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Landslide!



Ukrainian President-elect Volodymyr Zelenskiy reacts in his Kyiv campaign headquarters after exit poll results show a landslide victory for him on April 21, 2019. (AFP)

The next print edition of newspaper will be on May 10. Until then, follow kyivpost.com for all the latest news.

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Poroshenko's legacy after 5 years: A presidency of historic achievement

BY EUAN MACDONALD
EUAN@HOTMAIL.COM

It's too soon to write Petro Poroshenko's political obituary, as the outgoing Ukrainian president still enjoys enough support in the country for his party to win seats in the Verkhovna Rada in the parliamentary elections in October.

But his days in the top seat of Ukrainian politics will soon be over. There is little chance of a big political comeback for Poroshenko akin to that of Viktor Yanukovich after the 2004 Orange Revolution: The incumbent president was mauled in the presidential election by the inexperienced newcomer Volodymyr Zelenskiy, suffering the worst defeat in percentage terms in Ukrainian presidential election history. The majority of Ukrainian voters wanted literally anyone but Poroshenko to win in 2019.

It didn't have to be this way. In May 2014, when Ukrainians were voting for their first post-Euro-Maidan Revolution president, they were electing someone to continue charting Ukraine's historic change of course away from Kremlin political and economic domination.

While Poroshenko was still a representative of Ukraine's old oligarchic political elite, he was savvy enough during both the Orange Revolution of 2004 and the EuroMaidan Revolution of 2013-2014 to pick the winning side in the decades-long struggle between the public's yearning to live in a "normal" (i.e. European, democratic) country, and Ukraine's post-Soviet oligarchic power system.

Given that there was no realistic post-Maidan candidate for president who wasn't from the old political elite, Poroshenko looked the best bet. He swept to victory on May 25, 2014 with a convincing first round win, with 57.7 percent of the vote, well ahead of his nearest rival, Yulia Tymoshenko, who got 12.81 percent.

But Poroshenko quickly showed he was incapable of making the transition from oligarchic power player to Western-style liberal democratic leader, and this has doomed him to be a single-term president.

It's the war, stupid...

Poroshenko's presidency got off to the worst start possible. He promised on May 26, the day after his election, that there would be a quick end to Russia's war on Ukraine, absurdly claiming that "the anti-terrorist operation cannot and should not last two or three months. It should and will last hours."



Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko gestures as he talks to army commanders during military drills on the coast of the Azov Sea near the town of Urzuf on Oct. 12, 2018. (Volodymyr Petrov)

Ukraine had already gone on the offensive against Russia's military intervention in the Donbas. Acting-President Oleksandr Turchynov launched the "Anti-Terrorist Operation" on April 7, 2014, with the SBU security service commanding operations in the war zone. At that time, Ukraine's military had been so hollowed out by previous President Viktor Yanukovich's defense cuts that the nation of 45 million could barely muster 6,000 combat-ready troops. Volunteer battalions, formed and supported by ordinary citizens quickly, helped fill the gap.

Battling hard, Ukraine by late summer looked to be on the verge of defeating the Russian-led forces. But in late August 2014 the Kremlin sent large numbers of regular troops into Ukraine to deal a series of devastating blows to the Ukrainian military, notably at Ilovaisk in Donetsk Oblast, when hundreds of retreating Ukrainian troops were ambushed and killed by Russian artillery. Russian paratroops, tank units and self-propelled artillery also fought Ukrainian troops away from the Russian-Ukrainian border, making it easier for the Kremlin to sustain the occupied parts of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts.

By early September 2014 Ukraine was forced into humiliating peace talks in Minsk, Belarus, where Russian President Vladimir Putin at one point threatened to "crush Ukraine's troops," according to former French President Francois Hollande, who was present at the talks.

The cease-fire agreed in Minsk broke down within hours, and after Ukraine finally lost control of the ruined Donetsk airport in January 2015, another meeting at Minsk was held. Russia broke the second "cease-fire" agreed there almost immediately, seizing control of the strategic rail hub of Debaltseve in another humiliating defeat for Ukraine.

The front line has since stabilized, but the constant, low-level fighting has now taken over 13,000 lives, and Poroshenko's failure to stop the war is one of the main reasons he lost

in 2019. None of the five eastern oblasts gave Poroshenko more than 11.5 percent in the second round vote on April 21. Luhansk Oblast gave him his lowest result - 8.5 percent.

But it's economy too...

While Russia's military intervention is only directly affecting Crimea and two oblasts in the Donbas, Ukrainians in the rest of the country have felt its effect in their pockets. The economic crisis may have been triggered by the revolution and war, but it had been brewing under the corrupt misrule of Yanukovich and his cronies, who looted the economy of billions. Poroshenko was faced with the unenviable task of cleaning up the mess.

But between the time Poroshenko took the helm on May 25, 2014 and the aftermath of the terrible defeat at Debaltseve, Ukraine's hryvnia currency fell from about Hr 11.72 to Hr 28.46 to the dollar on Feb. 26, 2015.

Overall, the hryvnia lost about 70 percent of its value against the U.S. dollar in these first nine months of Poroshenko's presidency. The dramatic plunge reflected the overvaluation of the currency under Yanukovich, and the sharp contraction of the Ukrainian economy after the outbreak of the war.

But it also reflected the National Bank of Ukraine's abandonment of its pegging the hryvnia to the dollar and switch to a free-floating exchange rate - one of the key demands of the International Monetary Fund. Throughout his presidency, Poroshenko was to wrestle with the need to meet the demands of Ukraine's financial backers for reforms, the political backlash that painful but necessary reforms generated, and his own oligarchic desires not to dismantle the system that had nurtured him.

The cleansing of the banking system by the NBU, and astute fiscal policies pursued by Natalie Jaresko, Ukraine's Finance Minister from December 2014 to April 2016, stabilized the hryvnia at around Hr 22

to the dollar by March 2015. But the currency continued to weaken for the remainder of Poroshenko's term, with economic growth sluggish. This was a second big reason for his unpopularity come election time in 2019.

And corruption...

Poroshenko was also dogged by corruption allegations against his close political associates, some of whom were former business partners whom he had appointed to positions of power. Over his term, Ukrainian politics looked to have reverted to business as usual, with one lawmaker who fled the country under the threat of embezzlement charges alleging that he had delivered "suitcases of cash" to the Rada to buy key votes for government.

Poroshenko himself failed to give up control of some of the companies he owned, including his influential 5th Channel television station, and faced personal scandals concerning a lavish holiday in the Maldives in early January 2018 and questions over his financial affairs raised by the Panama Papers leak of financial documents. That leak, and the later Paradise Papers leak, raised suspicions that Poroshenko used a web of offshore companies to minimize his tax obligations.

Worse, the former deputy secretary of the National Security and Defense Council, Oleh Hladkovskiy - a long-time close business partner of the president - was linked via his son to a scheme to smuggle military parts from Russia, some faulty and obsolete, which were allegedly sold at inflated prices to Ukrainian defense companies.

That last scandal broke a month before the first round of the presidential election, and dogged Poroshenko all through the final part of his election campaign. While Poroshenko's poll numbers already indicated defeat before the scandal broke, this last setback may well have effectively eliminated any chance of a rebound in his support.

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Hot campaign ends with very calm election in Ukraine

Editor's Note: Election Watch is a regular update on the state of the 2019 races for the presidency and parliament. The country elected a new president on April 21 and will vote for a new parliament in October. The Election Watch project is supported by the National Endowment for Democracy. The donor doesn't influence the content. Go to kyivpost.com for more election coverage.

Key developments: Zelenskiy wins landslide victory, goes silent after election. Thank-you rally for Poroshenko. Russia flexes its muscles.

BY OLGA RUDENKO
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It happened: On April 21, showman Volodymyr Zelenskiy won the Ukrainian presidency in a landslide with 73 percent of the vote.

After a surreal campaign that resembled reality TV and included a stadium debate and a public drug test, Zelenskiy went silent. Four days after the vote, he has largely avoided the spotlight. His Facebook and Instagram accounts, which were his preferred communication platforms during the three-month campaign, also went silent.

the runoff on April 21 than for the first-round vote on March 31, which featured 39 candidates.

As polling stations closed and the exit poll results came in, Zelenskiy celebrated victory. The gap between him and Poroshenko, at 49 percent, was the biggest margin of victory in Ukrainian election history. It was so large that no one waited for the official result to come in.

Zelenskiy celebrated his victory at his team's headquarters, but only appeared before the press twice on election night: once to react to the results and to promise "he will never fail" Ukrainians, and once to answer several questions. His most memorable statement of the night was the one he didn't address to Ukrainians. "To all post-Soviet countries: look at us. Everything is possible," he said.

Poroshenko

Poroshenko acknowledged his defeat immediately after the exit polls came out.

The president went on stage at his campaign headquarters in Kyiv to concede, and called Zelenskiy, according to the president-elect, soon after.

Poroshenko's concession speech won him praise among his supporters and observers. The outgoing president was dignified, calm, and seemed to be in a good mood. The election result wasn't a surprise to anyone, including Poroshenko.

