large flats, some of which were rented out. During the Soviet era, the building was nationalised and converted into communal apartments building where academics such as poet and writer Mykola Bazhan and economist Pavlo Pershyn resided. Over the years, the building fell into disrepair, and it went through a massive renovation in the 2000s. Nowadays the "Pink Castle" of Baron Ikskul-Gildenband has regained its original look and is home to a private company. ■



Despite the mystery around the strange sounds heard inside the Castle of Richard the Lionheart being solved, the building remains empty to this day, intriguing its bypassers. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)



Exhibition of posters

Oct. 22



The exhibition "Ephemeroïds. XX Century In A Poster" in of the Kyiv's biggest art galleries, Mystetsky Arsenal, offers its visitors an alternative view of the history of Europe in the 20th century through posters of various styles from a range of countries.

Ephemeroïds. XX Century In A Poster (Exhibition). *Mystetsky Arsenal (10-12 Lavrska St.) Hr 60-100*



Bandura concert

The Zaporizhzhya-based musical ensemble "Bozhena," will perform music featuring the bandura, the Ukrainian folk string instrument that combines elements of the zither and lute and has up to 50 strings.

Bandura Style (concert). *Oct. 26. 7 p.m. National Philharmonic of Ukraine (2 Volodymyrsky Uzviz St.) Hr 70 -200*

Philharmonic of Ukraine (2 Volodymyrsky Uzviz St.) Hr 70 -200

Theatre play screening

Oct. 22



The UK's Kenneth Branagh Theatre Company will perform John Osborne's modern classic play "The Entertainer," which will be broadcast live in cinemas all over the world on Oct. 27. In Kyiv, the play will be shown in the SkyMall shopping center.

The Entertainer (play screening). *Oct. 27. 9.15 p.m. SkyMall (2T Vatutina Ave.) Hr 175 - 225*

Compiled by Anna Yakutenko

New nationalistic-themed restaurant is a hidden gem

Restaurant from page 20

interior styling: One is in a loft style with a large bar; the next in gold and brown colors reminiscent of a private library, and the third, which is accessed via a curved stairway is built around the foundations of the St. Michael's Arch monument on Maidan Nezalezhnosti. The restaurant also has a small shop selling Ukraine-made accessories and a range of souvenirs.

In all rooms the walls are decorated with photos or memorabilia from historical moments of Ukraine's independence, such as pictures of Orange Revolution in 2004 or globes one of the activists wore during the Euromaidan Revolution in 2013-2014. The restaurant also touts itself as a place to promote Ukrainian culture.

Along with a stylish interior, Ostannya Barykada offers plenty of tasty dishes and a good range of alcoholic drinks, such as craft beer for around Hr 50, and fruit liqueurs for Hr 29-35.

For an appetizer, try a vegetable platter with walnut cream for Hr 69. Another tasty option is baked cheese with warm bread - but be careful not to get carried away: leave some space for the main course.

The top choice turned out to be a turkey with crushed potatoes for Hr 118. Another must-try is Bigos (Hr 98), also known as a hunter's stew - finely chopped sausage stewed with mushrooms and shredded fresh cabbage and served in a loaf, like a burger. Compared to the first two dishes, the traditional holubtsi (stuffed cabbage rolls) for Hr 98 were the least impressive (although they were quite okay).

Overall, the restaurant is on a par with the most popular place of its type in Lviv - the nationalist-themed Kryivka restaurant - but it has a more luxurious interior, and its menu perhaps outclasses that of Kryivka. Ostannya Barykada is well worth a visit - if you can remember how to get in. ■



Oct. 22-23

Fitness festival

Fitness fans can attend more than 50 master classes in fitness, aerobics, hip-hop dancing and other activities during the ProFit Convention fitness festival on Oct. 22-23.

ProFit Convention. *Oct. 22-23. 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Akko International Exhibition Center (40-b Peremohy Ave.) Hr 500 - 90*

Oct. 14-16



Joss Stone (soul concert)

British soul and R&B singer Joscelyn Eve Stoker, who performs under the pseudonym Joss Stone, will perform for the first time in Kyiv, singing new songs from her latest album "Water for Soul" along with her famous past hits. The singer rose to fame after her first album "The Soul Sessions" made it to the shortlist for the

prestigious Mercury Prize in 2004.

