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What to do in Kyiv

See Entertainment Guide on pages 12, 13



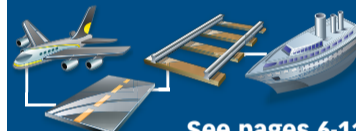
World in Ukraine: Norway

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Thriving Norway Sets Example for Ukraine

Special Business Focus
Infrastructure



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Go to page 6 to read the Kyiv Post interview with Infrastructure Minister Volodymyr Omelyan.



Go to page 10 to read the Kyiv Post interview with Yevhen Kravtsov, the acting CEO of Ukrzaliznytsia, the state's railways monopoly.



See World in Ukraine: Norway coverage on pages 14-18

Tourists visit Trolltunga, a scenic cliff 700 meters above Ringedalsvatnet Lake in Norway, a popular tourist destination. Ukrainians have enjoyed visa-free travel to Norway since June, but only an estimated 10,000 Ukrainians made the trip to the Scandinavian nation of 5.3 million people in 2017. Travel would get a boost if an airline offered non-stop Kyiv-Oslo flights. (AFP)

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Sheptytsky Center in Lviv bringing light to education

BY YULIANA ROMANYSHYN
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LVIV, Ukraine — The Sheptytsky Center stands out.

The ultra-modern, newly built building that houses the educational and cultural center, with its airy glass-walled first floor and blocky exterior with sloping wall panels, stands in stark contrast to the nearby State Fiscal Service office — a hulking Soviet concrete high-rise, and the abandoned theater hall next to it.

But the center stands out not just by its appearance, but by the very ethos behind it: It is breaking new ground in the educational sphere in Ukraine.

"We realized that we're pioneers in building a place not for offices, business or trade, but for education, enlightenment, and cultural activities," says Oleh Yaskiv, the head of the center, adding that this is the first building of its type to be constructed in Ukraine since independence.

The center is a part of the Ukrainian Catholic University campus in Lviv, the city of 723,000 people some 540 kilometers west of Kyiv. Opened in September, the five-story-plus-basement building, along with a dormitory building, auditoriums, and a church, is the latest addition to the private university's campus.

From its second to fourth floor, the center houses the university library. The basement has tutorial rooms and open spaces for students, while the fifth floor has offices for university staff, including the rector's office and offices for the heads of departments. The offices are glass-fronted, with glass doors, to reflect the university's ethos of openness and transparency.

On the first floor, visitors can have a drink or snack in a cafe run by a local social enterprise called Walnut House. There is also an art exhibition, conference rooms where lectures are held, and a book store with university publications.

Who was Sheptytsky?

The center is named after Andrey Sheptytsky, the Metropolitan Archbishop of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church from 1901 to 1944, who, due to the shifts of borders and control in the region brought by war and revolution, lived under the governments of seven regimes during his tenure.

Walking from floor to floor, visitors see on the walls popular expressions of Archbishop Sheptytsky and one of his successors, Major Archbishop Lubomyr Husar and others.

Yaskiv says the center was named after Sheptytsky because he supported the development of art and



A man walks down by the stairs of Sheptytsky Center, a newly built modern library and open space, on Febr. 6 in Lviv, western Ukraine. The center is a part of private Ukrainian Catholic University. (Volodymyr Petrov)



Andrey Sheptytsky (1865-1944), leader of Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church



Canadian-Ukrainian philanthropist James Temerty

science by Ukrainians when this part of Ukraine was under the control of Poland.

"To some extent, UCU is the continuation of Sheptytsky's initiative," he says, adding that the archbishop had wanted to found a Ukrainian university.

\$6 million project

Financed by a philanthropist and university community, the center's construction cost \$6 million. Most of the funds came from James Temerty, a Canadian-Ukrainian businessman. It took two-and-a-half years to build the modern complex, designed by Lviv AVR Development architecture office and Germany's Behnisch Architekten. "It has been a sign to the



Ukrainian community that it is possible to erect such buildings — in such a difficult time in Ukraine — for young people, primarily for students, and for people interested in culture," Yaskiv says.

Since opening, the center has hosted exhibitions, lectures, and public events, including Lviv Fashion Week and the Lviv Security Forum. After it started counting visitors in January, the building's administrators recorded 15,000 visitors to the complex over two weeks.

Modern library

The library and reading room is the only area that is not open to the general public — access is via a library card or a university student or staff ID. However, non-university visitors

can buy a one-day pass for Hr 30. "It's the price of a coffee," Chief Librarian Ihor Ohura says.

Once inside, visitors can search for a book in a digital catalog that lists some 160,000 publications. Using the open-source integrated library system, readers can leave comments on the books online. Library users can also order a book if it is not stocked by the library.

"If the library is able to purchase it, it will definitely buy it," Ohura said.

Before working in the UCU library, Ohura modernized one of Ukraine's oldest libraries — that of Lviv National University, which has around 3 million books.

But to introduce some innovations there, Ohura had to get approval from the university's top management — and sometimes it could take months for a decision to be made.

At UCU it takes only a few days, he says.

"Here there is freedom of action, but people take responsibility for their actions," Ohura said. "People just want to work differently here." Because the university is a private one, there are fewer procedures that have to be followed, he says.

While built on innovation, one corner of the library still has to follow some traditions — the old books section. Oksana Paliy, the curator of the section, said it's much smaller than that of large university libraries around the country, but it has a number of books that were banned in Soviet times but preserved by Ukrainians living abroad.

Some of the books were damaged as people hid them to protect them from destruction, she says. The books were donated by collectors and philanthropists who fled from the Soviet totalitarian regime when it took over Ukraine. The oldest book in the collection was written in the 16th century.

Yet even when lending out old and rare books, the university's ethos of openness coupled with personal responsibility is applied.

"No special permission is needed, as it often is in the state libraries — just come with a library ID card," Paliy says. ■

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Poroshenko and Lozhkin face new accusations over UMH sale

BY OLEG SUKHOV
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President Petro Poroshenko and his close ally and former chief of staff Boris Lozhkin are facing new corruption accusations linked to Lozhkin's \$500 million sale of his UMH media group in 2013 to Serhiy Kurchenko, an ally of ex-President Viktor Yanukovich.

First, Al Jazeera on Feb. 8 published a document showing part of the money paid for UMH came from a loan secured with assets worth \$50 million allegedly stolen by Kurchenko. This implies that Lozhkin received funds raised fraudulently, and raises the questions of why they have not been confiscated.



Serhiy Kurchenko (UNIAN)

According to documents revealed by Al Jazeera, Poroshenko still owned a 3 percent stake in UMH when it was sold to Kurchenko and thus also received \$15 million raised fraudulently. Poroshenko denied having owned the stake at the time of the sale.

Second, 1+1 TV channel's TSN show on Feb. 13 revealed alleged evidence that Lozhkin acquired one of UMH's assets, Our Radio, back from Kurchenko in 2014. The investigation suggests that the acquisition could have been a payback for Ukrainian prosecutors' decision to unfreeze Kurchenko's UMH assets in 2014.

Lozhkin's spokeswoman Maria Popova denied the accusations, saying that "the legality of the UMH deal has been confirmed by international law firms" and that currently Lozhkin does not have any media assets.

Stolen assets

Al Jazeera published a document according to which Kurchenko's VETEK Group took out a \$160 million loan from state-owned UkrEximBank to finance the purchase of UMH.

The loan was secured with \$50 million held in the accounts of three Cypriot firms – Kviton Solution Limited, Sabulong Trading Limited, and Quickspace Limited.

According to a secret Kramatorsk court ruling on the confiscation of \$1.5 billion linked to Kurchenko published by Al Jazeera in January, the three companies were part of a large-scale money laundering and embezzlement scheme.

In December, a Kyiv court froze Kurchenko's UMH assets for the second time. One of the arguments prosecutors used was that the \$160 million loan agreement taken out by Kurchenko showed signs of money laundering.

Poroshenko's role

Poroshenko has always claimed he



President Petro Poroshenko (L) and his then Chief of Staff Boris Lozhkin attend an exhibition at the Presidential Administration on May 17, 2016. They face new accusations of corruption, which they deny. (Volodymyr Petrov)

sold his 3 percent stake in UMH in the months prior to the deal. However, an analysis of Cypriot company records by Al Jazeera indicates that, on the day of the sale – Oct. 28, 2013 – he still held the shares via a company in the British Virgin Islands. Unless he sold the BVI company beforehand, at the point of sale, Poroshenko stood to receive \$15 million, tripling his initial investment, Al Jazeera reported. A spokesman for Poroshenko said he did not own, directly or indirectly, any stake in UMH on Oct. 28, 2013.

Kurchenko confirmed in December that he bought UMH not only from Lozhkin but also from Poroshenko.

If he took part in the deal, it is not clear if Poroshenko paid the appropriate tax on the deal, given that it was executed in offshore tax havens, according to Al Jazeera.

Poroshenko also co-owned with UMH the Korrespondent magazine, the bigmir news site and Our Radio until April 2013, as well as Retro FM and Next Radio until February 2013.

Our Radio scheme

Another accusation is that Lozhkin allegedly acquired Our Radio, one of UMH's assets, from Kurchenko in 2014.

Aziza Kourmpanova is the head of both Avikan Limited, which owns

Our Radio now, and Ensitar Limited, which is owned by Lozhkin.

Our Radio is owned by Ukrainian firm Katapulta, which is in turn owned by Oleksandr Kartashov. TSN reported that Grigory Shverk, who was a vice president of UMH under Lozhkin, had confirmed to them that Kartashov was his relative.

Moreover, Olena Leshko, who became the head of Katapulta in 2016, used to work at Retro FM radio when it was owned by Poroshenko and Lozhkin.

Oleksandr Onyshchenko, a fugitive lawmaker charged with graft, told the Kyiv Post that the alleged acquisition of Our Radio by Lozhkin was payback for prosecutors' decision in 2014 to unfreeze Kurchenko's other UMH assets. According to a contract published by Al Jazeera, Onyshchenko and Russian-Ukrainian oligarch Pavel Fuks bought Quickspace Limited from Kurchenko for \$30 million in 2015. Onyshchenko denies completing the deal.

Money laundering?

Some analysts believe UMH's \$500 million sale price was far more than the real value of UMH, and that is why suspect that money laundering and a kickback were involved. Lozhkin denies these accusations.

According to the Forbes magazine,

UMH's price was 80 percent to 300 percent higher than foreign media groups with similar financials, including Poland's Agora and Western European media groups.

Ex-Infrastructure Minister and former investment banker Andriy Pivovarsky said in 2013 that UMH was estimated to be worth \$120 million to \$150 million in 2012.

Six days after the \$160 million loan was made to Kurchenko and the official change in ownership, Lozhkin received \$130.5 million from the Latvian bank account of BVI company Trejoli Business Ltd, which is linked to Kurchenko, Al Jazeera said.

The money went to an Austrian bank account held at Raiffeisen Bank on behalf of his BVI company, Integrity International Holdings. The transfer led to a suspicious activity report being filed at the bank, which in turn triggered a money laundering investigation by Austria.

However, the investigation saw no progress due to a lack of cooperation from Ukrainian law enforcers.

Meanwhile, Kurchenko said no taxes had been paid on UMH's sale in Ukraine, which prompted accusations of tax evasion. Lozhkin denies them. ■

ON THE MOVE

Advertisement

Sayenko Kharenko announces new counsels

Sayenko Kharenko is pleased to announce the appointment of three new counsels across a range of legal practices: Valentyna Hvozdz (antitrust and competition), Sergiy Kazmirchuk (corporate and M&A) and Oleg Klymchuk (intellectual property).



Valentyna Hvozdz

Valentyna Hvozdz has been with Sayenko Kharenko for almost 11 years. Her practice focuses on a wide range of antitrust and competition matters, including merger control, cartels, abuse of dominance, anti-trust investigations, distribution agreements, and unfair competition before the Antimonopoly Committee of Ukraine. Valentyna has worked on numerous complex and high profile cases for the firm's multinational and domestic clients. She also advises clients

on legal issues at the intersection of antitrust and intellectual property law.

Valentyna earned her LL.M. degrees, summa cum laude, from KROK University and the Intellectual Property Institute of Odesa Academy of Law, and received her BA, summa cum laude, from Wisconsin International University (Ukraine).



Sergiy Kazmirchuk

Sergiy Kazmirchuk has over 18 years of professional experience. He advises clients on issues ranging from M&A projects to various corporate law and regulatory matters, including issues related to highly regulated industries such as banking and insurance. Over the past decade, Sergiy has been involved in all aspects of high-profile transactions related to the sale and acquisition of Ukraine's largest banks and insurance companies. Drawing on his

prior in-house experience, he brings a unique, business-focused perspective to his legal advice.

Before joining Sayenko Kharenko in 2007, Sergiy held a number of leadership positions in the banking and insurance sectors. Sergiy earned his LL. M. from Ivan Franko National University of Lviv.



Oleg Klymchuk

Oleg Klymchuk concentrates primarily on a variety of intellectual property and commercial matters, including copyright, trademarks, patents and unfair competition. He has considerable experience in conducting IP due diligence and IP-driven transactions, enforcement of brands and designs against imitation and unfair exploitation, and anti-counterfeiting issues. Oleg's experience also includes advising IT & TMT suppliers on intellectual

property, commercial/transactional, regulatory, and advertising issues.

In addition to his IP practice, Oleg regularly assists clients on a range of data protection and privacy issues, including cross-border transfers and complex personal data issues related to anti-corruption investigations.

Oleg earned his LL. M. from Kyiv National Linguistic University, Faculty of Economic and Law.



Partner Vladimir Sayenko comments: "Congratulations to these outstanding talented lawyers. Valentyna, Sergiy and Oleg embody the dedication, passion, creativity and business acumen that are the hallmarks of our law firm. These appointments demonstrate our commitment to invest in the best talent we have within the firm."

Editorials

No to impunity

Two aircraft have tainted the image of President Petro Poroshenko in the first weeks of the year.

The first was the luxurious jet that the president rented for his scandalous and no longer secret \$500,000 vacation in January.

The second one carried ex-President Mikheil Saakashvili out of Ukraine on Feb. 12.

The violent arrest of Saakashvili and his prompt deportation to Poland were not unexpected: Even though Saakashvili has never been much of a political threat to Poroshenko, the president evidently held a personal grudge against his former friend, who turned on him after coming to Ukraine at his invitation.

Still, the manner of the expulsion was revolting — and telling. The lightning-fast actions of law enforcers who seized Saakashvili in a Kyiv restaurant, raced him to the airport in a van, and bundled him into a specially chartered plane to fly him to Poland, once again proved that Ukraine's authorities can act quickly — when they want to.

When it comes to the interests of the state, however, they are slower than tranquilized snails.

There are lots of examples: the uninvestigated murders of EuroMaidan Revolution protesters, the unpunished allies of ex-President Viktor Yanukovich, the foot-dragging in creating an independent anti-corruption court, the failure to prosecute corrupt top officials. The list goes on..

And every other week brings a fresh example of the country's leaders betraying the ideals and promises that got them elected.

The latest example came on Feb. 15, when a Kyiv court released without bail Odesa Mayor Hennadiy Trukhanov, who is suspected of grand-scale embezzlement.

Appropriately, vouching for Trukhanov in court was a lawmaker from the president's faction in parliament, Dmytro Holubov, a notorious former hacker. Holubov was arrested in 2010, suspected of cybercrimes, but he was released by the courts in a similar manner and — because this is Ukraine — he went straight into top-level politics.