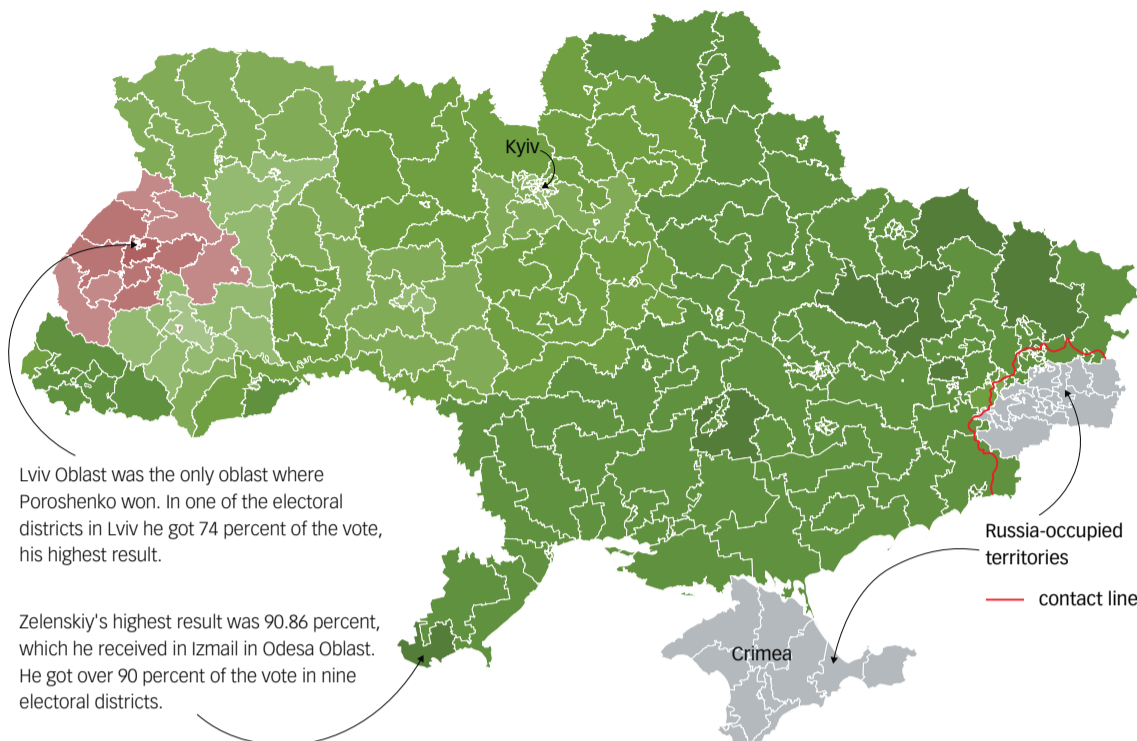
He offered his help to Zelenskiy and emphasized that he would pass to him "the international network of support" that Ukraine has.

But Poroshenko's best post-election moment arrived on the following day, when several thousand people held a rally near the presidential administration to thank him for his service. Poroshenko welcomed the crowd and took selfies with his supporters. He and his wife Maryna also came to the administration's balcony to wave, resembling British royalty.

The pleasant surprises for Poroshenko ended there. The election tested the loyalty of some of his top allies.

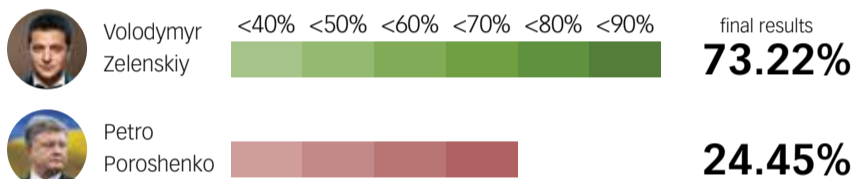
On the day after the election, the Prosecutor General's Office, led by Poroshenko's appointee and ally Yuriy Lutsenko, published subpoenas for several former top officials

How Ukraine voted in April 21 presidential election
The map shows the winning candidates in each of the 199 electoral districts of Ukraine.



Lviv Oblast was the only oblast where Poroshenko won. In one of the electoral districts in Lviv he got 74 percent of the vote, his highest result.

Zelenskiy's highest result was 90.86 percent, which he received in Izmail in Odesa Oblast. He got over 90 percent of the vote in nine electoral districts.



An actor-turned-politician Volodymyr Zelenskiy won the presidential election, receiving 73.22% of the vote. He won the majority in all but one Ukrainian oblasts, with 13.5 million people voting for him. President Petro Poroshenko lost his re-election bid. He won electoral districts in Lviv Oblast and in the cities of Ternopil and Ivano-Frankivsk.

Source: Central Election Commission

Kyiv Post



While the president-elect is catching his breath somewhere out of the public eye, analysts and politicians are discussing his possible first steps and appointments.

Thanks to Zelenskiy's notorious vagueness and his campaign's lack of clear substance, there are plenty of grounds for speculation about his first steps and his candidates for the key posts, which include the chief of staff, defense and foreign ministers, prosecutor general, and the head of the state security service, or SBU.

Fair election

For all the strangeness of the campaign, the actual runoff Election Day was calm and brought no surprises. Polls predicted that Zelenskiy would win by a large margin, leaving little to no chance for his competitor, President Petro Poroshenko, to get a second term.

The polls turned out to be accurate: Zelenskiy won over 73 percent of the vote, while Poroshenko took only 24 percent.

The election saw a relatively low turnout of 61 percent — the second lowest voter turnout in the history of Ukrainian presidential elections. Even fewer people, 59 percent, took part in the 2014 election where Poroshenko won in the first round. Every earlier election saw a considerably higher voter turnout, especially in the second round, in which people traditionally showed more interest. Yet in this election, even fewer people showed up for

more Election on page 18

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Editorials

Election is over...

It is done. What used to be unthinkable became reality: Volodymyr Zelenskiy, a popular actor and comedian, was elected president of Ukraine.

His swift and unusual campaign will go down in history — and probably, in marketing textbooks as well. It can be liked or disliked but one can't deny its effectiveness.

Zelenskiy won the election in a landslide, nailing the biggest winning margin in the history of presidential elections in Ukraine, by nearly 50 percentage points. He also won across the country, although he was more supported in the east. He won everywhere except for Lviv Oblast and some locations in Ternopil and Ivano-Frankivsk oblasts.

In theory, it means Zelenskiy was elected the president of the whole country, and the disgraceful "east against west" polarization that started during the 2004 presidential election finally ended.

In practice, however, the election still brought polarization. This time, it isn't based on the "east vs. west" paradigm, but is rather a leftover — or a hangover — of the toxic presidential campaign.

In the presidential campaign, we saw very little discussion of policies. Instead, we saw a spectacular show and, unfortunately, a lot of bashing of the other candidate's supporters. It is one thing when a candidate is accused of incompetence or corruption. It's a different thing when a candidate's supporters are called, for months, empty-headed for supporting who they support.

Anyone sincerely believing in any candidate deserves their position to be respected. Learning about candidates, getting involved, voting, taking active participation in the democratic process deserves respect.

This post-election hangover will end with inauguration within several weeks.

Zelenskiy was elected by 73 percent of all who voted — that's 13.5 million Ukrainians. Out of respect for their choice, the new president needs to be given fair treatment. That includes the benefit of the trust.

He also needs to be held accountable for his actions. We, along with all Ukrainian journalists, will make sure he is.

...Now the work starts

When President-elect Volodymyr Zelenskiy enters office as Ukraine's sixth president by June 3, he will have a full in-tray waiting for him. The most pressing matter will be Russia and its ongoing war in the Donbas. Russian President Vladimir Putin has already set the new Ukrainian leader his first test — how to respond to the Kremlin's decision to start issuing Russian passports to Ukrainians in the Russian-occupied parts of the Donbas.

It's no coincidence that Putin chose to put his "passportization" scheme, in preparation for at least two years already, into motion just days after Zelenskiy's election. Make no mistake: this is a direct challenge to Ukraine's sovereignty, and Putin is not only testing the reaction of Ukraine's new leader, but the responses of Ukraine's friends and allies. If there is no strong answer to this outrage, such as an increase in Western sanctions, the Russian dictator will judge it safe to turn up the pressure.

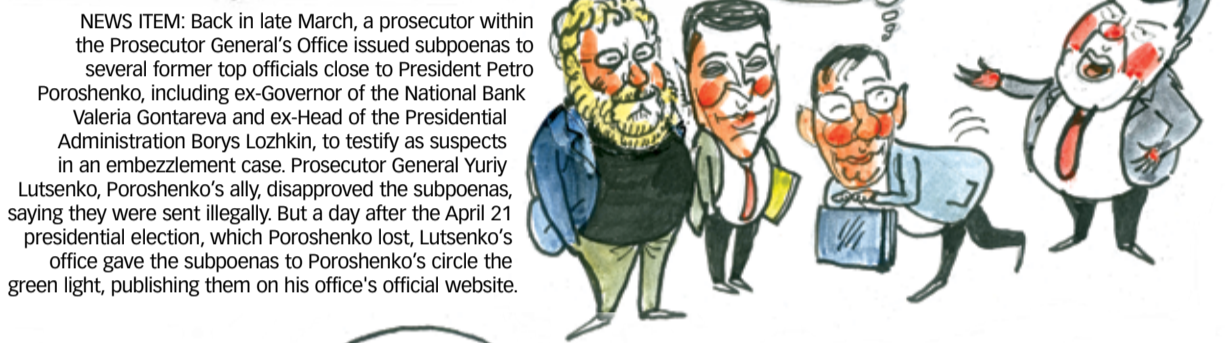
Moscow hopes that Zelenskiy will cut a deal: It wants Ukraine to accept back the occupied territories, but for them to have a large measure of autonomy (read "Kremlin influence") so that Ukraine remains weak and unstable. It also wants Ukraine to accept the loss of Crimea, and will offer a cheap gas deal as a sweetener, but also as a way to continue to poison Ukraine with corruption. The pro-Russian politician Viktor Medvedchuk hinted at the possibility of such a deal even before Zelenskiy's election.