Joss Stone (soul). *Oct. 20. 8 p.m. Freedom Event Hall (134 Kyrilivska St.) Hr 1,500-3,000*

Oct. 22 - 30



Molodist Festival (movies)

Movie lovers can enjoy rare films from Ukrainian and foreign directors during the annual Molodist movie festival. This year's festival will be held in several of the city's cinemas, including the recently rebuilt Zhovten cinema at 26 Konsyantynivska St. Apart from movie screenings, master classes by directors and producers are to be held during the festival. For the detailed program visit molodist.kiev.ua.

Molodist Festival (movies). *Oct. 22 - 30. Sophiivska Square. Hr 40-70*

International non-profit organization seeks **Training Developer** and **Clinical Advisor** for its project of international technical assistance focusing on public health, position based in Kyiv.

Requirements for **Training Developer** include: university degree (public health, health education, communications, education, social sciences, related field) with an equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted; 4+ years of professional record; experience of developing training materials for adults in healthcare settings and as a trainer/facilitator preferred; exceptional computer skills; exceptional communication and diplomacy skills; ability to work independently and deliver results under pressure; fluency in English, Ukrainian, and Russian languages; outstanding writing skills.

Requirements for **Clinical Advisor** include: qualified MD; 10+ years of experience, specialist in infectious diseases or related fields; experience with TB, hepatitis or alike advantageous; excellent knowledge of national public health system; training design, development, facilitation skills preferred; exceptional computer skills; exceptional communication and diplomacy skills; ability to work independently and deliver results under pressure; fluency in English, Ukrainian, and Russian languages; advanced writing skills; availability to travel up to 25% of time. Option of 80% employment will be considered for medical practitioners. This position is contingent upon funding availability in November 2016.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted and will receive detailed job description prior to their interviews. All resumes w/cover letter & references should be sent to tenders@itech-ukraine.org by 6 p.m. on November 04, 2016.

A leading European supplier of fresh salads and herbs is looking for a Sales Representative based in Kyiv.

Requirements:

- Min 2 years of relevant experience in fresh logistics and/or distribution;
- Fluent English;
- Age – 25...35;
- Driving license

Please send your CV with the photo to hovdanata@gmail.com



The Commercial Law Center (Ukrainian NGO implementing USAID technical assistance program)
is seeking candidates to fill the position of
Competition Impact Assessment Consultant

Responsibilities:

Conduct consultancy work (provide services) as part of the Commercial Law Center's activities under international technical assistance programs.

Requirements:

- University Degree in Law, Economics or Public Administration;
- Experience and skills in legislation analysis;
- Good knowledge of competition legislation;
- Experience of cooperating with antimonopoly and other authorities;
- Good working record in the sphere of market competition development;
- Good command of Ukrainian and English;
- Advanced user of different computer applications.

Experience and expertise in carrying out (impact assessment) is an advantage.

The consultant is also expected to:

- have good analytical skills and organizational capabilities;
- be a proactive team-player;
- be responsible and creative in communicating in different ways.

Please, send your CV and cover letter to:

clc@clc.com.ua

or fax them at:

+380 44 490 65 74 by COB October 31, 2016. Please, note that only short-listed candidates will be invited to interview.



PATH is currently recruiting for:

- TB Program Officer to provide technical expertise in TB and MDR-TB control for the Challenge TB project in Ukraine.
- Evaluation Specialist to provide support to the Challenge TB project in Ukraine.
- TB Case Management Officer to provide technical expertise in TB and MDR-TB control for the Challenge TB project in Ukraine.
- Communications Associate to implement a communication strategy for the Challenge TB project in Ukraine.
- Program Assistant to work with and provide organizational, technical and logistical support to the Challenge TB program and team.

These positions are funded through September 29, 2017. Employment after that date is subject to availability of funds.