The brazen impunity goes on and on. And as the example of Holubov shows, it's cross-generational.

As for Saakashvili, his antics often distracted the public from a key fact: the message he delivered was correct. It is the same message given — albeit in a much more restrained form — by civic activists, and Western leaders, ambassadors, and politicians. The message is simple: punish corruption, deoligarchize, and introduce the rule of law.

Ukraine's leaders should finally heed this message.

Otherwise, like Saakashvili, they could some day be taking a one-way trip out of Ukraine on a plane themselves.

Our new motto

The long-time Kyiv Post motto "Independence. Community. Trust." first appeared on the newspaper's front-page masthead on Sept. 25, 2008, although we had been using the slogan for several years before then. It served us well. The three simple words spoke to how we have served the community since we first appeared on the market on Oct. 18, 1995, as a trustworthy and independent source of news.

But while we've grown attached to the motto, and hope our readers have too, it's time for a change. So we are rolling out, as a test, "Ukraine's Global Voice," a motto we informally adopted several years ago.

Why the change? For starters, "Ukraine" did not appear anywhere — in the name of the newspaper or in our motto before. Secondly, since the launch of our website 16 years ago, our readership has taken on a global dimension. Today, 75 percent of our online readership is abroad — led by the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Germany. We don't think another news outlet in Ukraine has such a high percentage.

Still, we are reluctant to part with an old friend. But it was adopted at a time when the Kyiv Post had primarily a local print audience and catered primarily to expatriates. Those days are long gone. We don't rule out bringing the motto back by popular demand. But even if we don't, nothing will change in our approach to news: We will continue to be independent and trustworthy while serving the community.

We welcome other suggestions for our new motto. Feel free to contact us and let us know your ideas.

NEWS ITEM: Ex-Georgian President and Ukrainian opposition politician Mikheil Saakashvili was detained and deported from Ukraine to Poland on Feb. 12, forcefully and without a court warrant. The pretext for the expulsion was Saakashvili's allegedly illegal crossing of the border into Ukraine in September, although he claims he crossed the border legally.

NEWS ITEM: Anti-corruption activists claim that Ukraine's authorities are attempting to clear the name of Yuriy Boyko, the former energy minister and leader of the Opposition Bloc in parliament so that he can aid them in upcoming elections. Under Boyko, the energy ministry in 2011 bought two oil and gas drilling rigs for \$800 million, with \$300 million of that sum going to a shady intermediary in the deal.



NEWS ITEM: Odesa Mayor Hennadiy Trukhanov was arrested on embezzlement charges on Feb. 14 upon his return to Ukraine after a six-week absence and released without bail. Many saw his decision to return to Ukraine just a day after he was officially pronounced a suspect as a sign that the mayor struck a secret deal to escape justice.

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Petro Tryhykal
Official who led the deportation of politician Mikheil Saakashvili

Ukraine's Friend & Foe Of The Week



Dan Coats
U.S. director of national security knows what Kremlin plans for Ukraine



Andreas Maurer
Obscure German politician is a star of Russian propaganda

VOX populi: Were authorities right to deport Saakashvili?

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Saakashvili saga delivers blow to Ukraine's image

BY OLEG SUKHOV
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The deportation of ex-Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, one of the fiercest critics of Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, from Ukraine to Poland without a court warrant on Feb. 12 further eroded the rule of law in Ukraine and dented its international image, according to Poroshenko's opponents.

Video footage of Saakashvili's detention in a Kyiv café showed him being brutally pushed by armed border guards and grabbed by his hair. Saakashvili said that later the men had hit him in the face, threatened to shoot him and had forced him onto the floor of a bus. His detention and expulsion violated numerous laws, according to Saakashvili's lawyers and independent ones. The authorities deny accusations of wrongdoing, claiming that Saakashvili's deportation was legal. The move was the culmination of what Poroshenko's critics see as political repression, with opponents and critics being routinely arrested, deported or harassed.

Protest to come

However, with a restless firebrand and outspoken critic of Ukraine's rampant corruption and sabotage of reforms removed from the political scene, these underlying problems themselves have not melted away.

"Saakashvili's physical deportation doesn't change anything because the main reason for existing problems remains in Ukraine," Viktor Trepak, an ex-deputy chief of the Security Service of Ukraine, said on Feb. 12.

A crucial question is whether Saakashvili's deportation or mounting public frustration with corruption and a lack of the rule of law will ignite bigger protests and unite the opposition to Poroshenko ahead of



Supporters of ex-Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili protest his deportation in front of the Presidential Administration on Feb. 12. They see the move as the culmination of political repression. (Volodymyr Petrov)

the 2019 presidential and parliamentary elections.

Political persecution?

The authorities' decision to get rid of one of Poroshenko's most outspoken opponents prompted his critics to compare Poroshenko to Yanukovich and Russian dictator Vladimir Putin, who have jailed and exiled their political enemies.

"In the times of Yanukovich this would have been called a political vendetta and top-level selective justice," reformist lawmaker Sergii Leshchenko said on Feb. 12.

In January a court placed Saakashvili under nighttime house arrest in a criminal case, which expired on Feb. 6. Prosecutor

General Yuriy Lutsenko has accused Saakashvili of accepting funding from Serhiy Kurchenko, a Yanukovich ally, to finance anti-government demonstrations and plot a coup d'etat.

Saakashvili argues that his expulsion from Ukraine shows that the case was fabricated and political, and the authorities could not lawfully convict him. The prosecutors' alleged evidence against Saakashvili was dismissed by independent lawyers as weak, and he was released from custody by Pechersk Court Judge Larysa Tsokol on Dec. 11. Tsokol ruled that Saakashvili's detention without a court warrant and any other legal grounds on Dec. 5 was unlawful.

One of Saakashvili's associates, Severion Dangadze, is under arrest in

the same case. Moreover, five Saakashvili supporters have been charged in criminal cases linked to what the authorities believe to be his illegal crossing of the border in September.

Deportation

The State Migration Service said on Feb. 12 it had "re-admitted" Saakashvili to Poland because a court had found him guilty of illegally crossing the border and because another court had rejected his political asylum application in January.

Serhiy Hunko, a spokesman for the State Migration Service, confirmed to the Kyiv Post that there was no court ruling on Saakashvili's forced deportation from Ukraine. He claimed that no court ruling was

necessary because it was a re-admission to Poland, and not a deportation per se. Saakashvili's lawyer Pavlo Bogomazov and independent lawyers Roman Kuybida and Vitaly Tytych dismissed these explanations as absurd, saying that Saakashvili's re-admission was only possible if combined with deportation, and a court ruling is necessary for that.

Even if Saakashvili had been lawfully arrested with a deportation ruling, such a ruling could have been appealed within 30 days, and deportation could only happen after the appeals court made its ruling.

The Kyiv Administrative Court of Appeal on Feb. 5 rejected Saakashvili's political asylum appeal. But his lawyers filed an appeal with the Supreme Court, and, under Ukrainian law, his deportation was illegal during this appeal stage.

Moreover, Saakashvili had a legal status in Ukraine — that of a permanent stateless resident — and therefore could not be deported regardless of asylum status, his lawyers argued. Under Ukrainian law, a person who was a permanent resident of Ukraine before being stripped of citizenship is considered a permanent stateless resident, which happened in Saakashvili's case.

Saakashvili and his supporters also argued that he could not be expelled from the country because the cancellation of his citizenship by Poroshenko in July contradicted Ukrainian and international law, the Constitution and due process, which is denied by Ukrainian authorities. His lawyers said that his extradition or deportation was impossible before a court decided on the legality of the cancellation of his citizenship.

Tytych said that a criminal case could be opened against the Border Guards for obstructing justice by preventing Saakashvili from being tried in the coup d'etat case. ■

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Omelyan's bid to reshape planes, trains, rails, roads

BY ILYA TIMTCHENKO
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Ukraine's path to prosperity runs right through Volodymyr Omelyan's ministry.

The infrastructure minister oversees more than 1 million employees, or 5 percent of the nation's active workforce. His portfolio includes railways, roads, ports, air traffic and postal service.

Omelyan brings libertarian views and transparency to the job he took over on April 14, 2016 from Andriy Pivovarsky, whom he served as deputy minister. His task is formidable — to revamp a Soviet-style ministry with a sordid history of corruption.

His team of 250 advisers includes a large number paid by the European Commission and other donors. He tries to give them a free hand to do their jobs.

"I always delegate power to people we select and appoint," Omelyan told the Kyiv Post in a Feb. 12 interview. "It's very counterproductive if I hire a CEO... and then tell them what to do on a daily basis."

Omelyan also wants to let the private sector take control of more of Ukraine's infrastructure to encourage competition and better performance.

The 39-year-old Omelyan is a lightning rod for criticism from vested interests that have benefited from the ministry's corrupt schemes. His approach is a far cry from the secretive ministers who had been the norm for much of independent Ukraine's history. He has started weekly briefings with the media.

This approach helps keep everyone accountable, he says. "My publicity is also a good controlling measure for myself. If I say it publicly I should do it."

Critics

Omelyan believes he is the right person for the job, even though most of his experience has been in foreign affairs, and not infrastructure or the private sector.

Some have described Omelyan as a protégé of Ukraine's Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman. However, the minister says that the only paycheck he receives is from the Infrastructure Ministry, and denies having any personal business contacts with oligarchs or politicians.

"I'm happy that I have never compromised my integrity or done anything bad to my country," Omelyan says.

His predecessor, Pivovarsky, resigned in December 2015, citing Ukraine's refusal to prosecute high officials for corruption. Omelyan sees himself as picking up where Pivovarsky left off, and says that he still speaks with his former boss occasionally.

Asked whether he was willing to give the names of corrupt players in the field, Omelyan says that he tried it before and it didn't help. He was silenced by legal action. "I lost in all the courts. I can't name them again," he says.

In November 2017, Omelyan wrote on his Facebook page that former Ukrzaliznytsia director Mikhail Kostyuk, lawmaker Yaroslav Dubnevych and his brother Bohdan,



Ukraine's Infrastructure Minister Volodymyr Omelyan speaks with the Kyiv Post on Feb. 12 in the ministry's press conference room on Peremohy Ave, 14 in Kyiv. His ministry oversees more than 1 million employees. (Volodymyr Petrov)

as well as Ukrzaliznytsia manager Serhiy Myhalchuk, were all suspected of theft, and that prosecutors and police were investigating.

Ports

But speaking out led to action in at least one case. Andriy Amelin, the former CEO of Ukrainian Sea Ports Authority, a state enterprise that oversees tenders and collects revenue, was arrested and is now being investigated by the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine for profiteering from shady tenders.

"I hope that he is only the first one who is arrested in the infrastructure sector," the minister says.

Amelin's replacement with Raivis Veckagans was a big victory for Omelyan in the maritime sector. Improvements are already happening. Recent deals with DP World and Hutchison Ports are just the beginning, with many more to come, he says.

Other projects, such as dredging the Yuzniy and Chornomorsk sea ports, show that investors and businesses are interested in revitalizing shipping.

But the minister says parliament still has to approve the privatization of ports and other state assets for major changes to take place. "I hope that this will be a top priority for the president and prime minister," Omelyan says.

Another victory is the establishment of the Maritime Administration, a single state body to oversee Ukraine's international maritime obligations and sea security issues. "It's a great success," the minister says, replacing chaotic regulation among numerous agencies.

The government has lowered sea port duties and taxes by 20 percent. But Ukraine's ports still remain among the most expensive.

Additionally, because of ecology inspectors' demands for bribes, inspections are now recorded on video.

"Right now, it's an issue for the Ecology Ministry, but we are cooperating with them fruitfully just not to let crooks make illegal actions," he says. "It's ridiculous when foreign vessels, as well as Ukrainian vessels, enter a Ukrainian sea port and are met by a bunch of unknown guys demanding money."

Roads

Omelyan is most proud of reforms in the road sector.

The state has allocated \$1.8 billion to upgrading road infrastructure this year, including for road safety and digitalization measures.

"Two years ago, it would have been a dream to have at least \$1 billion for road repairs," he says. This year, the minister expects to

upgrade 4,000 kilometers of roads in a campaign much heralded by Prime Minister Groysman.

With new road infrastructure, Ukraine will be able to boost its annual gross domestic product by another 3–4 percent, the minister says.

The ministry also established a State Roads Fund that went into force on Jan. 1. This will make it easier to attract investors and to build concession roads.

Most of the success comes from the new administration at Ukravtodor, Ukraine's state roads agency, which is now run by Slawomir Novak, Poland's former infrastructure minister.

Ukravtodor is also being decentralized: now it is responsible only for 47,000 kilometers of major highways. The other 70 percent of the road network is now to be managed at the regional and municipal levels.

The ministry has brought in two independent organizations to oversee road construction. One is the Construction Sector Transparency Initiative, established with the help of the British government and United Nations.

"They check everything connected with road reconstruction, starting from the tender procedures and

How much does government plan to spend on infrastructure in 2018?

\$3.2 billion



Construction and repair of roads set the most money from government in 2018. The plan is to repair at least 4,000 kilometers of highways.

Source: Ministry of Infrastructure

more **Omelyan** on page 8



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Omelyan says he needs public's help to build modern infrastructure, stamp out corruption

Omelyan from page 6

ending with the completion of the roads," Omelyan says.

The second is the International Federation of Consulting Engineers, or FIDIC, an internationally recognized association of independent engineers. Each company that wins a tender should hire a FIDIC engineer

that oversees the construction and takes responsibility for road quality. In addition, each road work is now supposed to be guaranteed by a warranty of at least five years.

Before, the minister said, at least 50 percent – billions of dollars – of Ukraine's road budget was simply stolen through various schemes such as signing a contract for a three-lay-

ered road, when actually only a one-layer one was built.

"This is also an explanation of why Ukraine's roads are of such poor quality," he says. "Because on paper you invest a lot, but in reality there's a huge difference."

Buses

Another form of corruption in



Ukraine's Infrastructure Minister Volodymyr Omelyan told the Kyiv Post that parliament still has to approve the privatization of ports and other state assets for major changes to take place. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

Ukraine involves bus routes. Today the market is still underdeveloped, provides poor service and is dominated by Bohdan Motors Corporation, shares of which used to belong to Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko.

"It was a corrupt scheme. The only people who had close connections to the local authorities or to government bodies were allowed to open new bus routes or new bus destinations," Omelyan says.

But that is now changing. Now companies can compete to operate new bus routes, the minister says.

Airlines

Another monopoly is in the skies. Ukraine International Airlines, owned by billionaire oligarch Igor Kolomoisky, controls more than 50 percent of the market, the minister says.

"There was huge resistance in 2017 from (Kolomoisky's) company, and that's why the first try to get RyanAir to enter the country was not successful."

Omelyan's plan was to have the Irish low-cost carrier in Ukraine by September 2017. But plans fell through when the airline and the airports could not agree on terms. But the minister is still not giving up, and he is confident that this year will be the year of low-cost airlines for Ukraine.

He expects RyanAir to enter during the fall, together with Spanish low-cost Vueling and another European market player which Omelyan didn't want to name.

It's a start in getting Ukraine International Airlines used to the idea of competition.

"All of them, even Ukraine International Airlines, recognize that yes, low-cost carriers will enter the market, and we should be ready for it."

Kolomoisky's willingness to compromise may have been motivated by a United Kingdom court's freeze on \$2.5 billion of his assets. "Yes, that definitely played a part," Omelyan says.