It is essential that Zelenskiy does not yield: Many will see it as a betrayal of national interests if he does. While Zelenskiy's supporters want change, they do not want Ukraine to change back to being dominated by Russia.

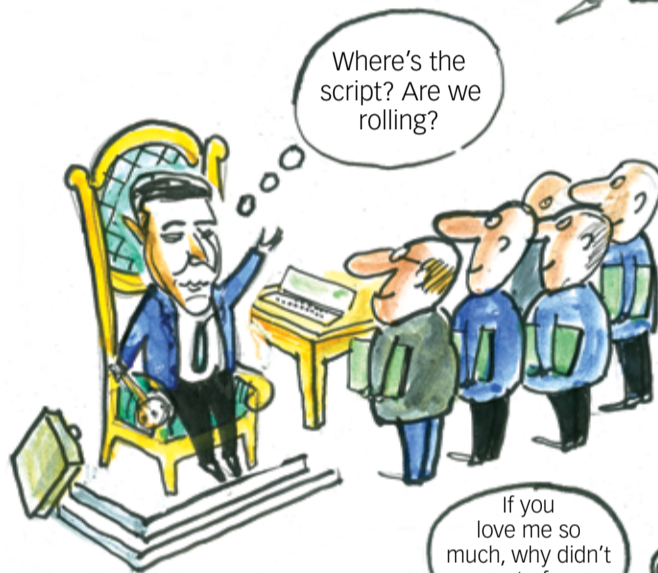
Zelenskiy's response to this challenge, and the controversy over Ukraine's new language law, will set the tone of his presidency for the months and years to come. Let's hope he gets it right.



NEWS ITEM: Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman said on April 22, the next day after the presidential election which his former patron President Petro Poroshenko lost, that he was going to form a new party and lead it to the parliamentary election, currently scheduled for October. He is one of many politicians who said they were starting new parties ahead of the election.



NEWS ITEM: Back in late March, a prosecutor within the Prosecutor General's Office issued subpoenas to several former top officials close to President Petro Poroshenko, including ex-Governor of the National Bank Valeria Gontareva and ex-Head of the Presidential Administration Borys Lozhkin, to testify as suspects in an embezzlement case. Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko, Poroshenko's ally, disapproved the subpoenas, saying they were sent illegally. But a day after the April 21 presidential election, which Poroshenko lost, Lutsenko's office gave the subpoenas to Poroshenko's circle the green light, publishing them on his office's official website.



NEWS ITEM: Comedian-turned-politician Volodymyr Zelenskiy won the Ukrainian presidency in a landslide, getting 73 percent of the vote against President Petro Poroshenko, who got 24 percent. Zelenskiy has no experience in politics or public service, although one of his most famous TV roles was that of a school teacher who becomes president of Ukraine in the show "Servant of the People."



NEWS ITEM: Several thousand people held a rally near the presidential administration in Kyiv on April 22 to thank President Petro Poroshenko for his five years in office. The day before, Poroshenko lost re-election to Volodymyr Zelenskiy, a comedian with no political experience. Poroshenko got only 24 percent of the vote.

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Reformer & Anti-Reformer Of The Week



Reformer

Nadiya Bugrova
Expert who took on interior minister faces trial as part of vendetta



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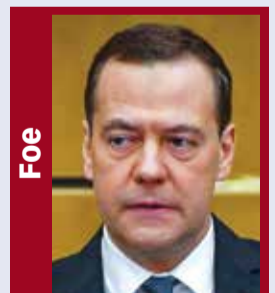
Maksym Gryshchuk
Prosecutor accused of blocking graft case against presidential ally

Ukraine's Friend & Foe Of The Week



Friend

Michael Carpenter
Foreign policy expert calls on West to rally round new president.



Foe

Dmitry Medvedev
Russian PM has the gall to ask Ukraine to be honest with Russia.

VOX populi:

What first steps do you expect the new president to take?

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Electoral reform moves up list of parliament's priorities

BY OKSANA GRYTSENKO
GRYTSENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

As Ukraine prepares to inaugurate a new president, some lawmakers are looking ahead to parliamentary elections in late October.

On April 23, media outlets shared photos and videos of food packages with pasta, buckwheat, canned meat and fish, condensed milk, sunflower oil and a bottle of red wine, all marked as Easter gifts from Serhiy Pashynsky, a lawmaker from the 80-member People's Front party.

The parcels were delivered to people older than 65 in Korosten, a city of 65,000 residents just 150 kilometers northwest of Kyiv. On its Facebook page, Pashynsky's charity also posted photos of a video projector it gave to a local kindergarten and basketballs presented to a local school this month.

Pashynsky didn't respond to requests for comment.

People's Front has witnessed a spectacular fall from grace since it took parliament by storm in 2014. Currently, it has almost no support and has not even been included in recent polls. But Korosten's single-member district could still give Pashynsky a shot at being reelected.

Under the current law, 225 out of 450 lawmakers are elected from single-member constituencies. The rest of parliament is formed using the closed party list system, under which parties must reveal to voters only the top five names on their lists. This allows them to bring publicly unpopular but rich and powerful party sponsors — hidden below the fifth position — into the Verkhovna Rada.

Ukraine's richest oligarch, Rinat Akhmetov, was elected to parliament this way in 2006 and 2007. Both times, he was included in the seventh spot on the lists of ex-President Viktor Yanukovich's Party of Regions. During his time in parliament, Akhmetov was almost never present in the Rada.

For years, it has been no secret that the electoral system needs urgent reform to prevent these kinds of dishonest actions. Both President Petro Poroshenko and President-elect Volodymyr Zelenskyy claimed in their campaigns that parliamentary elections should be held under a party system with open lists.

But these changes haven't yet been adopted by parliament and have nearly no chance of being implemented this year, experts say.

"I see no prospects for it so far," said Olga Aivazovska, head of the Opora election watchdog.

New electoral code

When Poroshenko campaigned for the presidency in 2014, he promised that the next parliament would be elected using a system of open party lists. That never happened.

Only in November 2017 did parliament pass a new electoral code in its first reading with the minimal required 226 votes. Although the bill was co-sponsored by members of the parliamentary coalition — including Rada speaker Andriy Parubiy —



Lawmakers from People's Front party faction Khvicha Meparishvili pinches nose of his fellow faction member Andriy Reka during parliament session on Oct. 19, 2017. Both lawmakers are little known by public. Meparishvili was elected by closed party list being number 78 there, while Reka was elected by single constituency mandate. (Oleg Petrasuiuk)

lawmakers have yet to give it (and its roughly 4,000 proposed amendments) a second reading.

"Nobody wants this system," said Oleksandr Chernenko, a lawmaker from the 135-member Poroshenko Bloc party faction and co-sponsor of the electoral code. "There is no common opinion on it in the factions and the lawmakers elected from single-member constituencies are against it."

The bill envisages that, during parliamentary elections, the parties will offer their national lists of candidates and also create 27 regional lists, filling them with candidates based on their popularity in certain regions.

Voters then have to vote for one party. But they may also choose one candidate in the party's regional list. If a candidate receives significant support in a regional list, his name

will rise in the national list and he will have a higher chance of becoming a lawmaker.

Campaign for new laws

In February, popular rock singer Svyatoslav Vakarchuk made an open address to Poroshenko and lawmakers, urging them to pass the electoral code, which would eliminate the corrupt single-member system and would not allow the lawmakers to defect from their parties.

"And most importantly, this system gives the new kind of politicians the highest chance of getting into parliament," he said.

Zelenskyy, who campaigned for the presidency as a politician of the new generation, also included the need to hold both the parliamentary and local elections using open lists in his program.

Vadym Halaychuk, chief lawyer to Zelenskyy's campaign and his representative in the Central Election Commission, told the Kyiv Post that holding elections for the next parliament under the old rules would "hopelessly postpone" the achievement of people power, one of the new president's stated priorities.

However, he said Zelenskyy's team cannot say whether they support the new electoral code until they see all the amendments made to the document. "The electoral code received so many changes that it's now unclear how exactly the (party) lists will be formed," he said.

Aivazovska said she also hasn't seen the final text of the electoral code with all the changes made by members of the special parliamentary group after it was passed in its first reading. But, so far, she also sees "no

real interest" from Zelenskyy's team in promoting the new election rules.

Chernenko said that Zelenskyy, who has no representation in parliament, has no means to influence the adoption of electoral reform.

Other election bills

Although photos of Pashynsky's food packages outraged many Facebook users, the lawmaker may feel safe. Nobody can charge him with vote-buying before the parliamentary campaign starts on July 29.

But even after that, Pashynsky faces little risk for distributing, among other things, buckwheat — a method that has been used so frequently in modern Ukrainian history that it has even become a meme and shorthand for vote-buying.

"Buckwheat is now, in fact, partly legal," Aivazovska said. It may violate the spirit of the law, but there is no punishment for it.

This problem could have been solved with a bill submitted by the government and aimed at strengthening criminal liability for election fraud. But that draft law hasn't been passed even in the first reading.

The parliament also has a draft law that could save time for internally displaced people and tens of thousands of other Ukrainians who don't live at their legal registration address. To vote in the recent presidential election, they had to stand in long lines before both rounds for a one-time change of their voting address.

The bill submitted by a group of lawmakers in March 2017 would allow every voter to change their voting address permanently and vote wherever they want, Aivazovska said.