PATH is an international organization that drives transformative innovation to save lives and improve health, especially among women and children. We accelerate innovation across five platforms-vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, devices, and system and service innovations-that harness our entrepreneurial insight, scientific and public health expertise, and passion for health equity. By mobilizing partners around the world, we take innovation to scale, working alongside countries primarily in Africa and Asia to tackle their greatest health needs. Together, we deliver measurable results that disrupt the cycle of poor health.

Ukraine has one of the highest tuberculosis (TB) disease burdens in Europe and Eurasia. Three main factors fuel the epidemic: numerous TB strains resistant to multiple drugs; growing rates of HIV infection, which makes people especially vulnerable to developing TB disease; and setbacks to the health system during years of political, social, and economic transition.

PATH has been providing technical assistance to Ukraine's TB control efforts since 2001. In close collaboration with local, national, and international partners, we're expanding the reach of End TB strategy, the internationally recommended strategy for TB control. We've also worked to increase services for people with TB and HIV and reduce the stigma and discrimination surrounding these conditions.

PATH is seeking above-mentioned staff for its TB control activities to be carried out in Ukraine in 2016-2019 under the Challenge TB (CTB) Project funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development. Also, PATH looks forward to executing TB diagnosis and treatment components to improve the prevention, detection and treatment of tuberculosis (TB) and drug-resistant tuberculosis (DR TB) through technical assistance in harmony with international best practice and national guidelines. Duties may require domestic and international travel and a flexible work schedule to permit for either early morning or late evening teleconference calls or assignments.

To be considered for the positions please apply www.path.org/jobs/Europe

Applications submitted elsewhere will not be considered!

TB Program Officer, CTB Ukraine (Tracking Code 7759)
Evaluation Specialist, CTB Ukraine (Tracking Code 7760)
TB Case Management Officer, CTB Ukraine (Tracking Code 7758)
Communications Associate, CTB Ukraine (Tracking Code 7756)
Program Assistant, CTB Ukraine (Tracking Code 7757)

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Svetlana, Tel. **+380 93 248 64 28**
mail: svet.sila@list.ru



Opportunity to Join our Team

Deloitte is seeking resumes for the position below to work with HIV Reform in Action, a USAID project.

- Administrative Assistant

For qualifications and job descriptions refer to:

www.kyivpost.com/classifieds/jobs/administrative-assistant



Professionals for Reform Support Mechanism (PRSM) provides human resource support — from managers to technical experts — to critical reform initiatives undertaken by national governmental agencies. Current opportunities include:

- **Team Leader for the Project Office for Sectoral Decentralization (POSD)** who will coordinate and support the decentralization reforms activities conducted by the Ministry of Regional Development, Construction, Communal Service and Housing (Minregion);
- **PRSM HR Assistant** — responsible for applicants' documentations filing, preparing tables/charts and other reports.

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

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Lysenko	Excellent	3	85	1200
Khreshchatyk	Excellent	1	45	800
Sofivska	Excellent	2	65	950
APARTMENTS FOR RENT				
Location (St.)	Condition	Rooms	Area	Rent, UAH (per day)
Mykhailivska	Excellent	1	35	11000
Vorovskogo	Excellent	2	60	20800
Tereschenkivska	Excellent	2	50	30000
Saksaganskogo	Excellent	4	160	27000
Lva Tolstogo	Excellent	5	142	65000
Mykhailivska	Excellent	6	252	100000
Darvina (office)	Excellent	6	150	72000
APARTMENTS FOR SALE				
Location (St.)	Condition	Rooms	Area	Price, UAH
Volodymyrska	Excellent	1	44	79760/sq.m
Darvina (office)	Excellent	6	150	72800/sq.m

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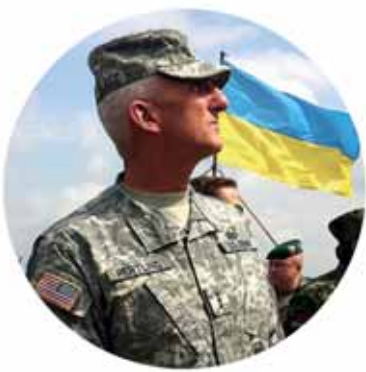
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