Kolomoisky's control is weakening in other areas.

Denys Antoniuk, viewed as working on Kolomoisky's orders, was dismissed from the State Aviation Service, which regulates airline routes. "Everything positive that is happening right now is thanks to the transparent position of the State Aviation Service," Omelyan says.

Boryspil International Airport CEO Pavlo Ryabikin is also more independent from Ukraine International Airlines than his predecessors, the minister says. The results: Record air traffic and record revenue in 2017.

Omelyan is more optimistic about Lviv Danylo Halytskyi International

Airport after Tetyana Romanovska took over its management.

"In 2015 we were about to close Lviv airport," he says. But 2017 was a record year, with more than 1 million passengers.

Other airports on the minister's radar are Dnipro and Odesa international airports.

Railways

One sore point for the minister is Ukraine's state-owned railways monopoly Ukrzaliznytsia, historically a cash cow for vested interests. And although Ukrzaliznytsia has been making progress, including reaching profitability last year, Omelyan says that it can do much more.

"This company could be... the number one company in Ukraine," he said, describing himself as "unhappy with the situation."

Omelyan had a public dispute last year with the monopoly's former CEO, Wojciech Balczun, who was criticized by Omelyan for inaction until his August 2017 resignation. During the dispute, the Cabinet of Ministers took control of the monopoly.

Despite the problems, Omelyan hopes for new projects, including a high-speed Odesa-Kyiv-Lviv route that would cost an estimated \$1 billion. It's not clear where the money for that project will come from.

Ukraine also struck a deal with U.S. company General Electric on Feb. 14 to produce locomotives in Ukraine to better meet cargo demands and ease last year's "huge bottleneck" for exporters.

This year Ukrzaliznytsia plans to invest about \$1 billion in its rail fleet. This includes purchasing 60 new wagons, 30 General Electric locomotives, the production of 3,600 freight wagons, and the modernization of 226 passenger wagons and 10,000 freight wagons.

Postal service

Ukraine's state-owned postal service UkrPoshta is also rebounding. The state-owned enterprise, another source of corruption in Ukraine, is led by new CEO Ihor Smeliansky.

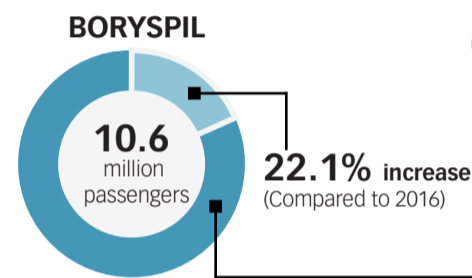
Companies often bribed the postal service to transport goods for free. Today that has stopped, says the minister.

"There is no shadow deal possible with Smeliansky," Omelyan says. "I don't have any problems with his integrity."

UkrPoshta has been forced to change with the rise of private players such as Nova Poshta and is now cooperating with U.S. company Amazon and China's Alibaba.

"Soon you will hear of another huge project by UkrPoshta and another state company," Omelyan promises. ■

Air travelers in 2017

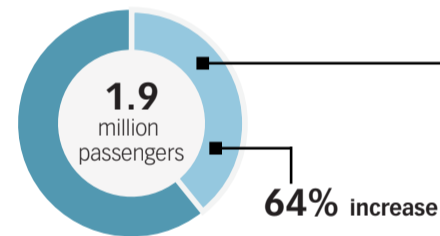


What is happening in the industry?

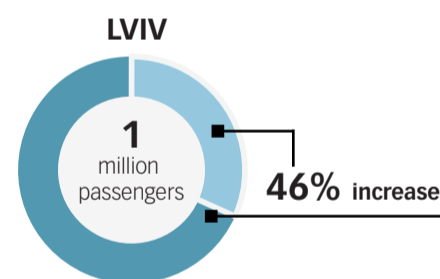
The country's main airport welcomed 10.6 million passengers in 2017. By comparison, Europe's largest -- London Heathrow -- had 75 million passengers in 2016. The number of passengers set a record for Boryspil, which also posted record revenue of \$148 million in 2017.

75% of passengers traveled via Ukraine International Airlines, owned by billionaire oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky.

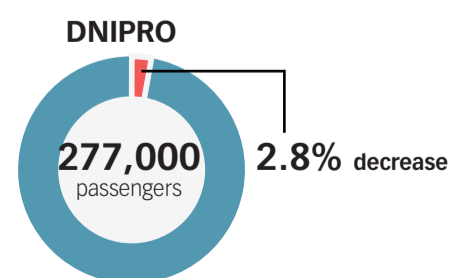
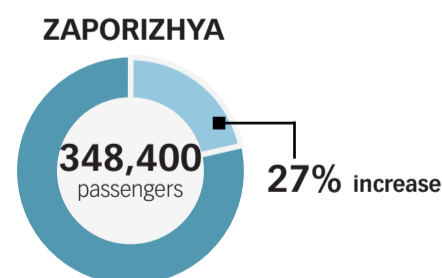
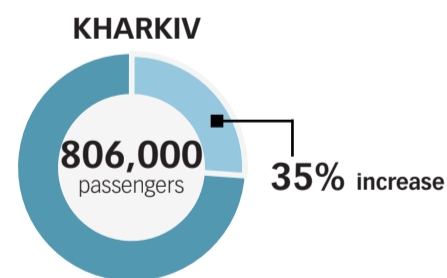
KYIV INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (ZHULIANY)



The second biggest airport, Zhuliany, more than doubled its passenger traffic after Polish LOT and Hungarian Wizz Air introduced more connections via this hub. The most popular international destinations from Zhuliany were Minsk, Dubai, Budapest, Ankara, Antalya, Sharm el-Sheikh, Warsaw and Rome.



Lviv airport hit another milestone in 2017 with 1 million passengers for the first time since 1991.



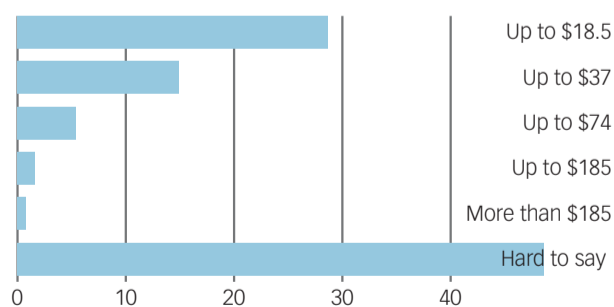
\$140 million for air industry in 2018

The government will spend this amount on development of the air industry.

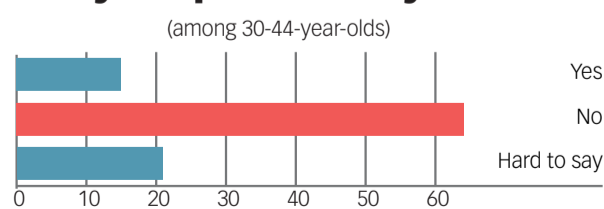


Ticket price

How much are Ukrainians willing to pay for a one-way ticket to a European Union country? This was the theme of a survey conducted by non-governmental organization Europe Without Barriers in the fall of 2017, several months after the visa-free regime was introduced in June.



Do you plan to fly to EU? (among 30-44-year-olds)



Because of price, most Ukrainians don't have plans to fly to the Schengen Area despite the advent of visa-free travel.



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Ukrzaliznytsia chief aims for incremental changes

BY JOSH KOVENSKY
KOVENSKY@KYIVPOST.COM

Ukraine's railways monopoly Ukrzaliznytsia keeps the trains running on time, but has been bled dry through endless corruption schemes.

With more than 270,000 employees and 21,000 kilometers of track, acting CEO Yevgen Kravtsov describes the company "as spread like bread on butter over Ukraine."

Ukraine's national rail operator is one of the cheapest passenger train companies in the world. It's all part of a mammoth organization, with gross revenue equal to 4 percent of the nation's \$100 billion gross domestic product. It carried passengers more than 1 billion kilometers in 2017.

Kravtsov, a 31-year old attorney who took over for Polish Wojciech Balczun in August, joined Ukrzaliznytsia's supervisory board in 2015, answering to the Cabinet of Ministers, not the Infrastructure Ministry.

In an interview with the Kyiv Post, he said his focus is on changing the company's internal procedures rather than holding anyone accountable for wrongdoing.

One such change will be how and what Ukrzaliznytsia purchases.

On Feb. 14, the government approved \$1 billion in capital expenditures aimed at modernizing the company's fleet while adding new international routes to the Baltic states and Hungary.

But, as Kravtsov said, "I see my role as the CEO and head of the company in order to change the system within the organization, not to let bad things which happened before happen again."

Polish rocker's legacy

Kravtsov took over from Balczun, a Polish rock star with a bumpy one-year tenure before quitting the \$18,000 a month job.

Balczun clashed frequently with Infrastructure Minister Volodymyr Omelyan. Kravtsov, another former enemy of Omelyan, has since mended fences with the minister.

Kravtsov's mission is a challenge: how to modernize and make the company profitable, while purging Ukrzaliznytsia of corruption schemes that have allowed powerful oligarchs to enrich themselves with the help of cheap rates on cargo transportation as state officials routinely took



Acting Ukrzaliznytsia CEO Yevgen Kravtsov speaks in the railway monopoly's Kyiv headquarters on Feb. 14. Kravtsov sees little need to hold officials beneath him accountable, and says he would prefer to focus on "systemic" changes. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

kickbacks on overvalued equipment purchases.

Balczun's tenure saw the company make a \$4.5 million profit in the first half of 2017, compared to more than \$140 million in losses during the same period in 2016. Cargo transport increased by 6.1 percent overall. But the issue of low tariffs to politically influential companies remained.

Another issue is that of the company's workforce — successive managers have failed to reduce the company's 270,000 people, while Kravtsov sounded neither optimistic nor motivated about the idea of firing the company's employees.

"We should stop thinking about making Ukrzaliznytsia a place for social programs. It's a place for business," he said.

Destroying black market

Another Kravtsov aim is to destroy the black market for railway wagons. Under that scheme, the government forced the railway company to rent out wagons for \$2.90 per day, about 10 percent of the market rate.

"It was either given to our clients who were using these wagons, or to intermediary companies," Kravtsov said, estimating that \$223 million was lost to the scheme annually. "This money was not invested into Ukrzaliznytsia."

But under government deregulation, Ukrzaliznytsia will begin to charge market rates for the wagons starting Feb. 19, destroying the black market, if all goes according to plan.

Another front of Kravtsov's offensive has been streamlining procurement.

Though Ukrzaliznytsia conducts purchases through Prozorro, Ukraine's online public procurement platform, the system remains vulnerable to rigging through tender contracts written so specifically that they can only be fulfilled by a pre-set supplier. Kravtsov wants to establish

auditing and compliance committees to ensure that procurement procedures remain transparent.

"My goal here in procurement is to change the systems, protocols, and procedures," he said. "If you have a system with reporting and transparency, oriented on there being no manipulation, the system will work properly."

Kravtsov has also attempted to make Ukrzaliznytsia, the country's largest fuel purchaser, buy diesel on contracts that float with international rates, as opposed to fixed-price contracts which would allow suppliers to overcharge the company.

Suppliers that operated under the old system included WOG, Oko, SOCAR and Trade Commodity, an offshore firm at the center of multiple corruption scandals.

"We were procuring (above) market rates," Kravtsov said, adding that the new practice — implemented on 60 percent of the company's diesel purchases — could save up to \$7.4 million.

Other positive indicators include a recent contract with General Electric, which will see the U.S. conglomerate deliver 30 locomotives to the Ukrainian monopoly to alleviate a critical shortage.

Genie in a bottle

Arguably the biggest area of waste at Ukrzaliznytsia is in tariff pricing.

Roughly 80 percent of the company's revenue comes from cargo transport, while coal producers like billionaire oligarch Rinat Akhmetov's System Capital Management have been able to receive discounted tariffs on transport.

Kravtsov called the practice "destructive for the economy and for us," but added that "it should be as transparent and open as possible."

"If there is a position of the state that certain industries should be in a better condition than others, it should be openly stated, ground-

ed and taken on the governmental level," he said. "We are not the only state where there could be a system of stimulation of certain industries."

Kravtsov said that tariffs on cargo should be the same, regardless of what is being transported. But he called himself "realistic about what can be done," saying that an "open discussion of Ukrzaliznytsia's tariff policy" would cause troubles.

Tariffs on passenger tickets are scheduled to increase this year. Kravtsov said that prices will go up 10 percent, and then 12 percent, but remain heavily subsidized.

An \$4.18 platskart ticket from Kyiv to Kostyantynivka will increase to \$4.50, for example, but still cheaper than a \$8.20 bus on the same route.

"We are one of the cheapest passenger railways in the world in terms of ticket price," he said.

Not a prosecutor

Before Balczun departed, he promised to hire a foreign firm to come in and conduct a forensic audit at the railway monopoly to root out corruption schemes.

Kravtsov appeared ambivalent when asked if he would fulfill Balczun's promise, saying that it would be too expensive, even though it could lead to the return of stolen money.

"Ukrzaliznytsia at this moment will not receive a direct benefit," he said.

When asked if he thought conducting an audit would help hold wrongdoers accountable, Kravtsov replied "I'm not sure that it's our job."

"From a populist point of view, making a motto to do a forensic audit and clean up the company sounds better, but it will not give a result," he said. "What will give a much more positive result is if we change the system. I do not know any example in Ukraine at least or globally where the CEO of a company acted effectively as a prosecutor." ■



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Ukraine's roads can pave way to nation's prosperity

BY BERMET TALANT
BERMET@KYIVPOST.COM

If a nation's economy is like its roads, Ukraine remains potholed and underperforming for its 42 million people, with 90 percent of the 169,500-kilometer network in critical condition.

But help is on the way.

Ukravtodor, Ukraine's state road authority, is entering its busy construction and repair season in mid-March with renewed vigor and more money. The aim is not only to fix the roads, but make them a worthy part of an integrated European trade and logistics network.

Besides the usual corruption and mismanagement, Ukraine's infrastructure has suffered greatly from Russia's war in the eastern Donbas. In November 2014, a United Nations report found that 53 bridges, 45 road sections and parts of 190 railways were damaged in the early part of the war in Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts.

The war and Russia's seizure of Crimea also broke trade and transit links with the former Soviet Union. While Ukraine is scrambling to move West, with a free trade agreement with the European Union that took effect last year, crumbling highways

are an obstacle to economic growth.

For 2018, the Ukrainian government has allotted \$1.9 billion, or less than 2 percent of the country's gross domestic product, to fix roads. Most of the money, \$1.2 billion, will go to the newly established State Road Fund. The fund is meant to guarantee stable, long-term financing.

Additionally, responsibility for the road network has been decentralized.

The majority of roads — 123,105 kilometers — were transferred to local authorities, along with funds and autonomy to decide which roads to repair. The main body, Ukravtodor, is left with 46,985 kilometers of roads of national and international importance. It also gets 60 percent of the State Road Fund.

Questions remain, however, about Ukravtodor's capacity.

In December 2016, Ukravtodor was not able to take advantage of a \$220 million loan offer from the World Bank. Ukravtodor director Slawomir Novak said that his agency needed time to evaluate its capacity to spend the money honestly and effectively.

But Nowak said that he welcomes a switch to European standards for road design and construction standards. The changes, however, are in the initial stages.