But with that bill languishing away, she added, voters who don't live near their registration address cannot vote for single-member districts or in local elections at all. ■

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Natalia Galibarenko: Brexit is a challenge for Ukraine

BY JACK LAURENSEN
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LONDON — Early in the morning on April 13, an attacker began ramming his car into the official vehicle of the Ukrainian ambassador to the United Kingdom while it was parked outside the embassy. Officials in Kyiv and London scrambled to make sure that Natalia Galibarenko and her staff had not been harmed.

The man had not entered the Ukrainian embassy, a modest-sized building on the western edge of central London, and few diplomatic staff were in the building at the time.

Galibarenko was posted to the British capital in September 2015 and has been representing Ukrainian interests throughout the turbulence of Brexit. She is probably one of the most important Ukrainian ambassadors.

The senior diplomat told the Kyiv Post in an interview at the Ukrainian embassy in London on April 18 that she was relieved nobody had been hurt in the attack.

“Even in a disastrous situation like this there can be positives to find,” she said. “I was trying to imagine the picture if he had not been attacking the car but was attacking the line of voters outside the embassy instead,” the ambassador said. She expected 1,250 Ukrainians in London to vote at the embassy on April 21, as people headed to the polls for Election Day.

Embassy attack

Police blocked off the street and began a short but tense standoff with the attacker. The man then revved his engine before driving the car directly at officers, according to police. Armed officers opened fire on the vehicle but did not wound its driver. Instead, he was subdued with a taser.

“Instead of surrendering when faced by armed police, he attacked, forcing them to open fire,” the ambassador said. “This is something that I cannot explain — it goes beyond any kind of normal grievance.”

On April 14, London’s Metropolitan Police confirmed that the unnamed suspect had been arrested on suspicion of criminal damage and attempted murder. He was also sec-



Ukrainian Ambassador to the UK, Natalia Galibarenko (C), and her husband Oleksandr Naumenko (R), meet Britain's Queen Elizabeth II during a private audience at Buckingham Palace, in central London on March 2, 2016. (AFP)

tioned under the Mental Health Act and transferred to a hospital.

British Ukrainians

An estimated 31,000 Ukrainian-born citizens live in the United Kingdom, although it is unknown exactly how many ethnic Ukrainians live among the diaspora that is scattered throughout the British Isles.

Despite the April 13 attack, Galibarenko maintains that the Ukrainian community in the U.K. broadly feels safe and secure.

“It is a close-knit community... and despite Brexit, Ukrainians generally feel welcome and not threatened,” she said. These days, the same cannot be said for all foreigners in Britain.

The country’s move to leave the European Union, decided in a 2016 referendum, has been accompanied by a rise in rhetoric and actions that are anti-European and xenophobic, experts say. Last summer, the United Nations issued a report that warned of a rise in “Brexit-related” racism. Eastern Europeans have been made to feel especially unwelcome since the contentious vote.

But Ukrainians are mostly happy in

Britain, the ambassador said, adding that the embassy deals with few serious consular complaints. And there are plenty of good reasons for Ukrainians to feel comfortable in the U.K.

Migrant workers earn some of the best salaries in Europe, many British universities and schools rank among the world’s best, living standards are high and the country is, for the most part, economically and politically stable.

Ukrainians in the U.K. have put down social and cultural roots too, and their heritage, if you know where to look, is not difficult to see.

Unions, societies and associations bring the Ukrainian diaspora together. Ukrainian language newspapers can be found. There is a Ukrainian language service of the British Broadcasting Corporation, or BBC, and the British Library in London — the world’s largest with some 200 million items in its inventory — has an impressive Ukrainian collection that is constantly being replenished.

A statue of Volodymyr the Great can be found in central London, as can memorials honoring the Ukrainian war dead. Near the northern English city of Derby — which has a Ukrainian community — there is a monument to the Soviet-orchestrated famine known as the Holodomor. Similar memorials can be found in the cities of Bolton and Rochdale too.

For Britain and Ukraine, ties are strong and relations good, but they can always be better. And no shortage of challenges lay ahead.

On Russia

In one area, Ukraine and the U.K. are almost entirely in agreement, and that is unlikely to change. When it comes to Russia’s war against the country, Ukraine has a steadfast and reliable ally in Britain.

Galibarenko says that being based in the U.K. presents her with the perfect platform to represent and defend Ukrainian interests.

“This country presents very favorable conditions for speaking about Russia because people here understand that we are speaking about Russian aggression — there is no civil war in Ukraine,” she said, adding that there is an additional challenge in working to make sure that this is accurately portrayed in English-language media.

“Other ambassadors have to explain that Russia is waging a war against Ukraine and they’re not listening,” the ambassador said, suggesting that some foreign officials have fallen victim to Moscow’s propaganda. “They don’t believe there are Russian troops fighting in Ukraine.”

Galibarenko says that the U.K. has been a strong advocate for Ukraine, especially in increasing sanctions on Moscow. Meanwhile, other countries in Europe have been somewhat less reliable. She fears losing the support of London in the European corridors of power.

“For me, that there will be no U.K. voice in Brussels that is defending Ukraine, it could be a big problem... there are certain things that we cannot change... after Brexit we will lose a voice in support of Ukraine,” the ambassador said.

Brexit and Ukraine

Galibarenko is trying not to become too distracted by the political circus that are taking place in both London and Kyiv, where Brexit and elections dominate the news cycles. She says that Kyiv’s priorities when it comes to British-Ukrainian relations are unlikely to change, regardless of circumstances.

“These political battles are influencing us very little,” she said. “And we have our own agenda with Britain, irrespective of what is happening in Ukraine. Certain priorities like EU and NATO integration are already envisaged in the constitution... (and) regardless of the next president, (such) priorities won’t change.”

How the United Kingdom and its commitment to multilateral agreements and institutions could change, however, is a point of concern for the ambassador — and she is not alone: many Ukrainian lawmakers have told the Kyiv Post they’re anxious about Brexit, and losing the British voice in Brussels.

“Brexit is a problem,” Galibarenko said. “Uncertainties in our bilateral relationship are a problem.” Ukrainians are being patient when it comes to unanswered questions on important issues relating to trade and visas, she added.

“We don’t even know when Brexit is coming... and we cannot proceed to a higher level of consultations,” the ambassador said.

In Kyiv, the British ambassador to Ukraine, Judith Gough, recently told the Kyiv Post that preliminary talks on a new trade agreement had started. She also said she hoped that visa-free travel (for Brits) would remain unaffected.

Many Ukrainian officials would like to renegotiate the British-Ukrainian visa arrangements and say it is broken.

“We would also like to simplify the visa regime,” said the Ukrainian ambassador to London, noting that Ukrainians have a rough time in getting a U.K. visa. Rejection rates are high and visas can be expensive for Ukrainians.

Meanwhile, British citizens can travel to Ukraine for 90 days without a visa. But beyond that period they also face problems. Visa fees for U.K. citizens are the most expensive of any nationality: a type-D visa for work is at least \$800, while a family reunification visa will cost \$2,000 or more. Then begins the bureaucratic headache of attempting to get a 1-year temporary residence permit.

Galibarenko says the bilateral arrangement should be improved, but she’s encountering obstacles in London where she has had little luck in securing commitments to renegotiate.

“We are realistic people and we’re not pushing for a visa-free regime with the U.K. the day after Brexit... but let’s start some kind of a dialogue, let’s look at simplification,” she said, adding that Ukrainian officials, scientists, businesspeople and journalists should at least have an easier time in visiting the U.K.

“It is difficult for me to explain back in Ukraine... because we’re very good friends with the U.K. and to explain why friends cannot proceed with improvements in their relations, it’s difficult,” she said.

Despite challenges ahead, Galibarenko is sure that Ukraine and the United Kingdom will face them together. She says there is plenty of opportunity to deepen ties and improve the relationship.

“We should be doing more to improve our image in the U.K. Ukraine is not only a victim of aggression,” she said. “We can also be a very good and valuable partner... our country has a lot to offer.” ■



A damaged black diplomatic car remains parked in the street outside the Ukrainian Embassy in west London on April 14, 2019, a day after an incident in which police firearms and a taser were used in making an arrest. (AFP)

What does business want from new president of Ukraine?

BY IGOR KOSSOV
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Business representatives are carefully watching what president-elect Volodymyr Zelenskiy and his team will do to preserve the independence of the National Bank of Ukraine, disavow oligarch influence, and help improve rule of law in Ukraine.

In the week after Zelenskiy's landslide victory, business leaders and international partners have come forth with concerns and suggestions for the new administration. The European Business Association released a list of seven steps it wants to see from Zelenskiy and hosted an event on April 25, to discuss the business community's hopes and concerns for the next five years. The American Chamber of Commerce also released a statement listing ten priorities for the future following its meeting with Zelenskiy on election night.

In addition, several business experts spoke to the Kyiv Post about their major concerns and what Zelenskiy can do to assuage them.

Clean nominations

Aivaras Abramovicius, a Zelenskiy advisor, told the assembled crowd at the EBA's Thursday event at the Hilton Hotel in Kyiv that the future administration would have three priorities: "team, team and team."

Business experts told the Kyiv Post that they want to see Zelenskiy's nominations for major posts as quickly as possible. But more importantly than that, they want nominees to have no blemishes on their record.

"It's important to recognize the appointments of people who lack a bad reputation," said Anders Aslund, a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council said. "This is more important than the lack of experience. People want change and so does the business community."

He added that two of the most important nominations are a new

prosecutor general and anti-corruption prosecutor. Former economy minister and Zelenskiy adviser Oleksandr Danyliuk, said that current general prosecutor Yuriy Lutsenko needs to go. The role will probably go to an activist, according to Danyliuk.