A fleet of steamrollers flatten a surface of a repaired road in Kyiv on Dec. 10. For 2018, the Ukrainian government has allocated \$1.8 billion to renovate the country's 169,500-kilometer road network. (Volodymyr Petrov)

"Last year we began to carry out a program for renovation of Ukrainian roads and improving road safety through traffic circles, traffic islands, road signs, illuminated pedestrian crossings," Novak told the Cabinet of Ministers on Feb. 12.

At the same government meeting, Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman said: "We need to change road construction norms — urgently. We need new projects and solutions for effective use of money."

Another possible change is the Ministry of Infrastructure's exploration of using more cement concrete

pavement and less asphalt.

"It's a good option because there are a lot of local producers. On the other hand, cement concrete roads require special equipment and it's costly," Infrastructure Minister Volodymyr Omelyan said.

New roads

Ukravtodor plans to repair a few regional highways.

One of them is M-15 that connects Odesa ports with Reni, near the Moldovan border. Another ambitious project is Go Highway that will run

from Odesa to the Polish city of Gdansk via the M-12 highway in Khmelnytskyi Oblast.

There are plans for construction of toll roads. Considering that Ukraine has the lowest population density and car ownership rate in Europe, there are only three passages that may be potential options: Lviv — Krakovets, Kyiv — Bila Tserkva and the so-called "Double Kalynivka" between two villages of the same name in Kyiv Oblast.

But parliament needs to pass enabling legislation first. ■



Remembering brutal Soviet-Afghan war

Ukraine and other countries of the former Soviet Union on Feb. 15 marked the 29th anniversary of the end of the Soviet-Afghan war.

Top: Red Army soldiers cross the Amu Darya river at the Soviet-Afghan border in Termez on Feb. 15, 1989, during Soviet Army withdrawal from Afghanistan. The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979 to shore up the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul and maintained more than 100,000 troops in the country until completing their phased withdrawal in 1989. Right: Veterans lay flowers at the monument for the dead in Soviet war in Afghanistan (1979-1989) during a memorial ceremony in Kyiv on Feb. 15. (AFP)



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(Cortesy of NaviBand)

NaviBand (pop, indie)

Belarusian culture has to be promoted across the world - this is the motto of Belarusian duo Naviband. The band participated in Eurovision Song Contest in Kyiv in 2017, and now they are coming back to Kyiv with their new show. **NaviBand (pop, indie). Atlas (37-41 Sychovykh Striltsiv St.) Feb. 22. 7 p.m. Hr 200 - 450**

Friday, Feb. 16

Classical music

Invitation to Dance. Playing waltz. National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 80-400

Live music

Music from the U.S. Musicals. Tavers Gallery. 7 p.m. Hr 200

Street jazz — Woody Allen. Architect's House. 7 p.m. Hr 225-450

Les Meilleures Chansons de Notre Dame de Paris. Palace Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 350-1,550

Jazz Under the Stars. Kyiv Planetarium. 7:30 p.m. Hr 200-400

Jazz for Adults with Alexey Kogan. Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 180-850

Clubs

East Kultur: w/ Kaan Duzarat (DJ set). Mezzanine. 12 a.m. Hr 199-250

Noizar (DJ set). Regenschirm. 10 p.m. Hr 100-150

El-B (DJ set). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 220-300

Take My Bass (Krissi B DJ set). Atlas. 11 p.m. Hr 120

Miscellaneous

Anton Popernyak. Ukrainian Baroque (modern paintings created in Baroque style).

Tryptykh. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Discernment (the analysis of identity in the intercultural society by U.S. media artist Bayete Ross Smith). America House Kyiv. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

Perfection (art-project about the concept of "perfection" in modern society by young Ukrainian artist Artem Kaffelman). RAW. 7 a.m. - 3 a.m. Free

The Wrong Door (erotic photography by Ruslan Lobanov). Museum of Kyiv History. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

50 Shades of Victor Zaretskyi (paintings by Ukrainian artist Victor Zaretskyi, who is known as "the Ukrainian Klimt"). Museum of Kyiv History. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Listen to Yourself (late paintings of Tetyana Yablonska). Museum of the Book and Printing of Ukraine. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Hr 10-30

The Bird Over Birkenau (paintings by Ukrainian artist Matvei Vaisberg devoted to his trip to the Holocaust memorial at Auschwitz-Birkenau). White World. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Utopia. Transformation of Ukraine's East (art exhibition devoted to changes in Ukrainian cities in the war-torn east). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Movies

Roman J. Israel, Esq. (crime, drama). Kyiv

Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 100

The Snowman (crime, drama, mystery). Kyiv Cinema. 9:20 p.m. Hr 100

Fruitvale Station (biography, drama, romance). America House. 6:30 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Euphoria (adventure, drama). Zhovten. 4:15 p.m. Hr 60-70

Selbstkritik eines buergerlichen Hundes (comedy, in German). Zhovten. 2:30 p.m., 9:25 p.m. Hr 60-80

Shows

Of The Wand and The Moon (dark ambient). Mezzanine. 7 p.m. Hr 300-350

IC3peak (industrial pop). Closer. 7 p.m. Hr 150

TNMK and Slobzhansky Orchestra (hip-hop, classical music). Ivan Franko National Academic Drama Theater. 7 p.m. Hr 490-1,490

Los Vivancos (folk, dances). Zhovtnevy Palace. 7 p.m. Hr 150-2,250

Denis Horvat (noir). SkyBar. 11 p.m. Hr 400

Theater

Floria Tosca (opera by Giacomo Puccini). National Opera of Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 20-400

Saturday, Feb. 17

Classical music

Classics for Children. Zhovtnevy Palace. 11 a.m. Hr 200-320

Classic Music Evening. Playing Mozart, Bach, Tchaikovsky. Architect's House. 7 p.m. Hr 225-400

Live music

Big Bands Parade. National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-250

Music from Love Movies. Zhovtnevy Palace. 8 p.m. Hr 150-600

Clubs

Rhythm Büro (Oscar Mulero, Varg DJ set). Plivka. 11:50 p.m. Hr 500

Hippie Love (Kalabrese and Rumpeporchester, Pavel Plastikk DJ sets). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 220-300

Maksimalno (Lunar One, Avc, Kichi Kazuko). Mezzanine. 11:59 p.m. Hr 100

20ft Radio (DJ set). Regenschirm. 10 p.m. Price is to be announced

Miscellaneous

Anton Popernyak. Ukrainian Baroque (modern paintings created in Baroque style). Tryptykh. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Discernment (the analysis of identity in the intercultural society by U.S. media artist Bayete Ross Smith). America House Kyiv. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Perfection (art-project about the concept

of "perfection" in modern society by young Ukrainian artist Artem Kaffelman). RAW. 3 p.m. - 3 a.m. Free

The Wrong Door (erotic photography by Ruslan Lobanov). Museum of Kyiv History. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

50 Shades of Victor Zaretskyi (paintings by Ukrainian artist Victor Zaretskyi, who is known as "the Ukrainian Klimt"). Museum of Kyiv History. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Listen to Yourself (late paintings of Tetyana Yablonska). Museum of the Book and Printing of Ukraine. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Hr 10-30

Utopia. Transformation of Ukraine's East (art exhibition devoted to changes in Ukrainian cities in the war-torn east). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

The Bird Over Birkenau (paintings by Ukrainian artist Matvei Vaisberg devoted to his trip to the Holocaust memorial at Auschwitz-Birkenau). White World. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Vsi Svoi. Your Kids (market of clothes and goods for children). Vsi Svoi. 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. Free

Movies

The Grand Budapest Hotel (adventure, comedy, drama). Kinopanorama. 3 p.m. Hr 50

Call Me by Your Name (drama, romance). Kyiv Cinema. 9:20 p.m. Hr 100

Roman J. Israel, Esq. (crime, drama). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 100

Peace Officer (documentary). America House. 2 p.m. Free

Euphoria (adventure, drama). Zhovten. 4:15 p.m. Hr 80-90

Selbstkritik eines buergerlichen Hundes (comedy, in German). Zhovten. 2:30 p.m., 9:25 p.m. Hr 70-80

Shows

Denis Horvat (dance/electronic). SkyBar. 11 p.m. Hr 400

Who Made Who (Indie-rock/dance-punk, DJ-set). CHI by Decadence House. 11:59 p.m. Hr 400

Electric Meadow: Winter Edition vol.2 (psychedelic rock). Mezzanine. 3 p.m. Hr 150-200

Mad Heads: Show Must Go On (rock). Docker Pub. 10 p.m. Hr 150-1,400

Tarabarova (pop). Caribbean Club. 7 p.m. Hr 200-690

Theater

La Bayadere (ballet by French choreographer Marius Petipa to the music of Ludwig Minkus). National Opera of Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 50 - 2,550

Young Marx (British Theater Live). Multiplex (Lavina Mall). 3 p.m. Hr 175

Sunday, Feb. 18

Classical music

Dialogue Between Countries. Playing Rodin, Bibik. National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-300

Live music

All Star Jazz — Sinatra. Architect's House. 7 p.m. Hr 225-450

Miscellaneous

Anton Popernyak. Ukrainian Baroque (modern paintings created in Baroque style). Tryptykh. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Perfection (art-project about the concept of "perfection" in modern society by young Ukrainian artist Artem Kaffelman). RAW. 3 p.m. - 1 a.m. Free

The Wrong Door (erotic photography by Ruslan Lobanov). Museum of Kyiv History. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

50 Shades of Victor Zaretskyi (paintings by Ukrainian artist Victor Zaretskyi, who is known as "the Ukrainian Klimt"). Museum of Kyiv History. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Listen to Yourself (late paintings of Tetyana Yablonska). Museum of the Book and Printing of Ukraine. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Hr 10-30

Utopia. Transformation of Ukraine's East (art exhibition devoted to changes in Ukrainian cities in the war-torn east). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

The Bird Over Birkenau (paintings by Ukrainian artist Matvei Vaisberg devoted to his trip to the Holocaust memorial at Auschwitz-Birkenau). White World. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Vsi Svoi. Your Kids (market of clothes and goods for children). Vsi Svoi. 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. Free

Movies

The Grand Budapest Hotel (adventure, comedy, drama). Kinopanorama. 3 p.m. Hr 50

I, Claude Monet (exhibition on screen). Kyiv Cinema. 3 p.m. Hr 150

Brigsby Bear (comedy, drama). Kyiv Cinema. 9:20 p.m. Hr 100

The Snowman (crime, drama, mystery). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 100

Euphoria (adventure, drama). Zhovten. 4:15 p.m. Hr 80-90

Selbstkritik eines buergerlichen Hundes (comedy, in German). Zhovten. 2:30 p.m., 9:25 p.m. Hr 70-80

Shows

Green Grey (rock). Docker Pub. 7 p.m. Hr 150-1,750

Dandies (rockabilly). Docker's ABC. 7 p.m. Hr 75-450

Theater

Rigoletto (opera by Giuseppe Verdi). National Opera of Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 20 - 400

Monday, Feb. 19

Classic music

Symphony of Sounds. Playing Bach, Handel, Marcello, Mascagni and others. National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-250

Miscellaneous

Utopia. Transformation of Ukraine's East (art exhibition devoted to changes in Ukrainian cities in the war-torn east). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Anton Popernyak. Ukrainian Baroque (modern paintings that resemble Baroque style). Tryptykh. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

50 Shades of Victor Zaretskyi (paintings by Ukrainian artist Victor Zaretskyi, who is known as "the Ukrainian Klimt"). Museum of Kyiv History. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Free

Movies

A Ghost Story (drama, fantasy, romance). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 100

Euphoria (adventure, drama). Zhovten. 9:20 p.m. Hr 80-90

Selbstkritik eines buergerlichen Hundes (comedy, in German). Zhovten. 2:30 p.m., 9:25 p.m. Hr 60-80

Shows

Gospel Company (jazz). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 150-550

Tuesday, Feb. 20

Classic music

Concert in Memory of Heavenly Hundred. Playing Skoryk, Barber, Mozart, Vivaldi, Massenet. Actor's House. 7 p.m. Hr 100-160

Miscellaneous

Perfection (art-project about the concept of "perfection" in modern society by young Ukrainian artist Artem Kaffelman). RAW. 6 a.m. - 1 a.m. Free

Discernment (the analysis of identity in the intercultural society by U.S. media artist Bayete Ross Smith). America House Kyiv. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

Utopia. Transformation of Ukraine's East (art exhibition devoted to changes in Ukrainian cities in the war-torn east). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

The Bird Over Birkenau (paintings by Ukrainian artist Matvei Vaisberg devoted to his trip to the Holocaust memorial at Auschwitz-Birkenau). White World. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Anton Popernyak. Ukrainian Baroque (modern paintings created in Baroque style). Tryptykh. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

50 Shades of Victor Zaretskyi (paintings by Ukrainian artist Victor Zaretskyi, who is known as "the Ukrainian Klimt"). Museum of Kyiv History. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Movies

Silent Movie and Jazz. Screening "The Circus" to live jazz. Architect's House. 7 p.m. Hr 200-300

Bonnie and Clyde (action, biography, crime). American Library. 5 p.m. Free

Euphoria (adventure, drama). Zhovten. 4:15 p.m. Hr 60-70

Selbstkritik eines buergerlichen Hundes (comedy, in German). Zhovten. 2:30 p.m., 9:25 p.m. Hr 60-80

Theater

Symphony #2 (Symphony by Gustav Mahler). National Opera of Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 20-400

The Crucible (British Theater Live, a play by

Feb. 15-21



(Cortesy)

Euphoria

A new drama directed and written by Swedish filmmaker Lisa Langseth will be screened in Kyiv. Starring Alicia Vikander, Eva Green and Charlotte Rampling, "Euphoria" tells a story of a woman who invites her sister to spend a relaxing weekend at an outdoor location. When they arrive, the sister finds out it's a euthanasia clinic and her sibling is terminally ill. The screening will be in English.