NBU independence

The new president "must respect the independence of the NBU," said Sergiy Fursa, head of fixed income sales at the Ukrainian investment firm Dragon Capital. "The business community is nervous about it because the key priority of the NBU is an important part of the institutional reforms."

Zelenskiy's team had previously talked about a possible NBU audit, which could include questioning the head of the central bank, Yakiv Smolii, due to slow pace of reforms. Dmytro Razumkiv, a Zelenskiy adviser, even suggested that an audit might lead to dismissals.

The EBA, Dragon Capital and the Center for Economic Strategies on April 25 released the results of an investor survey, which found that "Attempts to undermine NBU independence" would have a major negative impact on their investment decisions.

"It's obvious that it would be a major mistake" to sack NBU officials, said Aslund.

However, Danyliuk told reporters that the new team will not only respect the NBU's independence but strengthen it.

Oligarchs

Oligarch influence remains a top concern for many business leaders. Thomas Fiala, the head of Dragon Capital on April 25 characterized "oligarch monopolization" of key industries as a major impediment to increased investment.

The investor survey found that "reducing oligarch influence" was the number three priority, behind



Anna Derevyanko, the head of the European Business Association asks a question at the EBA's "New 5 Year Challenge" event, where business and investment leaders stated their hopes, concerns and expectations for Volodymyr Zelenskiy's presidency. (European Business Association)

demonstrating anti-corruption efforts and appointing reformers to key positions.

"The elephant in the room is Mr. (Ihor) Kolomoisky," Andy Hunder, the president of the American Chamber of Commerce, told the Kyiv Post. This oligarch and former owner of PrivatBank, has business ties with Zelenskiy, who attracted criticism as a result.

PrivatBank was nationalized in 2016, after it was found to have a \$5.5 billion hole in its ledger, allegedly moved out of the bank by Kolomoisky through sketchy enterprises. Last week, a Kyiv administrative court ruled that PrivatBank's 2016 nationalization was illegal, an important victory for Kolomoisky who wants to get it back. The case will now head to appeals. Financial experts had told Kyiv Post that if Kolomoisky regains control of PrivatBank, the country's financial system would approach collapse.

"If PrivatBank nationalization is canceled, the bank will go into liquidation and it will make a huge problem," said Fursa. "It would destroy our programs with the International Monetary Fund and our international creditors."

On April 25, the international credit rating agency Moody's stated that if the new president aids Kolomoisky in the battle over PrivatBank, it would "badly damage" Ukraine's credit profile. However, the agency also said "we attach a low probability to such a scenario."

Abromavicius, seemed to blame the previous administration for some of the problems that the president-elect will inherit. These include the recent court decision about PrivatBank, as well as the Constitutional Court eliminating a law against illegal enrichment in February.

Rule of law

Fiala said that overly aggressive actions by law enforcement bodies dampen investment. Fursa added that one of Zelenskiy's challenges would be to tackle some "siloviki" or law enforcement officials and reduce the pressure they exert on businesses.

Hunder said that rule of law was AmCham's top priority. He said that the government should "guarantee real and effective judicial reform, rule of law, fair justice, transparent operations and selection of judges at all levels, including launching a full,

operational High Anti-Corruption Court in the nearest term."

The investor survey found that "lack of trust in judiciary" is the second most important problem perceived by business, followed by "widespread corruption."

Danyliuk said that the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine, or NABU, and the Special Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office, or SAPO, must be relaunched.

Staying positive

Despite concerns, multiple business representatives told Kyiv Post that they have not seen negative investment flows related to the election.

Marina Petrov, the director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's Ukraine office, said that the bank plans to double its investments in Ukraine to \$1 billion during 2019. She added that she sees investors ready to come to Ukraine, as long as the country doesn't take any unexpected economic decisions that might scare them off.

Petrov added that she expected Ukraine to continue cooperating with the IMF, whose review of Ukraine is coming up in May. Danyliuk said the incoming administration is prepared to do so.

"We look forward to a successful review in May," he said. ■



Ukrainian presidential candidate Volodymyr Zelenskiy reacts at a polling station during the second round of Ukraine's presidential election in Kyiv on April 21, 2019. Zelenskiy is under scrutiny to continue anti-corruption reforms and improve the business environment. (Volodymyr Petrov)

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Ukraine's democratic election inspires former Soviet states

BY BERMET TALANT
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It was the evening of April 21. The first exit polls had just rolled in, indicating that comedic actor and political novice Volodymyr Zelenskiy would be elected Ukraine's next president.

At his campaign headquarters, the political newcomer took to the stage to address his supporters and the press. But Zelenskiy directed his brief speech not only at Ukraine, but also other former Soviet states.

"While I'm not yet president, I can say this as a Ukrainian citizen. To all post-Soviet countries: look at us. Everything is possible," he said.

His words resonated far and wide.

Kazakhstan

On the same day Ukrainians exercised their right to elect a comedian as their new leader, a court in the Kazakh city of Almaty handed down a 15-day jail sentence to two activists. Their crime? Calling for a fair and competitive presidential election on June 9.

Kazakhstan is preparing to hold its first presidential election without its long-standing leader, Nursultan Nazarbayev, who unexpectedly stepped down in March after 30 years in power. Although Nazarbayev's name won't be on the ballot, he stays very much in power as the leader of the ruling party Nur Otan. That party recently picked his successor: Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev, who currently serves as the interim president.

Activists Asiya Tulesova and Beibarys Tolymbekov were arrested for unfurling a banner reading "You can't run from the truth," "For fair elections," and "I have a choice" during the city marathon on April 21.

Zelenskiy's landslide victory, followed by President Petro



Comedic actor Volodymyr Zelenskiy delivers a speech on April 21, 2019, at his election headquarters after the preliminary exit polls showed that he would be elected Ukraine's next president. (Volodymyr Petrov)

Poroshenko's graceful concession, seem to have impressed Kazakh citizens who only expect a simulacrum of a presidential race in their country. Pundits and journalists also drew parallels between the two countries and pondered whether Kazakhstan could get its own Zelenskiy. Clips from Servant of the People television series, in which Zelenskiy plays a school teacher elected President of Ukraine, circulated on social media among Kazakh users.

"Our people observed Ukraine's election with envy. There was everything we want: competition, a new face in politics, debate. I would say it inspired our society," said journalist Bagdat Asylbekuly, who wrote

an article titled "Searching for our Zelenskiy" for the Fergana news website.

Asylbekuly attended a public meeting in Almaty to discuss the future Kazakh election and the absence of real political choice in it — a rare event in a country known for suppression of political dissent and repression of free media. The meeting was held after the arrest of activists Tulesova and Tolymbekov.

"At the meeting, a political expert Dosym Satpayev compared elections in Ukraine and Kazakhstan. He said that Zelenskiy was a new face, an 'against everyone' candidate," Asylbekuly said. "He suggested that opposition journalist Yermurat

Bapi, who is running for office, could become such an 'against everyone' candidate in our vote. But I don't think he stands a chance. He's little-known to the general public and he doesn't have administrative resources."

Almaty-based journalist Aigerim Toleukhan said that Kazakh legislation completely excludes the possibility of running for someone like Zelenskiy, an outsider without political experience.

By law, independent candidates cannot run. Only parties may nominate presidential candidates who must have five years of experience in public service. Not one of Kazakhstan's seven officially regis-

tered parties is truly oppositional, she said.

Kyrgyzstan

In another Central Asian state, Kyrgyzstan, citizens also closely followed the Ukrainian presidential election.

Unlike its neighbors in the region, which are ruled by strongmen, Kyrgyzstan boasts a vibrant civil society, has a history of twice overthrowing corrupt presidents, and changes its government approximately every 9–18 months on average.

Its last presidential election, held in 2017, was declared the first truly competitive vote in Central Asia, but ultimately proved a win for the old order. Sooronbay Jeyenbekov, the chosen successor of outgoing President Almazbek Atambayev, defeated his younger rival, opposition leader and businessman Omurbek Babanov, in an unpredictable race.

On April 23, Kyrgyz tabloid Super.kg, the largest newspaper in the country, published an article on the Ukrainian election's effects on Kyrgyz politics. It cited clear similarities between both nations: two revolutions, high level of corruption, widespread labor migration, disillusionment with the powers that be, and demand for new faces in politics.

One expert interviewed for the story praised Ukraine for sticking to



its pro-Western course — one that will not change even when a new leader takes the helm. Another political expert said Kyrgyzstan would need Ukraine's experience in dealing with Russia. "We can see what attitude Russia shows when the relations with it go bad," he said.

Unlike Ukraine — which distanced itself from the Kremlin after Russia launched a war in the Donbas and occupied Crimea five years ago — the Kyrgyz leadership has strengthened its ties with Moscow, becoming a member of the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union and the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

"Ukraine officially left the Commonwealth of Independent States (an inter-state organization born after the collapse of Soviet Union in 1991). It looks westwards and feels itself to be part of Europe. So it was heartwarming when Zelenskiy addressed former Soviet countries," Kyrgyz politician Edil Baisalov told the Kyiv Post. "Major responsibility lies on Zelenskiy as the president of Ukraine. Ukraine's success as a functioning European state is important for Kyrgyzstan, too."