Euphoria. Zhovten (26 Kostiantynivska St.) Feb. 15-21. 4:15 p.m. Hr 60-90

Arthur Miller). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 175

Wednesday, Feb. 21
Live music

Ze Best Cinema Music - Ennio Morricone. Architect's House. 7 p.m. Hr 225-450

Miscellaneous
Perfection (art-project about the concept of "perfection" in modern society by young Ukrainian artist Artem Kaffelman). RAW. 6 a.m. - 1 a.m. Free

Discernment (the analysis of identity in the intercultural society by U.S. media artist Bayete Ross Smith). America House Kyiv. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

Utopia. Transformation of Ukraine's East (art exhibition devoted to changes in Ukrainian cities in the war-torn east). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

The Bird Over Birkenau (paintings by Ukrainian artist Matvei Vaisberg devoted to his trip to the Holocaust memorial at Auschwitz-Birkenau). White World. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Anton Popernyak. Ukrainian Baroque (modern paintings created in Baroque style). Tryptykh. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

50 Shades of Victor Zaretskyi (paintings by Ukrainian artist Victor Zaretskyi, who is known as "the Ukrainian Klimt"). Museum of Kyiv History. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Movies
Euphoria (adventure, drama). Zhovten. 4:15 p.m. Hr 60-70
Selbstkritik eines Buergerlichen Hundes (comedy, in German). Zhovten. 2:30 p.m., 9:25 p.m. Hr 60-80

Theater
Raymonda (Ballet to the music of Alexandr Glazunov). National Opera of Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 20-500

Thursday, Feb. 22
Live music

All Star Jazz — Louis Armstrong & Ella Fitzgerald. Architect's House. 7 p.m. Hr 225-450

Miscellaneous
Perfection (art-project about the concept of "perfection" in modern society by young Ukrainian artist Artem Kaffelman). RAW. 6 a.m. - 1 a.m. Free
Discernment (the analysis of identity in the intercultural society by U.S. media artist

Bayete Ross Smith). America House Kyiv. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

Utopia. Transformation of Ukraine's East (art exhibition devoted to changes in Ukrainian cities in the war-torn east). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

The Bird Over Birkenau (paintings by Ukrainian artist Matvei Vaisberg devoted to his trip to the Holocaust memorial at Auschwitz-Birkenau). White World. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Anton Popernyak. Ukrainian Baroque (modern paintings created in Baroque style). Tryptykh. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

50 Shades of Victor Zaretskyi (paintings by Ukrainian artist Victor Zaretskyi, who is known as "the Ukrainian Klimt"). Museum of Kyiv History. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Shows
Buerak (indie). Atlas. 8 p.m. Hr 350-600
Naviband (pop, indie). Atlas. 7 p.m. Hr 200 - 450

Theater
My Treacherous Light (Opera by Salvatore Sciarrino). National Opera of Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 20-800
Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (British Theater Live, a play by Tennessee Williams). Multiplex (Sky Mall). 9 p.m. Hr 175-225

Friday, Feb. 23
Classic music

Mark Bushkov (violin). Playing Mozart, Korngold and Prokofiev. National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 80-490

Live music
Street jazz — Billie Holiday. Architect's House. 7 p.m. Hr 225-450

Clubs
Doctor Dru (DJ set). Skybar. 11 p.m. Hr 400

Parental Advisory (Steve Murphy, DJ Octopus). Closer. 11.59 p.m. Price to be announced

Jager Vibes (Olegue Zabava, C.A.Ramirez) Regenschirm. 10 p.m. Hr 100-150

Miscellaneous
Perfection (art-project about the concept of "perfection" in modern society by young Ukrainian artist Artem Kaffelman). RAW. 7 a.m. - 3 a.m. Free
Discernment (the analysis of identity in the intercultural society by U.S. media artist Bayete Ross Smith). America House Kyiv. 12



Feb. 8 - March 3
Discernment

Discernment art exhibition by American artist Bayete Ross Smith explores how stereotypes affect communication between individuals and even groups of people from different cultures. The exhibition contains photos, video installations and virtual reality videos.
Discernment. America House Kyiv (6 Mykoly Pymonenka St.) Feb. 8 - March 3. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

p.m. - 9 p.m. Free
Utopia. Transformation of Ukraine's East (art exhibition devoted to changes in Ukrainian cities in the war-torn east). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

The Bird Over Birkenau (paintings by Ukrainian artist Matvei Vaisberg devoted to his trip to the Holocaust memorial at Auschwitz-Birkenau). White World. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

50 Shades of Victor Zaretskyi (paintings by Ukrainian artist Victor Zaretskyi, who is known as "the Ukrainian Klimt"). Museum of Kyiv History. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Shows
Respublika Palina (indie). Mezzanine. 9 p.m. Hr 200
Theater
Faust (opera by Charles Gounod, in French). National Opera of Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 20-400

Saturday, Feb. 24
Classic music

Mozart for Children. Parkovy. 11 a.m. Hr 250-350
Antonii Baryshevskiy and Iryna Starodub. Playing Mozart's chamber music. Parkovy. 3 p.m. Hr 100-400

Michaela Salinger and Kyiv Virtuosos. Playing Mozart. Parkovy. 8 p.m. Hr 150-450
Electro Acoustic Concert. Based on Mozart's opera "The Magic Flute." Parkovy. 10:30 p.m. Hr 150-250

The Art of Playing the Piano. Denys Proshayev playing Bach, Prokofiev and Schubert. National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-320

Clubs
Gus Gus (DJ set). D.Fleur. 10 p.m. Women - free. Men - Hr 250
Zavod (techno, electro). Mezzanine. 11:30 p.m. Hr 100-150

Three Years Parasolka (Cape Cod, Youngg P, Fozz). Regenschirm. 10 p.m. Price to be announced
Tirexxx (hip-hop). Plivka. 4 p.m. Free

Miscellaneous
Perfection (art-project about the concept of "perfection" in modern society by young Ukrainian artist Artem Kaffelman). RAW. 3 p.m. - 3 a.m. Free
Discernment (the analysis of identity in the intercultural society by U.S. media artist Bayete Ross Smith). America House Kyiv. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free
Utopia. Transformation of Ukraine's



Feb. 16
East Kultur: w/ Kaan Duzarat

During the daytime, Kaan Duzarat keeps himself busy mixing tracks of local Turkish artists for an Istanbul-based radio Dinamo. During the night his mixtapes, inspired by traditional Turkish music, are played at high-profile shows and parties. It will be the first of a range of "East Kultur" parties dedicated to the electronic music coming from the Middle East, so stay tuned.

East Kultur: w/ Kaan Duzarat (DJ set). Mezzanine (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska St.) Feb. 16. 12 a.m. Hr 199-250

Venues

- Classical Music**
National Philharmonic of Ukraine (2 Volodymyrsky Descent) +38044 278 1697
Actor's House (7 Yaroslaviv Val St.) +38044 235 2081
Live Music
Caribbean Club (4 Petliury St.) +38067 224 4111
Architect's House (7 Borysa Hrinchenka St.) +38050 386 7410
Zhovtnevy Palace (1 Heroviv Nebesnoi Sotni Alley) +38044 279 7482
Taverns Gallery (6 Olhynska St.) +38044 220 0692
Parkovy Congress and Exhibition Complex (16A Parkova Rd.) +38044 594 8888
Kyiv Planetarium (57/3 Velyka Vasylykivska St.) +38044 338 1991

- Clubs**
SkyBar (5 Velyka Vasylykivska St.) +38044 223 8888
Closer (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska St.) +38067 250 0308
CHI by Decadence House (16A Parkova St.) +38098 502 3464
D.Fleur (3 Mykhaila Hrushevskoho St.) +38073 200 9009
Regenschirm (25 Khoryva St.) +38098 921 3654
Mezzanine (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska St.) +38063 873 7306
Plivka (1 Vasylykivska St.) facebook.com/plivka.prostir
Miscellaneous
Vsi Svoi market (12 Desiaynna St.) +38073 416 4839
RAW bar (7 Dehtiarna St.) +38099 707 4822

- Museum of Kyiv History (7 Bohdana Khmelnytskoho St.) +38044 520 2825
Museum of the Book and Printing of Ukraine (9 Lavrska St.) +38044 280 7976
Izone gallery (8 Naberezhno-Luhova St.) +38050 470 0001
White World gallery (21 Pushkinska St.) whiteworldukraine@gmail.com
Movies
Kinoparorama cinema (19 Shota Rustaveli St.) +38044 287 3041
Kyiv Cinema (19 Velyka Vasylykivska St.) +38044 234 7381
Zhovten (26 Kostiantyntynivska St.) +38044 428 5757
American Library (8/5 Voloska St.) +38044 462 5674
America House (6 Mykoly Pymonenka St.) +38063 343 0119
Shows
Ivan Franko National Academic

- Drama Theater (3 Ivana Franka St.) +38044 279 5991
Docker's ABC (15 Khreshchatyk St.) +38050 440 1525
Docker Pub (25 Bohatyrska St.) +38044 537 1340
Palace Ukraine (103 Velyka Vasylykivska St.) +38044 247 2476
Atlas (37-41 Sichovykh Striltsiv St.) +38067 155 2255
Bingo (112 Peremohy Ave) +38044 424 2293
Theater
National Opera of Ukraine (50 Volodymyrka St.) +38044 234 7165
Multiplex (Lavina Mall, 6D Berkovetska St.) 0800 505 333
Multiplex (Sky Mall, 2T Henerala Vatutina Ave) +38044 371 4130

Theater

Viennese Waltz (ballet to the music of Johann Strauss). National Opera of Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 20-500

La Boheme (British Theater Live, an opera by Giacomo Puccini, in Italian with English subtitles). Multiplex (Lavina Mall). 7:30 p.m. Hr 175-225

Sunday, Feb. 25
Clubs

Kurs Valut (ebm, synth-pop, electro). Mezzanine. 8 p.m. Hr 150

Miscellaneous

Perfection (art-project about the concept of "perfection" in modern society by young Ukrainian artist Artem Kaffelman). RAW. 3 p.m. - 1 a.m. Free

Utopia. Transformation of Ukraine's East (art exhibition devoted to changes in Ukrainian cities in the war-torn east). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

The Bird Over Birkenau (paintings by Ukrainian artist Matvei Vaisberg devoted to his trip to the Holocaust memorial at Auschwitz-Birkenau). White World. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Vsi Svoi. Hygge (market of Ukrainian-made furniture and home accessories). Vsi Svoi. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

50 Shades of Victor Zaretskyi (paintings by Ukrainian artist Victor Zaretskyi, who is known as "the Ukrainian Klimt"). Museum of Kyiv History. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Movies

I, Claude Monet (exhibition on screen). Kyiv Cinema. 3 p.m. Hr 150

Shows

Maru (pop). Caribbean Club. 7 p.m. Hr 250-1,500
Kurs Valut (electronic dance, pop). Mezzanine. 8 p.m. Hr 150

Theater

Shopeniana (ballet to the music of Frederic Chopin). National Opera of Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 20-500

Carmen Suite (ballet to the music of Georges Bizet and Rodion Shchedrin). National Opera of Ukraine. 7 p.m. Hr 20-500



World in Ukraine

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

In partnership with Norwegian-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce

Welcome to Egersund, the 'Norwegian fish embassy'

BY MARIYA KAPINOS
KAPINOS@KYIVPOST.COM

The design of this seafood bar is minimalistic so that nothing distract customers from the food. And the food is special – Egersund Seafood restaurant in Kyiv serves Norwegian fish, delivered to Ukraine by plane within 48 hours of being caught.

The restaurant is owned by Pelagia Egersund Seafood, one of the largest fish companies in Norway, established since 1921.

The company has 27 factories located all over Norway and exports pelagic fish – fish that live in the open ocean – to 35 countries. The company started delivering fish to Ukrainian supermarkets in 1996, but it was only in 2014 that they opened their first shop in Kyiv to bring Ukrainian customers seafood products directly. Norway's Prime Minister Erna Solberg was present during the opening ceremony.

The company opened another shop in 2016 in the remodeled Central Department Store, or TsuM on the main Khreshchatyk Street, this time with its own food court.

In November 2017, the company opened a seafood bar on the third floor of Sky Mall shopping mall, where people can see the food they order being prepared in an open kitchen.

Pavel Solovyov, general manager of Pelagia Ukraine, says that in most



Valeryi Kovalchuk, head chef of Egersund Seafood restaurant in Sky Mall shopping mall in Kyiv, covers octopuses with ice on Feb. 14. (Volodymyr Petrov)

restaurants the food price includes extra charges to cover costs such as overhead and the price of outfitting the restaurant interior, but in their

seafood bar customers only pay for the cost of the food they eat.

"The food is what matters, not the decorations around," Solovyov says.

But there is more to the place than just the food.

Secret chamber

Egersund Seafood bar in Sky Mall shopping center has two zones: The first zone is open to any visitor.

To enter the second one, visitors have to show a special pass card to one of the waiters. The second zone is hidden and looks pretty much the same as the first one, but it's quieter, has a meeting room and offers additional dishes on the menu.

The regular menu features over 30 fish species as well as other seafood.

Egersund hands out pass cards to regular clients, Solovyov says. One can also apply for a card at one of the Egersund locations in Kyiv.

The standards

Globally, Solovyov says that Egersund Group focuses on supplying fish to the supermarkets and seafood

shops, but in Ukraine they've made an exception in opening their own restaurant.

"We always say to our workers: 'You are the last element in the long chain of monitoring the quality of the product,'" Solovyov says. "So if you see that a product has gone off – throw it away."

He says in many restaurants the main goal is to sell as much food as possible with minimum waste, but in Egersund a worker is rewarded for spotting and disposing of bad-quality products.

Valeryi Kovalchuk, the head chef of Egersund Seafood in Sky Mall, says that the most important rule is not to crowd out the taste of the fish with other ingredients, and not to overcook it. When fish are overcooked, they lose their taste and nutrients.

"That's why I like salmon medium cooked – this way it has the best consistency and taste."

It makes no sense to rapidly deliver seafood products by plane from Norway and then diminish its taste in Kyiv by overcooking it, he says.

Aside from seafood, there are desserts and sushi on the menu, but "this is not the kind of sushi you'd have in a Japanese restaurant,"

Kovalchuk says. "Our sushi has a Norwegian flavor."

The kitchen in the restaurant is open, and guests can watch as their food is prepared, Solovyov says, adding that "we have nothing to hide from our clients."

"We are a Norwegian fish embassy in Ukraine," Solovyov smiles.

According to Kovalchuk, the menu constantly changes and the number of clients is continuing to grow.

"We've been working for only three months, and on Valentine's Day we were fully booked," he says. "This is a good result, but I'm sure this is only the beginning."

Chef's recommendations from the menu:

Egersund Norwegian soup – Hr 112

Fish and chips, with optional extra portions of potatoes, peas and sauce – Hr 140–210

Atlantic mackerel – Hr 120 ■



World in Ukraine: Denmark
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Young Entrepreneurs program aims to strengthen Ukraine-Norway ties

BY DENYS KRASNIKOV
KRASNIKOV@KYVPOST.COM

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs funds an educational program for entrepreneurs with the aim of improving the economic relationship between Norway and Ukraine.

Called Young Entrepreneurs, the program run by the Norwegian-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce, or NUCC, brings together ambitious Norwegians and Ukrainians to work together.

The program has been selecting 20 businesspeople every year since 2014 to spend one week in Norway and one in Ukraine. They listen to lectures and network, with the goal of providing early-stage entrepreneurs with guidance. The participants also visit Norwegian and Ukrainian businesses, meet with government officials and non-profit organizations. Topics include business ethics, finance, corporate governance, investment and tackling corruption.

The participants work with university professors and mentors on business case studies.

Program co-founder Volodymyr Vargola thinks the program offers “a

very dynamic curriculum from the learning point of view. It is hard to overestimate the value of the Young Entrepreneurs program,” Vargola told the Kyiv Post. “What’s for sure is that this program targets the best people in their industries and future leaders who are building strong connections between the two countries.”

But much more needs to be done to make Ukraine known to more Norwegians, said Young Entrepreneurs 2018 project manager Anatolii Kyryliuk.

The interest in the program is also higher in Ukraine, with many more applications from Ukrainians. Norwegians also have a wider variety of study options.

“It’s difficult to convince the Norwegians that it’s fine to work with Ukraine because the media there cover Ukraine as a corrupt place with conflict going on,” Kyryliuk said, referring to Russia’s war in eastern Ukraine.

Kyryliuk reaches agreements with universities in Ukrainian and Norwegian cities to hold meetings and set up lectures. But he says that only 25 percent of the time is devoted to studying, with the rest taken up by networking and meetings.