In Kyrgyzstan, Zelenskiy is particularly well-known among young people who take part in KVN, a team comedy competition that emerged from a popular Russian television show and that spread to all former

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A woman casts a ballot at a polling station during the second round of Ukraine's presidential election in Kyiv on April 21, 2019. (Volodymyr Petrov)

Ex-republics only wish they could have democratic choice that took place in Ukraine

Election from page 8

Soviet countries. Zelenskiy began his career in KVN, but later left and moved back to Ukraine, where he started his own business

Several Kyrgyz comedians have participated in Make a Comedian Laugh, a stand-up comedy competition on Ukrainian television hosted by Zelenskiy. One of them, Ilgiz Kuvatbek, won Hr 50,000 (\$1,880) with his friend Eldiyar Yeshimbekov on the show in 2017.

Kuvatbek told the Kyiv Post that Zelenskiy's victory in the Ukrainian election also inspired comedians.

"I think it's a great occasion for everyone brought up on KVN. Many think comedy isn't a serious occupation. People usually ask 'What are you going to become?' Zelenskiy proved that a comedian can even become a president and can contribute to his country's development," he said, adding jokingly that he wouldn't mind becoming the president of Kyrgyzstan someday.

Belarus

In Belarus, President Alexander Lukashenko has held power for 25 years. The country's next presidential election is set for 2020, but few expect any real competition or challenge to Lukashenko.

Without truly democratic elections at home, Belarusians tuned into Ukraine's presidential vote.

On April 19, the Lidbeer bar in central Minsk broadcast the presidential debate between candidates Poroshenko and Zelenskiy at Kyiv's Olimpiysky Stadium.

"It was an important event in a neighboring country and also a spectacle to behold. Events like this don't happen here," said Vladimir Plavinsky, the art director of Lidbeer. "The idea to broadcast it came spontaneously, and we couldn't fit everyone who wanted to watch it. Our bar

is quite small, and we managed to accommodate around 120 people."

That night, the majority of the crowd cheered for Zelenskiy and applauded his debate performance. Plavinsky said that Belarusian media covered the Ukrainian election neutrally. He mostly watched its coverage on Ukrainian television channels and followed the campaign on social media.

Inspiration

Can other post-Soviet countries follow Ukraine's suit?

Yevhen Hlibovytsky, a strategist and founder of the pro.mova communication consultancy, told the Kyiv Post that the Ukrainian model could be an inspiration and a demonstration that change is possible. But it cannot be copied, he said.

"What I've learned from my experience in other former Soviet countries is that local context matters more. Any implication from Ukraine's case has to be re-contextualized for local realities. There's something to learn from Ukraine's case, but it's definitely not a trajectory. Every country has to come up with its own solution," he said.

Ukraine's aspiration for membership of the European Union and accession to NATO may be geographically irrelevant for many post-Soviet countries, but if Ukraine succeeds, its experience can be used as a benchmark. And Ukraine helps to expose the risks that a country that wants to be both successful and free from Russia is likely to face.

"There was no EU in Asia, but some Asian countries successfully transformed themselves using their partnerships with the United States and the United Kingdom to achieve the same security and institutional guarantees that many European countries achieved by joining the EU and NATO," Hlibovytsky said. ■



'Thank you, President Poroshenko!'

Several thousand people rallied on the evening of April 22, 2019, in front of the presidential administration in Kyiv to express support for President Petro Poroshenko, who lost the April 21 presidential runoff election. Poroshenko received 24.46 percent of the vote, while comedic actor Volodymyr Zelenskiy received 73.22 percent. On April 21, immediately after the exit poll results were announced, Poroshenko voters started a Facebook campaign, adding "Thank you" stickers in his campaign colors to their profile pictures. At the rally on April 22, Poroshenko said that the gesture had meant a lot for him. "I read so many positive things about myself on Facebook last night that I had not read in a very long time," he said. (Markiv Mykhailo, Mikhail Palinchak)

World in Ukraine: Sweden

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First 100 days: President Zelenskiy's top priorities

Editor's Note: On April 21, Ukraine elected comedic actor-turned-politician Volodymyr Zelenskiy president in a landslide. However, the president-elect's policy plans remain unclear. The Kyiv Post asked experts what steps they would like to see in the first 100 days of Zelenskiy's president.

BY JACK LAURENSON,
IGOR KOSSOV, OLEG SUKHOV



John Whittingdale
U.K. member of parliament, chair of the British-Ukrainian All-Party Parliamentary Group in Westminster

Parliamentary Group in Westminster

"Zelenskiy should move to reassure those in the international community who could have concerns about his lack of experience in politics. He can do this by appointing some serious, experienced figures. He should demonstrate to people that things will be different by beefing up the prosecutor's office and initiating some high-level prosecutions. It would also help to meet international leaders – and I hope he will come to the U.K. soon."



Ilya Ponomarev
former member of the Russian parliament, currently a Kyiv-based executive in the energy sector

"Throughout his first 100 days, Zelenskiy should be focused on

forming his team while paying close attention to the October parliamentary elections. Zelenskiy should get well-acquainted with international leaders and also make a start on re-energizing the peace talks with Russia. Securing the release of Ukrainian prisoners of war who are held in Russia should also be a priority. In the business sphere, Zelenskiy needs to quickly make strong commitments to transparency and advocate for zero tolerance on state intrusion into private business. He also needs to regularly read the Kyiv Post."



Anders Aslund
economist, senior fellow at the Atlantic Council

"He needs to not do something stupid like fighting with the National Bank. He needs to somehow repair the damage of the old regime (ignoring the corporate governance of) Naftogaz and the (cancellation of) the law on illicit enrichment. It's vital for him that he has a strong chief of staff. That's a very important position in the Ukrainian system. No concessions to (Ihor) Kolomoisky with PrivatBank, that is the immediate thing."



Ukrainian presidential candidate Volodymyr Zelenskiy (C), accompanied by his wife Olena, visits a polling station during the second round of the presidential election in Kyiv on April 21, 2019. (Volodymyr Petrov)



Andy Hunder
president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Ukraine

"There is nothing about banking or energy in Zelenskiy's campaign statements. Of our concerns, rule of law is top. Guarantee real and effective judicial reform, rule of law, fair justice,

transparent operations and selection of judges of all levels, including launching a fully-operational High Anti-Corruption Court in the nearest term. The business community wants to see the team."



Sergey Fursa
director of fixed income at Dragon Capital

"The main problem right now is with 'siloviki' (law enforcement officials). He has to reduce their pressure on businesses. His key test is Kolomoisky. He has to distance himself from the head of the Privat (informal business group). He has to make sure not to make any changes to the leadership of the National Bank of Ukraine (NBU). This is very important and business is watching to see if he will leave the NBU independent."



Gennady Chizhikov
president of the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

"Zelenskiy has major experience with promotion and making things popular. With him, we have to make our country popular (in the global market). Businesses will support this."



Oleksandr Lemenov
anti-corruption expert at the Reanimation Package of Reforms

"The leadership of the discredited National Agency for Preventing Corruption and the leadership of the Special Anti-Corruption

Prosecutor's office should be replaced. A fair competition should be held for top jobs at the anti-corruption prosecutor's office, and it must become truly independent, while the National Agency for Preventing Corruption must start thoroughly checking top officials' asset declarations. The Financial Investigation Service must be created. The Security Service of Ukraine should be stripped of economic functions and its staff must be cut."



Vitaly Shabunin
head of the Anti-Corruption Action Center's executive board

"Judicial reform, including the cleansing of the judiciary and replacing the High Qualification Commission of Judges, should be re-launched. Other steps include firing discredited Security Service of Ukraine Deputy Chief Pavlo Demchyna, reinstating the law on illicit enrichment, giving the National Anti-Corruption Bureau wiretapping powers and solving the problem of the dysfunctional Constitutional Court."



Yegor Sobolev
ex-chairman of parliament's anti-corruption committee

"Principled and honest people should be appointed to the Presidential Administration. Zelenskiy should also submit a law on presidential impeachment, appoint a strong prosecutor general and a strong head of the Security Service of Ukraine and strengthen Ukraine's strategic partnership with the West to fight Russian aggression." ■



Stolen French painting found

French ambassador to Ukraine Isabelle Dumont speaks during the presentation of the painting "Port de la Rochelle" (1915) by late French artist Paul Signac at the Interior Ministry in Kyiv on April 23, 2019. The painting worth \$1.5 million, was stolen a year before from the Museum of Fine Arts of Nancy, France, and found by police in Ukraine. (AFP)

Parliament passes Ukrainian language bill

BY OLEG SUKHOV
SUKHOV@KYIVPOST.COM

The Verkhovna Rada has adopted a bill on protecting the Ukrainian language. The draft law will now be sent to the president for his signature.

Passed in its second reading on April 25, the bill will formalize rules governing the usage of Ukrainian language in the media, education, and business. It aims to strengthen the language's role in a country where much of the public still speaks Russian.

However, the document has not been without controversy. Earlier versions of the bill appeared poised to place potentially unbearable burdens on English-language publications like the Kyiv Post. However, this was changed in later versions of the text.

In the wake of the draft language law's passage, President-elect Volodymyr Zelenskiy said that he would analyze whether any of the clauses of the bill violate citizens' rights, and would react according to his constitutional authority. He argued that Ukrainian should be the only state language, but added that the text of the bill had not been sufficiently discussed with civil society.

Regardless of Zelenskiy's view, the bill may be signed into law by outgoing President Petro Poroshenko before the new president is inaugurated.

A total of 278 out of the Rada's 423 lawmakers supported the bill, 38 voted against it, and seven abstained.

The pro-Russian Opposition Bloc voted against the legislation, and most members of Vidrodzhenya (Revival) and People's Will did not support it. These three factions are offshoots of ex-President Viktor Yanukovich's Party of Regions.

All the other parties voted for the language bill.