NUCC managing director Kjartan Pedersen considers the Young



Ukrainian and Norwegian businesspeople talk about cooperation in the two countries' information technology sectors in September at Norwegian-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce. NUCC is a non-profit organization established and funded by the government of Norway to strengthen business ties with Ukraine. (NUCC)

Entrepreneurs program one of NUCC's “most important initiatives on which we spend a lot of resources. There is tremendous talent in these young forward-leaning individuals we bring together, something that makes me excited about the future.” ■

NUCC NORWEGIAN - UKRAINIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Networking meeting in Kyiv – April 18th

Bringing business together for a better future

The Norwegian-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce (NUCC) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization established by and for Norwegian and Ukrainian companies. We work to stimulate commercial cooperation, strengthen relations and exchange of information and experience between Norway and Ukraine

Join our network on NUCC.no

Norwegian tech company works on 2 sides of war

BY DENYS KRASNIKOV
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It all started when Ukrainian naval radio operator and part-time programmer Vitaly Vatkov wrote to a Norwegian high-tech company in 2002, asking if he could work for them remotely from the Crimean city of Kerch.

The Norwegian company Adonis agreed.

Vatkov did well. He built up a successful branch for Adonis in Crimea. In 2007, the Norwegians decided to open up a second office in Ukraine, this time in Kharkiv.

But much has changed in Ukraine since then.

The country went through the EuroMaidan Revolution, which drove former President Viktor Yanukovich from power in February 2014. Soon Russia annexed Crimea, and a couple of months later it started the war in the Donbas.

And the two offices of the Norwegian firm Adonis — 12 staff members in Kerch and 23 in Kharkiv — ended up on territory controlled by opposite sides in a war.

The programmers and their families in Russian-occupied Crimea did not want to leave their native peninsula, so the Norwegians decided to carry on their business on both sides of the lines in Ukraine.

"In the software business, it's the people that are important, not the location," Per Ove Kviteberg, the Adonis commercial director, told the Kyiv Post. "When you have programmers who have been working for you in a specific high-tech area for five years, it would be foolish to lose them."

Unaffected

Headquartered in Norway, Adonis continues to work in Kerch, a city on the Sea of Azov just across the straits from Russia. Russia's occupation of Crimea has not affected the operations of the company, given its nature and clients.

Adonis develops software for human resource management and payroll systems for maritime personnel. All of its data are stored on servers located outside of Ukraine, in Western European countries.



Kerch employees of Norwegian software developer Adonis pose for a picture in Kerch in 2017. International sanctions imposed on Russia after the Kremlin annexed Crimea prohibited business with Crimean companies. But the sanctions have had no effect on Adonis, which has been running its Kerch office since 2002. (Adonis)

"We don't care much about people's location. It doesn't matter where you have Wi-Fi," Kviteberg said.

International sanctions imposed on Russia in the wake of its invasion and occupation of Ukraine's Crimea forbade business with all Crimean companies, but they've had no effect on the operations of Adonis, as in legal terms the company works through its Norwegian headquarters.

It is an example, however, of the weakness of sanctions in such outsource-heavy industries as information technology.

Inconveniences

That's not to say there haven't been problems because of Russia's occupation.

Kviteberg told the Kyiv Post that his company had to go through a major blackout in Crimea in 2015 and occasional problems with the internet connection.

The employees worked from home at first, but adapting to the situation,

Adonis set up a backup power supply and resumed its usual operations.

Later, power supplies to Kerch were improved, with new underwater power lines being laid across the Kerch Strait from Russia. The company reckons it lost about 20 working days during the period, but otherwise it remained unaffected.

Kharkiv, some 500 kilometers east of Kyiv, also had problems in 2014. Today the company is working normally, but four years ago the Norwegians viewed it as a dangerous place, due to its relatively close proximity to the Donbas. Adonis considered leaving the city.

"We drew up evacuation plans for the staff in Kharkiv," Kviteberg said. "Reserve workplaces were established among family and friends near Kyiv."

If anything happens they will apply the evacuation plan, but at the moment it seems unlikely.

Political views

Cooperation between the two offices continued without disruption, even when the situation in Crimea was unpredictable.

Over the past few years, the conditions on the border between Ukraine and the occupied territory of Crimea has become more stable. It is now fairly easy for citizens of Crimea to travel to Kyiv — provided that they have kept their Ukrainian passports. Likewise, it is possible for Ukrainians to enter Crimea.

"The only issues may arise from bureaucratic tie-ups and waiting lines at the border crossings," Kviteberg said.

Last year, Adonis "with no practical obstacles" arranged two conferences to allow its Ukrainian staff on mainland Ukraine and in Russian-occupied Crimea to meet.

Kviteberg insisted that the company would never leave Ukraine, because of well-educated, motivated and skilled people. This, in combina-

tion with the Norwegian "flat corporate structure, truthfulness, and an informal way of thinking" makes the company stay — despite the war and instability.

"Our wonderful staff in Kharkiv and Kerch have been able to cooperate on a daily basis all through this painful period. And everyone keeps political views private," he said. "They don't let them come to the surface during daily work so as not to damage the atmosphere."

Looking ahead

Ukraine continues to cooperate with other democratic countries. This includes promoting the country's IT industry, which, according to Kviteberg, may improve the importance of the tech sector in developing Ukraine's economy.

The visa-free regime with the Schengen Area, granted to Ukraine in July, has made a big difference in simplifying business for companies like Adonis, who often need to send their Ukrainian staff on business trips to Europe.

Favorable conditions make Adonis plan expansion in Ukraine, hiring more people within the next three years. However, the company has difficulties with raising capital from Norwegian banks, given the high risk of lending to Ukraine-based companies.

"Banks don't care about wars. What they care about is the security they can have (for their money). When the situation is not stable it's a high risk for them."

The company needs 500,000 euros and relies on loans from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Nevertheless, Kviteberg insists that everyone in Adonis is extremely impressed with the way its Ukrainian staff works, and it will do its best to make expansion in the country happen.

"Ukrainian tech people are highly skilled and motivated," Kviteberg said. "In setting and our internal systems with the latest web-based tools, we're making sure that our talented staff is able to collaborate, whenever they're located."

The Kyiv Post's IT coverage is sponsored by Ciklum. The content is independent of the donors. ■

Ukrainian scientist works on space projects in Norway

BY VERONIKA MELKOZEROVA
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Ukrainians are still contributing to the global space industry. One of them is Pavlo Kochkin, a 34-year-old Ukrainian scientist now living in Norway.

Kochkin relocated to Norway in 2014 to work on creating an ambitious \$40 million project — the Atmosphere-Space Interactions Monitor. It is a mobile climate observatory for the International Space Station.

And to make it even cooler, the climate monitor will be delivered to the station by none else than SpaceX, the U.S. company founded by the newest space icon, Elon Musk.

SpaceX dominated headlines in early February when it successfully tested its new super-heavy reusable launch vehicle, Falcon 9. For a test flight, it carried Musk's own car, a Tesla Roadster.

During a launch scheduled for April, the Falcon 9 will carry the cli-

mate monitoring system developed by Kochkin's team. It will be attached to the exterior of the International Space Station.

Atmosphere-Space Monitor

A team of more than 1,000 scientists have been working since 2010 to build the Atmosphere-Space Interactions Monitor. Kochkin joined



Pavlo Kochkin, a 34-year-old Ukrainian scientist, works at the Birkeland Center for Space Science of the University of Bergen in Norway. (Courtesy of Pavlo Kochkin)

more Scientist on page 21

Ukraine, Norway build on old ties with trade boost in 2017

BY VERONIKA MELKOZEROVA
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Norway, a rich Scandinavian country with an inclusive economy, seems to have little in common with poor, corrupt Ukraine. But the two nations share rich and ancient historical ties.

"Scandinavian Vikings played a major role in developing the early Kyivan Rus state almost 1,200 years ago, and Kyiv became the center of this state, strategically placed on the trade route between Scandinavia and Asia. So we have common roots," said Asbjørn Tandberg, a Norwegian-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce member and director of Tandberg Value Creation consulting company, based in the Norwegian capital Oslo.

The Viking Rurik dynasty ruled Kyivan Rus in the 860s, seizing control of the area from local Slavic tribes. One of the most famous princes of the medieval epoch, Oleg, was a Viking, and other Vikings served in the military of the Kyivan Rus.

The old ties are still celebrated today: Ukrainian and Norwegian historians met in December in Oslo for the first "Ukraine-Norway: Connected by History" conference.

Today Norway, with only 5.3 million people, is one of modern Ukraine's biggest supporters, both politically and financially. Norway has financed at least 30 development projects, supporting startups and young business leaders. It has helped soldiers settle back into civilian life. Since the EuroMaidan Revolution that ousted President Viktor Yanukovich on Feb. 22, 2014, Norway has given Ukraine more than \$100 million in assistance.

In addition, Norway has supported sanctions against Russia to punish the Kremlin for its war against Ukraine, even though this has triggered counter-sanctions from Moscow that banned Norwegian fish exports to Russia.

However, when it comes to business, Norwegians are still cautious about taking the plunge into Ukraine's economy.

The State Statistic Service of Ukraine reported that, as of October 2017, Norway's foreign direct investment in Ukraine was only \$7.2 million out of the \$39 billion that Ukraine has received since independence.

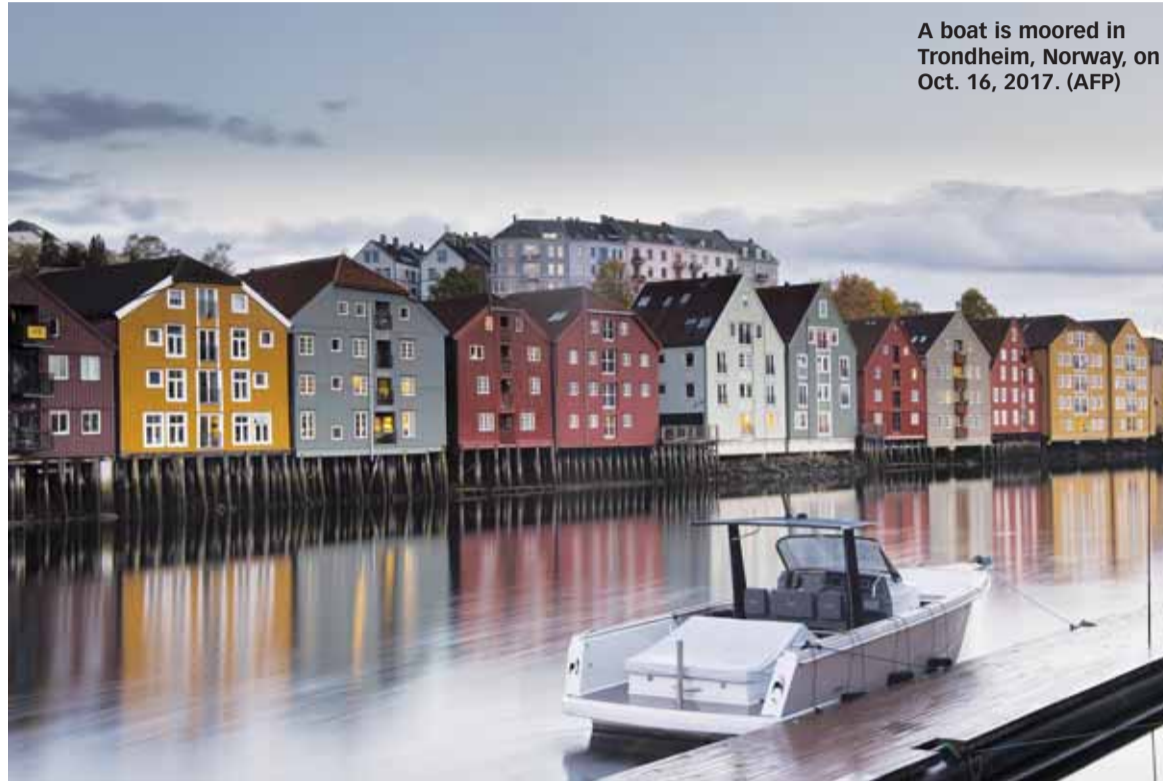
Ukraine's exports to Norway in 2017, while on the rise, were worth just \$17 million out of total exports of \$40 billion, while imports were \$192 million out of a total of \$45 billion.

Increasing trend

However, Kjartan Pedersen, managing director of the 98-member Norwegian-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce, told the Kyiv Post on Feb. 14 that a very positive trend in bilateral trade can be seen in Norwegian statistics.

"From 2015 to 2017 we experienced a 79 percent increase in mutual trade, according to Norwegian statistics— a 31 percent increase from 2016 to 2017," Pedersen said.

The countries buy each other's fish: In 2017 Ukraine imported fish worth \$125 million and exported fish worth \$7.4 million to Norway. The countries also trade other food and



A boat is moored in Trondheim, Norway, on Oct. 16, 2017. (AFP)

agricultural products, lumber and ferrous metals.

"Last year we witnessed a close to 40 percent increase in Ukrainian exports to Norway, where textiles, light manufacturing and agricultural products are some of the important sectors of growth," Pedersen said.

IT is by far the most important in Ukraine's economy for Norway when it comes to employment. At least 5,000 Ukrainian IT specialists work with Norwegian clients, Pedersen said.

Cautious players

Amund Myklebust, the former managing director of the NUCC, told the Kyiv Post that Norwegian companies often miss business opportunities in Ukraine because of misconceptions about the country and its poor image abroad. But there are real issues too.

Tandberg said that "different companies and sectors will give you different answers. But most Norwegian companies are concerned about corruption, environmental issues and quality monitoring and controls."

He sympathizes with Ukraine's unenviable position — caught between Russia and the European Union. And he wants to help.

"I would like to contribute to enhancing Ukrainian business relations and opportunities with Norway in a way that contributes to a win-win situation for both parties, not only to the benefit of my country and the West," Tandberg said.

Tandberg has visited Ukraine three times since 2016 in search of business connections.

"My primary field of interest is agricultural and the food industry. But I also have contacts within other sectors such as infrastructure, IT and travel," Tandberg said. "I would like more Norwegians to experience your beautiful country and its professionals, who are highly educated, ambitious, energetic, enthusiastic, and willing to learn."

And it seems more Norwegian businesspeople are indeed showing an interest in Ukraine.

Pedersen has seen his organiza-

tion grow: the NUCC now has 42 Norwegian members out of 98 total.

"We have seen increasing interest and membership applications in the last few years, with IT firms leading the growth," Pedersen said.

"There is also increased interest from Norwegian energy companies, since Ukraine's strategy of increasing its energy independence is creating opportunities for Norwegian companies to get more involved in Ukraine, in both the petroleum and renewables sectors."

But Pedersen said that the main factor stopping new Norwegian entrepreneurs from entering Ukraine is still corruption. It is also a major concern among businesses already operating in Ukraine.

"Although corruption is still a challenge, our experience is that development is going in the right direction. Several important measures have been taken and institutions created to tackle corruption," Pedersen said.

Among the most important improvements for Norwegian business, Pedersen named tenders conducted via the ProZorro online public procurement system, which are held in a transparent manner, and with information in English.

A well-functioning judiciary, predictable legislation, limited bureaucracy and political stability are all things Norwegian companies would like to see in Ukraine, Pedersen said.

Norway-Ukraine project

Norway, a member of NATO but not the European Union, says it will never recognize Russia's annexation of Crimea and supports the 2015 Minsk peace agreements, which call on Russia to leave the eastern Donbas, where for nearly four years it has been waging a bloody war that has killed more than 10,000 people.

Norway provided more than 60,000 field rations for the Ukrainian army in 2015, one of the toughest years of fighting. It has also financed retraining and aid for former soldiers in the Ukraine-Norway Project, a joint initiative

of Norway's Nord University and Ukraine's International Foundation for Social Adaptation.

Vladimir Rubtsov, president of the International Foundation for Social Adaptation, said that more than 16 Ukrainian universities and one

Norwegian one are now engaged in retraining soldiers for new professions. Participants can study free, for three to four months, subjects ranging from IT, business security, accounting, tourism, management, and entrepreneurship.

Since 2003, more than 9,000 soldiers and their relatives have taken part in the retraining project; 30 percent of those retrained were women.

Rubtsov said the program also helps participants find new jobs or even start a business.

"We have also a network of non-governmental organizations who continue cooperation with our participants for a year after, helping them to settle back into civilian life, find a job, study the legislation, and much more," Rubtsov said.

The program, already 15 years old, will continue until 2019 with \$4 million in funding.

Norwegians seem to have a strong sense of duty in helping less successful countries: it is one of the few nations in the world to spend more than 1 percent of its gross national product on international aid.

"They believe that the one who is on the top of a pyramid should help those who are at the bottom," Rubtsov said. "Because if they fall, you'll fall too." ■

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Norway's ambassador sees reasons for a hopeful year

BY BRIAN BONNER
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The last top-level event between Ukraine and Norway took place 20 months ago, when Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg and President Petro Poroshenko met on Oct. 18, 2016, and spoke to a business forum hosted in the Norwegian capital of Oslo.

At the time, Solberg told Poroshenko to his face that Ukraine needs to fight corruption, establish rule of law and create "better conditions" for business in order to attract more investment from Norwegian companies. She held up Poland as an example for Ukraine to emulate.

Since then, it appears that many Norwegian companies still have not found business conditions to their liking for entry into Ukraine.

About 60 Norwegian companies are doing business in Ukraine, the same number as in 2016, while foreign direct investment from Norway hasn't changed much and is estimated at \$8 million to \$12 million.

Norwegian Ambassador to Ukraine Ole T. Horpestad, on the job since Sept. 1, 2016, said that that Ukraine has made progress since then and the Norwegian business mood remains hopeful. But he emphasized that Ukraine needs to do more to entice investment.

"What companies tell us is Ukraine needs to do more work to improve the business climate," Horpestad told the Kyiv Post in an interview at the Norwegian Embassy. "Ukraine has to create stable market conditions. Ukraine needs a well-functioning independent judicial system. Corruption must be reduced. The anti-corruption court is an important step to get in place in Ukraine. All in all: create predictable and transparent legislation, eliminate red tape,

Ole T. Horpestad

Position: Norway's Ambassador to Ukraine since Sept. 1, 2016.

Personal: "My family is in three countries." His wife is in Oslo (but moving to Kyiv in summer). One adult son studies in France.

Did you know? He's a jazz & blues fan who can be found listening to music in Kyiv's Blues Bar on Mykhailivska Street.

How to succeed in Ukraine: "It's important to master the language. I am using Ukrainian more and more."



(Volodymyr Petrov)

establish stable political conditions. These are important conditions for Norwegian business to engage here."

Horpestad circled back to the need for an independent anti-corruption court once more during the hour-long interview, underscoring its importance to Norway and Ukraine's other Western partners.

Positive developments

On the plus side, Horpestad said that, overall, "things are moving in the right direction."

He cited the start of Ukraine's much-delayed privatization process to selling off more than 3,000 state-owned companies. The sales, he emphasized, must be transparent.

He said that the Norwegian-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce, which represents nearly 100 companies from both countries, also sees improvement in the protection of minority investors, employment permits and reduction of bureaucracy.

"Ukraine is definitely an interesting market and a potential mar-

ket," Horpestad said. "It's in Central Europe with a huge, well-educated population and now with" a free-trade agreement with the European Union.

"The interest is definitely on the rise," he said. "I think it will be an active year. I think we will have more political visits that I will inform you on as soon as I can. Our political and bilateral relations are very good and are developing well."

Norwegian Foreign Minister Ine Marie Eriksen Sørpede will, for instance, meet with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin during the Feb. 16-18 Munich Security Conference.

Norway's priorities

Norway, with only 5.3 million people, is one of the world's richest and most generous nations. It is among the few in the world to give at least 1 percent of its gross domestic product to development assistance around the world.

It also has a \$1 trillion sovereign wealth fund, or state pension fund, with global investments to help ensure that Norwegians will never again be poor. Poverty in the late 19th century and early 20th century in Norway, fueled by too many farmers on not enough land, led to waves of emigration, including to America. Some 4.5 million people of Norwegian ancestry live in the United States today.

But it's a different story today. Norway is investing and donating its largesse. It has given Ukraine more than \$100 million since the EuroMaidan Revolution drove President Viktor Yanukovich from power on Feb. 22, 2014. This year's assistance will come to nearly \$28 million alone.

Additionally, besides foreign direct investment, Norway's state pension fund as of 2016 had \$29 million in investments in Ukrainian agribusiness as well as \$68 million in equity investments in other Ukrainian companies, Horpestad said.

The ambassador said that assistance is focused in four areas: energy & energy efficiency; rule of law and good governance; economic reforms, trade, EU integration; and humanitarian assistance to war-torn eastern Ukraine.

"We have been engaged. We will

continue to be engaged," he said. "At the same time, we expect Ukraine to stay committed and continue the reform program."

Aside from support for independent anti-corruption institutions, Norway is involved in improving probation services in Ukraine's prisons as part of a three-year program with the Ministry of Justice.

"It means that four Norwegian experts will work in Kyiv for three years — one judge, one prosecutor, one probation specialist from the prison/penitentiary system," Torpestad said. The Ukrainian cities of Kharkiv, Kyiv and Bila Tserkva have been chosen for the pilot projects.

Another project is "Democracy in Schools," a three-year program to train teachers and upgrade curriculum teaching democratic, European values.

In the energy efficiency sphere, Norwegian money goes into changing boilers and upgrading heating systems — things that save money, energy and the environment, he said.

Both Norway and Ukraine are outside the EU but have free trade agreements with the 28-nation bloc. Norway's agreement with the EU — the Agreement on the European Economic Area — dates back to Jan. 1, 1994. Ukraine's deal only entered force last September and the nation still hasn't adapted to EU standards in most areas.

"There is a lot of common ground for transferring some of our experience to Ukraine which can be useful in their adaptation to EU standards," Horpestad said.

Trade shoots up in 2017

There's no arguing with the optimistic statistics: 2017 bilateral trade shot up to \$236 million, a 36 percent increase over the previous year, mainly due to increased seafood exports from Norway, Horpestad said.

The trade was lopsided, with Norway exporting \$181 million to Ukraine, while Ukraine exported only \$55 million to Norway. Norway bought textiles, manufactured goods and agricultural products — including feed for the Norwegian fishing industry.

Additionally, an estimated 5,000

Ukrainians work for Norwegian information technology companies.

"When it comes to other investments, more Norwegian companies are interested and active in the Ukrainian market, especially in the energy sector with Ukraine's new strategy of independence and renewable energy," Horpestad said. "Some companies are really engaged and I think and hope we will still see investment announcements soon. My impression is they are pretty close to making some investment decisions. That's a promising area."

One of the oldest Norwegian investments is in Fastiv, a city of 47,000 people only 76 kilometers southwest of Kyiv. The Elopac package factory opened in 1996 and employees 500 people. "It's one of the major working places there," the ambassador said.

Sanctions will stay

Horpestad said Norway has no intention of relaxing economic sanctions against Russia until it ends the war against Ukraine and the Kremlin's occupation of Crimea.

"We will keep up the sanctions until Russia fulfills its conditions" in the 2015 Minsk peace agreements, he said.

The stance has caused friction with Russia, a neighbor with whom Norway has an "interest-based, pragmatic relationship," Torpestad said. "At the same time, we are very clear on our position in Ukraine."

Another Norwegian with the same view is Jens Stoltenberg, the former Norwegian prime minister who now is secretary-general of the NATO military alliance.

Kyiv-Oslo flight needed

Since his arrival in 2016, Horpestad has taken note of the two nations' similarities.

"Norway and Ukraine have great nature. We love sports. We love the sea. We love mountains. We love skiing," he said. "I enjoy it very much. I like Kyiv as a city. There's lots of nice places to go here, lots of culture. I also enjoy traveling around the country a lot. I have been in most of the regions. What I feel as a Norwegian diplomat is a very positive attitude towards Norway all over the place."

While Ukrainians have been able since June to travel visa-free to Norway, which is part of the 26-nation European Schengen Area, only an estimated 10,000 Ukrainians did so last year. Going the other way, the embassy estimates that 20,000 people went from Norway to Ukraine in 2017.

Norway counts 5,000 Ukrainians living in its country, while it estimates the Norwegian population in Ukraine at only about 100 people.

More visits would take place if Kyiv and Oslo had non-stop, direct flights.

"I'm hoping that will come in place pretty soon," Horpestad said. "That would be a very good boost for tourism and for business and for ordinary contacts. We're not so far away — only a 2.5 hour flight." ■

Norway at a glance

Government type: **parliamentary constitutional monarchy**

Monarch: King Harald V
Prime Minister: Erna Solberg

GDP, PPP: \$405 billion
GDP per capita, PPP: \$73,615

Total area: 385,186 square kilometers
Population: 5.3 million

Norway's aid to Ukraine: **more than \$100 million** since 2014
Norway's FDI in Ukraine: **\$8 million-\$12 million**

Bilateral trade in 2017: \$236 million

Exports from Norway to Ukraine: \$181 million (fish, ferrous metals, chemicals)
Exports from Ukraine to Norway: \$55 million (textiles, manufactured goods, agricultural products)

Norway's main economy sectors: petroleum, natural gas production, fishing, shipping

Source: State Statistic Service of Ukraine, Embassy of Norway in Ukraine

Rave party revolution welcomes techno lovers in Kyiv clubs

Clubs from page 19

authorities cracked down on illegal constructions in the capital.

Regenschirm has two floors: The first, where most of the parties are held, has a dancefloor, and the second floor has tables and a bar. The bar holds most of its techno parties on Fridays and Saturdays, with entry costing Hr 100 before 2 a.m. and Hr 150 after.

Content manager Tanya Yatsenko describes the bar as “a cozy place in Podil, which is hard to pass by, especially in summer.” She praises its tasty cocktails and DJs playing music from vinyl. At the same time, she says that “in the summer we always hang out around the bar, sit near the entrance and chat.”

“The most memorable moment was when a man came with a bayan (type of a button accordion) and began to play near Regenschirm. So it was like two in one: music inside and outside,” Yatsenko said.

Regenschirm (25 Khoryva St.) Sun-Thu 12 p.m. – 11 p.m. Fri, Sat – 12 p.m. – 6 a.m. Hr 100–200 for parties

Alchemist

As well as Closer, Alchemist bar in the heart of Kyiv near Palace of Sports metro station is very popular among foreigners. However, it has a completely different atmosphere: While Closer is a downtown underground place for techno music fans, Alchemist is more about having a fun night out over a tasty cocktail.

Alchemist is tiny, so the area with a dancefloor and a bar is usually overcrowded during the weekends. The bar invites both local and international DJs that represent different music styles. Entry is free.

Lawyer Dmytro Honcharenko says

that Alchemist “is one of the very few bars in Kyiv that has maintained its coziness, friendly atmosphere and most importantly its delicious cocktails well after the opening.”

“I especially value ability of the bartenders to correctly guess my mood and recommend a suitable drink,” he said.

Alchemist (12 Shota Rustaveli St.) 12 p.m. – 3 a.m. Free

Khlam

Khlam is the renowned art club in a building hidden away in Podil district. In the daytime, it works as a café with vegan food that holds poetry readings, art talks, and various meetups. In the evenings, there might be jazz or other live music performances. At night, it is a venue for underground parties.

The café takes its name from the legendary art café that existed in Kyiv at the beginning of 20th century and was popular among artists and writers. Khlam, which in Russian means trash, is also an abbreviation for Painters Writers Artists Musicians.

Frank Bilchik often goes to Khlam to listen to Ukrainian DJ Smereka Beats based in Kyiv. He praises the venue for the artists playing in unusual electronic music styles such as ketapop.

“When I got there for the first time, I felt like I was at a house party rather than in a club,” Bilchik said.

Khlam (23 Mezhyhirska St.) 12 p.m. – 11 p.m. (café) Parties usually take place from around 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. See prices at www.facebook.com/pg/hlamkyiv.

Plivka

Art space Plivka is located in the dilapidated building of the

former Dovzhenko cinema studio in the southwest of Kyiv. The art space holds various lectures and workshops, contemporary music concerts played with classical music instruments, and, obviously, parties.

Plivka is well-known as a permanent home of the Cxema series of techno parties, which are on the international top-visit lists. Rhythm Büro, Kontrapunkt and other techno projects have performed at Plivka. The prices of entry is not fixed, and varies depending on which artist is performing: some parties are free, for others entry can be up to Hr 250.

Alexander Eryomin says Plivka is one of his favorite venues because it hosts a range of different events, from film screenings and flea markets to electronic music performances.

“I love Plivka for its special atmosphere, which is a mixture of a public space and an underground club,” he says.

Plivka (1 Vasylkivska St.) See the prices and schedule at www.facebook.com/plivka.prostir

Khorosho, Vsegda

Khorosho, Vsegda is a bar on Sichovykh Striltsiv Street that serves as a café in daytime and turns into a dance spot at night. The name of the bar translates from Russian as “Good, Always.” The owners of the bar previously managed Keller Bar in Podil district, which was famous for holding parties with various styles of electronic music, such as techno, deep house, drum’n'bass and more.

Khorosho, Vsegda (21 Sichovykh Striltsiv St.) Fri, Sat 11 a.m. – 5 a.m. Free, donations are encouraged. ■



Norwegian Jørgen Bø met Sophia Yushchenko at the Oslo Freedom Forum in May 2017. They co-founded the Connect Ukraine festival aimed to develop a common vision of Ukraine's future. (Nathan McBride)

Norwegian enthusiast launches Kyiv festival to promote Ukraine

BY TOMA ISTOMINA

ISTOMINA@KYIVPOST.COM

When Norwegian Jørgen Bø visited Ukraine for the first time four years ago, he saw a country with a lot of potential. Last year he moved to Kyiv and co-founded a festival aimed at developing a common vision of Ukraine's future.

The first festival and conference, called Connect Ukraine, was held in July in Kyiv.

The three-day event gathered more than 50 speakers – innovators, creators and social entrepreneurs – to present and brainstorm ideas about how to promote Ukraine abroad and attract investment to the country.

Since then, Bø, 27, has moved to New York, but he will return this summer to host the second Connect Ukraine conference.

“I saw that a lot of things that I focus on in my life – empowering people, connecting people and opportunities – were a very good match with Ukraine,” he told the Kyiv Post.

Bø first came to Ukraine four years ago. Living in Oslo, he hosted 600 couch surfers at his residence, and many of them were Ukrainians.

He then went to Lviv in western Ukraine during a road trip around Europe. Bø says he hadn't known what to expect, and was truly fascinated by the beauty of the city.

He was also surprised at the injustice he noticed.

“I met people who were the same age as me with exact same talents and abilities, and saw how different their situation was – just because they were born a little bit further south than I was,” he said.

That was when he felt he could contribute to Ukraine's development.