Media

One of the primary — and most controversial areas — governed by the



Activists attend a rally to demand lawmakers vote for a law that grants special status to the Ukrainian language and introduces mandatory language requirements for public sector workers, in front of the parliament building in Kyiv on April 25, 2019. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

draft "language law" is media.

According to the bill, print and online publications will have to be either exclusively in Ukrainian or have a Ukrainian language version. This norm does not apply to Crimean Tatar, English and official languages of the European Union.

The quota for Ukrainian-language content for national television and radio broadcasters will be increased from 75 percent to 90 percent, while the quota for regional television and radio broadcasters will be increased from 60 percent to 80 percent.

Crimean Tatar language television channels and radio broadcasters will be able to provide up to 70 percent of their coverage in Crimean Tatar.

Films and theaters

Films produced in Ukraine must be in Ukrainian. Subtitled non-

Ukrainian speeches cannot exceed 10 percent of the film.

Foreign language films will have to be dubbed into Ukrainian. Only foreign language films meeting Ukrainian authorities' quality standards or ones shown during film festivals can be subtitled, as opposed to being dubbed.

Subtitled foreign-language films cannot exceed 10 percent of a movie theater's program.

Under the bill, cultural events, including theater performances, will have to be in Ukrainian. Other languages can be used during cultural events if it is justified for artistic reasons or for the purpose of protecting ethnic minority languages.

Songs can also be performed in languages other than Ukrainian.

State and municipal theaters will be allowed to show performances in languages other than Ukrainian if

such performances are subtitled or translated into Ukrainian.

Books

Publishing houses will be required to print at least 50 percent of their books in Ukrainian, and book stores will have to sell at least 50 percent of their books in Ukrainian.

This norm does not apply to eth-

nic minority language books funded by the government and to specialized foreign language and minority language book stores.

Education

Under the bill, all schools and universities will be required to teach in Ukrainian.

Classes taught in ethnic minority languages will be allowed at Ukrainian-language schools, and some subjects at Ukrainian-language universities can be taught in English or one of the official languages of the European Union.

Business

The Ukrainian web sites of foreign businesses must have a Ukrainian version, according to the bill.

Computer software distributed in Ukraine will have to be either in Ukrainian, English or in one of the official languages of the European Union.

The bill also requires the employees of service sector businesses to speak to their customers in Ukrainian.

Enforcement

The enforcement of the law will be overseen by a Ukrainian language ombudsman.

Violations of the law will be punishable with fines ranging from Hr 3,400 to Hr 11,900 (\$125 to \$440).

However, penalties for violations of the law will begin only in three years. ■

TOP 10 KYIV POST exclusives online this week

1. Rammstein rock band use video footage of Ukrainian city for new album teaser (VIDEO)
2. LIVE UPDATES: 97% of ballots counted; Zelenskiy heads to landslide victory as Poroshenko concedes
3. Poroshenko, Zelenskiy hold presidential debate at sports arena in Kyiv
4. UPDATE: Exit polls show landslide win for Volodymyr Zelenskiy
5. Zelenskiy: 'To all former Soviet countries - look at us, everything is possible'
6. Investigation reveals more links between Zelenskiy's team and oligarch Kolomoisky
7. What's the worst that can happen: UIA
8. Third court rules in favor of oligarch Kolomoisky in PrivatBank case
9. Presidential candidates clash in rancorous debate at football stadium (PHOTOS)
10. Poroshenko allies to be charged with theft, money laundering



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Seeking justice

Approximately 70 activists protested next to the house of Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko near Kyiv on April 25. The protest erupted over the latest developments in the investigation of the murder of activist Kateryna Gandziuk, who was attacked with acid in July 2018 and died three months later. After months of public pressure, prosecutors made Vladyslav Manger, head of the Kherson Oblast Council, a suspect in ordering the murder. However, on April 24 the media reported that prosecutors changed the charge from murder to inflicting serious bodily harm, angering activists who have been pushing for the attack to be investigated. (Volodymyr Petrov)

Moon King

For those who enjoy the combination of dream pop with indie rock and house music, the Canadian band Moon King is coming to Kyiv to perform some of its hits on May 3. Moon King is a music project founded by Toronto-born songwriter and producer Daniel Woodhead, widely known as Daniel Benjamin. Since its establishment in 2012, Moon King has released a full-length album "Secret Life" in 2015, as well as three EPs. However, after Woodhead's moving to Detroit, the United States, Moon King's music has undergone some changes, adding some disco music and synthpop sounds.

Moon King. Closer (31 Nyzhnoirukivska St.) May 3. 8 p.m. Hr 250



(Moon King/facebook)

Friday, April 26

Classical music

Claude Debussy (by National Symphonic Orchestra of Ukraine). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-350

Live music

The Spring Playlist (piano concert by Pavel Ignatyev). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 180-650

Igor Agrich Trio – Let's Cool One (jazz). 32 Jazz Club. 8 p.m. Hr 400

Clubs

Udda, Libra and others (electronic dance music). River Port. 10 p.m. Hr 150-200

Sasha Dog, Sparkless and others (intelligent dance music). Dom. 11 p.m. Hr 100

Audino and Module Week (electronic dance music). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 300-400. Visitors must be over 21

Claaps, Prots and others (techno, break-beat). Mezzanine. 11:55 p.m. Hr 150-200

Osnova Lights (electronic DJ set). Otel'. 8 p.m. Price to be announced

Acid Party for Fashion Revolutionaries (electronic DJ set by Vasyl Fedorchuk, Yuriy Petrov, Prime Meridian). Khvylovyi. 9 p.m. Price to be announced

Miscellaneous

Albrecht Dürer (engravings from Kharkiv Art Museum's collection). The Khanenko Museum. 10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Hr 80 for adults, Hr 40 for students, Hr 20 for pupils and retirees

Afterimage (paintings by Artem Volokitin and Tetiana Malinivska, sculptures by Maria Kulikovska, video art by Alina Fedotova). Voloshyn Gallery. 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Amazing Stories of Crimea (artworks about the history of Crimea and its citizens). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Hr 80. Hr 40 for retirees, school and university students. Free for orphaned children, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee

Ego Sum Rex! (colorful portraits of male archetypes by Sasha Bob). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

The First Names (paintings by the leading Ukrainian 20th-century artists: Ivan Marchuk, Tetiana HOLEMBIYEVSKA and others). Kyiv History Museum. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Hr 45. Hr 30 for retirees, school and university students. Free for orphaned children, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, conscript soldiers and sailors, veterans and any museum employees

Reforming the Space (sculptures by Ukrainian artists and French artist Jaume Plensa). M17. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Hr 100. Hr 70 for children, students and retirees

Ain't Nobody's Business! (collective exhibition exploring displays of sexuality). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

Diffusion (street art and musical performance by the art duo Social Artur and Ihor Spaskyi). Closer. 12-9 p.m. Free

I Am a Woman. We Are Women (various artworks by Petro Ryaska exploring a woman as the first home to every person). Bursa. 12-8 p.m. Free

Igor Redkin (sculptures, paintings and designs). It's Not the Louvr. 12-11 p.m. Free

Late (art-objects by Mariia Proshkivska exploring gender issues with emphasis on women's lives in modern society). America House. 12 - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Tripoteca (traveling psychedelic film and art festival). VDNH. 8 p.m.-2 a.m. Hr 200

Movies

Rio Lobo (western, adventure). America

House. 6 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Shows

Riffmaster (rock). Docker Pub. 8 p.m. Hr 125-1,400

Theater

Nabucco (opera in Italian). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600

Saturday, April 27

Live music

Smooth Operation (smooth jazz, R&B, funk covers). Caribbean Club. 7 p.m. Hr 150-450

Clubs

DJ Masda, Khan and Others (electronic dance music). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 300-400. Visitors must be over 21

Miscellaneous

Albrecht Dürer (engravings from Kharkiv Art Museum's collection). The Khanenko Museum. 10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Hr 80 for adults, Hr 40 for students, Hr 20 for pupils and retirees

Afterimage (paintings by Artem Volokitin and Tetiana Malinivska, sculptures by Maria Kulikovska, video art by Alina Fedotova). Voloshyn Gallery. 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Amazing Stories of Crimea (artworks about the history of Crimea and its citizens). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80. Hr 40 for retirees, school and university students. Free for children under 12, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee

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The First Names (paintings by the leading Ukrainian 20th-century artists: Ivan Marchuk, Tetiana HOLEMBIYEVSKA and others). Kyiv History Museum. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Hr 30 for retirees, school and university students. Free for orphaned children, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, conscript soldiers and sailors, veterans and any museum employees

Reforming the Space (sculptures by Ukrainian artists and French artist Jaume Plensa). M17. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Hr 100. Hr 70 for children, students and retirees

Ain't Nobody's Business! (collective exhibition exploring displays of sexuality). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

Diffusion (street art and musical performance by the art duo Social Artur and Ihor Spaskyi). Closer. 12-9 p.m. Free

I Am a Woman. We Are Women (various artworks by Petro Ryaska exploring a woman as the first home to every person). Bursa. 12-8 p.m. Free

Igor Redkin (sculptures, paintings and designs). It's Not the Louvr. 12-11 p.m. Free

Shows

Alexander Polyakov Sextet (jazz). 32 Jazz Club. 8 p.m. Hr 400

Theater

Adriana Lecouvreur (The Metropolitan Opera recording in Italian). Multiplex (Lavina Mall). 3 p.m. Hr 190-240

La Sylphide (opera in Italian). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600

Sunday, April 28

Miscellaneous

Albrecht Dürer (engravings from Kharkiv Art Museum's collection). The Khanenko Museum. 10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Hr 80 for adults, Hr 40 for students, Hr 20 for pupils and retirees

Afterimage (paintings by Artem Volokitin and Tetiana Malinivska, sculptures by Maria Kulikovska, video art by Alina Fedotova).