Since then Bø has visited the country five times. He says that he has seen many extraordinary things in Ukraine that can't be found in any other country. One of them was the popular street food festival Ulichnaya Eda that gathers from 10,000 to 20,000 guests.

“It was one of the most life-changing experiences for me,” Bø said. “We don't have anything like that in Norway.”

Bø met his future business partner Sophia Yushchenko, the daughter of former Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko, at the Oslo Freedom

Forum in May 2017. They came up with the idea to arrange a big meeting with inspiring talks and workshops.

Bø decided to quit his job as a hotel manager in Oslo, moved to Ukraine in June 2017, and got down to business.

Connect Ukraine

It took just two months for the idea to become reality. The first Connect Ukraine festival kicked off on July 28 at the Platforma Art Factory in Kyiv, the location also used by the street food festival that impressed Bø.

The three-day conference gathered 2,000 guests. The program covered panel discussions and inspirational talks by 40 Ukrainian and 18 international speakers from the U.S., Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands, including Casey Fenton, the founder of CouchSurfing; Toni Lane Casserly, a bitcoin and blockchain expert and co-founder of the Bitnation virtual nation; and David Passiak, the author of the books Empower and Disruption Revolution, which examine innovative changes in working and business.

The event featured workshops for brainstorming ideas and co-creation sessions, where participants drew up plans for implementing their ideas. There were evening entertainment events for networking.

Bø believes that the event, which was sponsored by Ukrainian businesses, gave a start to creating in Ukraine a community of ambitious smart progressive minds, who will support and help each other.

Bø says that it wasn't a problem to find financing, and neither was it difficult to attract speakers.

“People are interested in Ukraine, we just have to do that job of getting them to come here and see all the opportunities.”

Ambitious goal

Despite being based in New York now, where he is working for environmental services company Chooose, Bø will return for the second Connect Ukraine festival, which will focus on how technology and other industries can create growth in Ukraine. For instance, some topics will be how blockchain technology can help fight corruption and how the creative industries are able to connect better with Western markets. ■

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City Life: Kyiv restaurants serve nutritious brunches

Brunch from page 19

time to time, but usually includes pumpkin soup or borsch, pilaf, salads, jerked meat and tartlets. Barvy serves desserts such as chocolate pie with cranberry and muffins. The drinks menu includes various kinds of wine, uzvar (Ukrainian traditional fruit and berries drink), cider and beer.

Barvy. 3 Mechnykova St. Sun. 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Milk Bar

This café, famous for its tasty desserts and healthy breakfasts, also pampers its visitors with sweet and savory brunches. Every weekend Milk Bar serves various kinds of dishes with

eggs - poached eggs with avocado on toast, baked eggs with tomatoes and goat cheese, and omelets with chicken and potatoes.

The brunch menu also includes banana waffles, sorghum porridge with peaches and nuts, muesli, French toast, salads, soups and more. Milk Bar serves a large variety of drinks, including different kinds of coffee, tea, milk, hot fruit drinks, smoothies and fresh juice.

Prices: poached eggs - Hr 115-189, banana waffles - Hr 139.

Milk Bar. 16 Shota Rustaveli St. Sat-Sun. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Vatra

Meat restaurant Vatra offers weekend brunches for real meat-lovers -

serving up premium Ukrainian beef steaks, BBQ brisket and ribs. Also on the menu is smoked beef and pork ribs, smoked turkey, sausage with dried olives and tomatoes, and pastrami sandwiches.

Apart from that, the restaurant offers smoked catfish and trout, cheese plates, various salads, baked vegetables with ricotta cheese, banosh (corn flour porridge) and bohrach (meat and vegetable soup). Vatra also bakes pastries and strudels with cherry and pumpkin, smoked apples and fresh fruit. Drinks include wine, uzvar and mors.

Prices: buffet brunch - Hr 399 per person.

Vatra. 4B Arhitektora Horodetskoho St. Sat-Sun. 12 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Bessarabiia

This restaurant located in the heart of Kyiv's downtown near Besarabsky market, serves seafood from the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Every weekend Bessarabiia offers a buffet brunch, serving mussels, mititei (grilled ground meat rolls), forshmak, hummus, poached eggs, cheese and smoked meat.

The restaurant also makes granola and yogurt, bakes various kinds of pastries, and offers a choice of salads.

Their drinks menu includes red, white and sparkling wine, and house-made kompot.

Prices: buffet brunch - Hr 298 per person.

Bessarabiia. 7 Besarabska Sq. Sat-Sun. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. ■



Every weekend Bessarabiia restaurant offers a buffet brunch serving seafood from the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. (Courtesy of Bessarabiia)

Scientist is among 5,000 Ukrainians who now call Norway their home

Scientist from page 16

them in 2014.

The multinational team includes scientists from Terma Aero Space Company, Technical University of Denmark, the University of Bergen, University of Valencia, Polish Academy of Science Space Research Center, and OHB Italia.

The idea is to install a system of cameras and various detectors on the International Space Station that will observe the upper atmosphere to help scientists understand its nature. Kochkin says that the main goal is to study "how Earth is coupled to space."

"Besides lightning, there are a few other astonishing atmospheric phenomena that lack complete understanding; their effects on the terrestrial atmosphere and near-Earth environment are far from being clear to us," Kochkin says.

Kochkin ended up on the project thanks to his earlier studies. Back in 2010, he relocated from Ukraine to the Netherlands to do a PhD at Electrical Engineering Department in the Eindhoven University of Technology.

"During the Ph.D., we conducted two experimental campaigns on long laboratory sparks in collaboration with the University of Bergen,

Norway. Later, after I was awarded my Ph.D. in 2014, I was invited to join their research team in Bergen," Kochkin says.

Lightning studies

The main focus of Kochkin's current research is lightning and associated atmospheric phenomena, such as terrestrial Gamma-Ray Flashes, long gamma-ray glows of thunderclouds, high-altitude discharges (sprites) and other such phenomena.

"My research can be used practically, for example, to study the interaction of lightning with aircraft, and possible climate effects," Kochkin explains.

"In collaboration with Airbus we send airplanes right into severe thunderstorms to study lightning effects, but also the phenomenology of aircraft-initiated lightning flashes," he says.

He has a third project: studying long laboratory sparks and basic physical principles of their evolution and development.

"They are, in some sense, small lightning discharges in a controlled laboratory environment," Kochkin says.

Ukrainians in Norway

Kochkin, who lives in Bergen with his wife and two children, is now

part of the 5,000-member Ukrainian diaspora in Norway. He says that the high quality of life in Norway has a positive impact on him, inspiring him a lot.

"Life in Norway is enjoyable," the scientist says. "The incredibly beautiful landscapes and ocean remind me of my home, Crimea. The climate is a bit tougher though, but Bergen is among the warmest cities in the country."

Kochkin finds the country and its people friendly and helpful to migrants like himself.

"The government provides you and your family with lots of possibilities to integrate smoothly into their society," Kochkin says. "There are free language courses, various social and sports activities, free library access, and international school classes."

Norway is known for its particularly high income tax - for Kochkin it is above 30 percent - but the Ukrainian says that the comfort one gets in return is worth it.

The key to adapting to a life abroad for Ukrainians is to "become open-minded and drop the post-Soviet mentality," he says.

"Once you've done this, life in Norway and other European countries becomes easier," Kochkin says. ■

EDUCATION ADVISER

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TEACHING FOR MASTERY



Luke Woodruff, Director, Kyiv International School

"What do you call a medical doctor that got 'Cs' in medical school? Wait for it...a DOCTOR." This joke never gets old, but typically hits home in a different way for me, as an educator. The humor brings to light the fact that in most educational programs, students can move up from level to level and year to year without demonstrating full understanding of the material or the ability to synthesize it. For many primary and secondary schools, a "C" or even "D" is the lowest passing grade. Depending on the school's grading scale, this means that the child may be moving to the next year or course having only demonstrated 60-70% proficiency. You have to wonder how important the missing

30-40% will be for the student moving forward.

Mastery Learning

Mastery Learning (ML) is not a new concept, but is starting to become the model for schools looking to reach all students in a more engaging and meaningful way. The idea behind mastery learning is simple. ML schools care about the 40%, 30%, 20%, 10%, and even the 5% that might be missing. They believe that these gaps in learning are important and, if left unchecked, turn into deficits, difficulties, and frustrations in learning down the road. Traditional education systems often identify the gaps without any plan or process to fill them. Mastery learning adheres to the principle that students must demonstrate proficiency or mastery in knowledge, content, and skills. If a student is not able to demonstrate mastery, he or she is provided with additional and differentiated support to first re-learn the material, and is then reassessed on it. This cycle continues, similar to one-on-one tutoring, until the learner has achieved true mastery.

Sal Khan, the founder of Khan Academy, gave a great TED Talk concerning mastery learning in 2015 and spoke at length about the need for such a system. He said the following in comparing traditional education systems to building a home:

"So we bring in the contractor and say, 'We were told we have two weeks to build a foundation. Do what you can.' So they do what they can. Maybe it rains. Maybe some of the supplies don't show up. And two weeks later, the inspector comes, looks around, says, 'OK, the concrete is still wet right over there, that part's not quite up to code ...I'll give it an 80 percent.' You say, 'Great! That's a C. Let's build the first floor.' We have two more weeks, do what you can, inspector shows up, it's a 75 percent. Great, that's a D-plus. Second floor, third floor, and all of a sudden, while you're building the third floor, the whole structure collapses. And if your reaction is the reaction you typically have in education, or that a lot of folks have, you might say, maybe we had a bad contractor, or maybe we needed better inspection or more frequent inspection. **But what was really broken was the process (emphasis added).** We were artificially constraining how long we had to do something, pretty much ensuring a variable outcome, and **we took the trouble of inspecting and identifying those gaps, but then we built right on top of it (emphasis added).** So the idea of mastery learning is to do the exact opposite."

(www.ted.com/talks/sal_khan_let_s_teach_for_mastery_not_test_scores).

When you think about it like that, it makes a lot of sense; yet parents, teachers, and students often get drawn into the traditional and antiquated benchmarks for education.

Time Mind Shift

Most education programs have some system of separating students based on academic achievement. It is acceptable for most school systems to teach all students the same things, to give identical exams to assess student learning, and then to observe, record, and report the difference in student achievement. In this scenario, performance becomes the focused variable. In mastery learning, time becomes the focused variable, and changes with the intention of increasing all student performance. Time is not an indicator OF success, but a tool FOR success. As such, it becomes one of the most valuable tools for students and teachers. All students are different and enter the classroom with varying levels of language fluency, emotional intelligence, work ethic, curiosity, aptitude for their studies, and degrees of content comprehension. It stands to reason that not all students will be able to reach a high standard of performance at the same time. As a result of varying the time indicator for success, more students are able to demonstrate proficiency and achievement at higher levels throughout the year. As the quality and quantity of time work together to provide a positive learning environment, there is a shift in the perception of time. It is now used as a tool FOR learning, that simultaneously develops and promotes a growth mindset. This shift in mindset leads to a solid foundation of learning and a healthy perspective of success that will benefit students throughout their education and careers.



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Lack of sex education fuels teen pregnancies in Ukraine

Editor's Note: This article is a part of the "Journalism of Tolerance" project by the Kyiv Post and its affiliated non-profit organization, the Media Development Foundation. The project covers challenges faced by sexual, ethnic and other minorities in Ukraine, as well as people with physical disabilities and those living in poverty. This project is made possible by the support of the American people through the U.S. Agency for International Development and Internews. Content is independent of the donors.

BY VERONIKA NIKITINA

Anastasia Naumenko will be a mother by the end of February.

Naumenko is only 13 years old, and has not even finished the eighth grade. She only found out she was expecting a child six months into her pregnancy.

"My mother began to suspect something, my stomach was getting bigger, and I started eating a lot," Naumenko told the Kyiv Post. "At first I cried. Mom said she would kill me, but then she accepted my pregnancy. I planned to have kids only when I was 23–24 years old, after I get education."

According to the United Nations Population Fund, Naumenko's case is not that rare: Every day, all over the world 20,000 teenage girls give birth; annually more than seven million. While in developed countries, like the Netherlands, Germany, Norway and Sweden, the adolescent birth rate per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19 is five.

In Ukraine it's 27, or five times higher.

In the post-Soviet states, one reason for the high rate is lack of sex education: Early sex education, rare in Ukraine's schools, helps delay children's first sexual experiences and significantly reduces sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancies.

Family trouble

There are six children in the Naumenko family. Anastasia is the oldest. She and her brothers and sisters have spent some time in an orphanage because of their mother's alcohol problems. Now they live together.

"My mother and I often quarreled when she was addicted to alcohol. I could leave home for a few weeks or months," Naumenko says. "At that time we had a fight again and I went to spend a night at my friends' brother's place. Then, as well as now, I was very naïve. I don't remember anything. He was drinking alcohol with friends, and I was drinking juice. Maybe he spiked my drink."

She hardly talks about her child's father, only that his name is Dima, he is 23 and he is "not a very good person. I try not to bear a grudge against people. I'll forget it as a terrible dream," she says.

One generation to next

Naumenko was born when her mother was 15 and had sex for the first time when she was 12. Her partner was 14, they were together for six months and then he started to abuse and humiliate her, so they broke up.

Despite her pregnancy, she says she actually knew about contraception from an early age.

"The current generation knows



Anastasia Naumenko, a 13-year-old girl who will become a mother in February, talks to the Kyiv Post at her apartment in Kyiv on Dec. 15. (Volodymyr Petrov)

about it at the age of 7. It's always discussed among friends. They told me about that. When I was 6 years old I already knew that I need to protect myself," she says.

School education

Ukrainian school students are supposed to receive basic sex education within the framework of the "Health Protection" and "Anatomy" national curriculum courses. However, according to U-Report, a free online messaging platform run by The United Nations Children's Fund for

young people, only 42 percent of Ukrainian teenagers actually take the courses, which are also poorly designed. Some schools invite in lecturers to teach independent sex education courses.

The vice director for educational work at Kyiv Gymnasium No. 179, Svitlana Bogdan, calls the issue of sex education "a painful question, that's why the more we inform children in more different forms, the better."

"Such information can't be a luxury for teenagers," said Bogdan, who

invited tutors from "The Hidden Side of Love" course to give classes to her students.

"The Hidden Side of Love" was created using charity funds and is designed to prevent violence during adolescents' first relationships.

Over the three-month course, students attend 12 classes, where they are taught the basics of female and male psychology, the creation of harmonious sexual relations, self-development, and the protection of personal boundaries. The most common stereotypes that can influence the teenagers' perception of relationships are analyzed during a lecture called "Sex and Love Myths." For example, that friendship between a man and a woman does not exist, or that if a man hits a woman it means he loves her.

Alexandra Starobor, head of "The Hidden Side of Love," says that understanding happy relationships and happiness itself does not unfortunately form when people become adults, but much earlier, "in adolescence, when we are forming as individuals."

Daniil Stolbunov, an activist for the non-government organization Teenergizer, which works with young people, believes the post-Soviet mentality is the reason why "parents and teachers don't talk with children about sex at all, or raise this issue when it's too late."

"Teenagers know how to divide, but do not know how to use a condom," Daniil says.

Naumenko plans to go back to school after six-months of maternity and finish it. She says she's thinking about becoming a cook, but this isn't the main thing on her mind.

"I'm not thinking about a future profession," the girl says. "Now I'm thinking how to bring up a child." ■

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