Voloshyn Gallery. 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Amazing Stories of Crimea (artworks about the history of Crimea and its citizens). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80. Hr 40 for retirees, school and university students. Free for children under 12, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee

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I Am a Woman. We Are Women (various artworks by Petro Ryaska exploring a woman as the first home to every person). Bursa. 12-8 p.m. Free

Igor Redkin (sculptures, paintings and designs). It's Not the Louvr. 12-11 p.m. Free

Movies

Michelangelo: Love and Death (exhibition on screen). Kyiv Cinema. 3 p.m. Hr 150

Luz (thriller in German, Spanish with English subtitles). Kyiv-Mohyla Academy's Cinema Club. 5 p.m. Free

Shows

Homesick, Resurgam, Kentawr and others (hardcore, punk). Otel'. 7 p.m. Hr 150

Monday, April 29

Live music

Kristina Kirik Quartet (jazz covers and original songs). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 150-350

Miscellaneous

The First Names (paintings by the leading Ukrainian 20th-century artists: Ivan Marchuk, Tetiana HOLEMBIYEVSKA and others). Kyiv History Museum. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Hr 45. Hr 30 for retirees, school and university students. Free for orphaned children, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, conscript soldiers and sailors, veterans and any museum employees

Tuesday, April 30

Live music

Ella Fitzgerald and Duke Ellington (jazz covers by Aniko Dolidze Big Band). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 190-1,100

Miscellaneous

Amazing Stories of Crimea (artworks about the history of Crimea and its citizens). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80. Hr 40 for retirees, school and university students. Free for children under 12, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee

Ego Sum Rex! (colorful portraits of male archetypes by Sasha Bob). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

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Reforming the Space (sculptures by Ukrainian artists and French artist Jaume Plensa). M17. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Hr 100. Hr 70 for children, students and retirees

Ain't Nobody's Business! (collective exhibition exploring displays of sexuality). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

Diffusion (street art and musical performance by the art duo Social Artur and Ihor Spaskyi). Closer. 12-9 p.m. Free

I Am a Woman. We Are Women (various artworks by Petro Ryaska exploring a woman as the first home to every person). Bursa. 12-8 p.m. Free

Movies

Nureyev: All the World His Stage (documentary, British theater on screen). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 190

Theater

Don Quixote (three-act ballet). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600

Wednesday, May 1

Classical music

Piano Space (Ravel, Debussy, Chopin and others). Kyiv Planetarium. 7:30 p.m. Hr 200-400

Miscellaneous

Amazing Stories of Crimea (artworks about the history of Crimea and its citizens). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80. Hr 40 for retirees, school and university students. Free for children under 12, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee

Ego Sum Rex! (colorful portraits of male archetypes by Sasha Bob). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Ain't Nobody's Business! (collective exhibition exploring displays of sexuality). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

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Diffusion (street art and musical performance by the art duo Social Artur and Ihor Spaskyi). Closer. 12-9 p.m. Free

I Am a Woman. We Are Women (various artworks by Petro Ryaska exploring a woman as the first home to every person). Bursa. 12-8 p.m. Free

Igor Redkin (sculptures, paintings and designs). It's Not the Louvr. 12-11 p.m. Free

Thursday, May 2

Classical music

Rachmaninoff the Wizard (first part of a musical and literary trilogy on Sergei Rachmaninoff). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-300

Live music

Apocalypse. Stalker (pipe organ show). Kyiv Planetarium. 7:30 p.m. Hr 200-400

Miscellaneous

Turbulent (video installations by Iranian artist Shirin Neshat exploring gender inequality). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Albrecht Dürer (engravings from Kharkiv Art Museum's collection). The Khanenko Museum. 10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Hr 80 for adults, Hr 40 for students, Hr 20 for pupils and retirees

Amazing Stories of Crimea (artworks about the history of Crimea and its citizens). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80. Hr 40 for retirees, school and university students. Free for children under 12, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee

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Reforming the Space (sculptures by Ukrainian artists and French artist Jaume Plensa). M17. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Hr 100. Hr 70 for children, students and retirees

Diffusion (street art and musical performance by the art duo Social Artur and Ihor Spaskyi). Closer. 12-9 p.m. Free

I Am a Woman. We Are Women (various artworks by Petro Ryaska exploring a woman as the first home to every person). Bursa. 12-8 p.m. Free

Igor Redkin (sculptures, paintings and designs). It's Not the Louvr. 12-11 p.m. Free

Theater

Julius Caesar (two-act ballet). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600

Friday, May 3

Classical music

Ludwig van Beethoven (symphony orchestra with Sasha Hryniuk on piano). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 80-400

Live music

Jazz Pop Rock (covers by Eclectic Sound Orchestra). Kyiv Planetarium. 7:30 p.m. Hr 250-500

Mashina Vremeni Tribute (by Mashynisty band). Docker Pub. 10 p.m. Hr 125-1,400

Miscellaneous

Turbulent (video installations by Iranian artist Shirin Neshat exploring gender inequality). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Albrecht Dürer (engravings from Kharkiv Art Museum's collection). The Khanenko Museum. 10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Hr 80 for adults, Hr 40 for students, Hr 20 for pupils and retirees

Amazing Stories of Crimea (artworks about the history of Crimea and its citizens). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80. Hr 40 for retirees, school and university students. Free for children under 12, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee

The First Names

April 19 – May 5



(Les Noms gallery/facebook)

In a joint project with Les Noms gallery, Kyiv History Museum will exhibit paintings by the leading Ukrainian painters of the 20th century,

whose works reside in private collections around the world. One of the highlights are artworks by Ivan Marchuk who has been named among the greatest living geniuses by the UK newspaper The Telegraph for his unique expressionist style. Another are the artworks by Mykola Hlushchenko, a post-impressionist who painted Ukrainian landscapes and portraits. The exhibition will also recognize the works of Tetiana HOLEMBIYEVSKA, where impressionism meets realism. In total, The First Names exhibition will present works by 20 artists.

The First Names. Kyiv History Museum (7 Bohdana Khmelnytskoho St.) April 19 – May 5. Tue – Sun: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Mon: 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Hr 45. Hr 30 for retirees, school and university students. Free for orphaned children, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, conscript soldiers and sailors, veterans and any museum employees

any museum employee

Ego Sum Rex! (colorful portraits of male archetypes by Sasha Bob). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Ain't Nobody's Business! (collective exhibition exploring displays of sexuality). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

The First Names (paintings by the leading Ukrainian 20th-century artists: Ivan Marchuk, Tetiana HOLEMBIYEVSKA and others). Kyiv History Museum. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Hr 45. Hr 30 for retirees, school and university students. Free for orphaned children, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, conscript soldiers and sailors, veterans and any museum employees

Reforming the Space (sculptures by Ukrainian artists and French artist Jaume Plensa). M17. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Hr 100. Hr 70 for children, students and retirees

Diffusion (street art and musical performance by the art duo Social Artur and Ihor Spasky). Closer. 12-9 p.m. Free

I Am a Woman. We Are Women (various artworks by Petro Ryaska exploring a woman as the first home to every person). Bursa. 12-8 p.m. Free

Igor Redkin (sculptures, paintings and designs). It's Not the Louvr. 12-11 p.m. Free

Shows

Worn Pop: Moon King (synthpop). Closer. 8 p.m. Hr 250

Theater

Carmen (opera in French). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600

Saturday, May 4

Live music

Rock Legends (covers by brass orchestra and Oleksandr Onofriyuk on vocals). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 100-500

Queen Tribute (by Beast band). Ducker Pub. 10 p.m. Hr 125-1,400

Andrew James Gustav, Toby Nicholas, Hamish Cole



May 4

British DJs Andrew James Gustav, Toby Nicholas and Hamish Cole give a chance to dance all night long to their techno, house music sets. Being a part of London's techno culture, Gustav has performed at the city's best known underground parties, such as Undersound and the Art of Dark, while Cole is a founder of the London-based house and techno label Butter Side Up. Apart from that, Cole together with Nicholas currently perform together, and are known as a DJ duo Hamish & Toby. Gustav, Nicholas and Cole will hit the stage of Kyiv's Closer on May 4.

Andrew James Gustav, Toby Nicholas, Hamish Cole (electronic DJ set). Closer (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska St.) May 4. 11:55 p.m. Hr 300-400. Visitors must be over 21

Clubs

Celestial (electronic DJ set). Otel'. 11 p.m. Hr 300-350

Andrew James Gustav, Toby Nicholas, Hamish Cole (electronic DJ set). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 300-400. Visitors must be over 21

Rfrsh: 1 year (electronic DJ set). River Port. 9 p.m. Price to be announced

Miscellaneous

Turbulent (video installations by Iranian artist Shirin Neshat exploring gender inequality).

Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Albrecht Dürer (engravings from Kharkiv Art Museum's collection). The Khanenko Museum. 10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Hr 80 for adults, Hr 40 for students, Hr 20 for pupils and retirees

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I Am a Woman. We Are Women (various artworks by Petro Ryaska exploring a woman as the first home to every person). Bursa. 12-8 p.m. Free

Igor Redkin (sculptures, paintings and designs). It's Not the Louvr. 12-11 p.m. Free

Movies

Cézanne - Portraits of a Life (exhibition on screen). Multiplex (Lavina Mall). 3 p.m. Hr 190-240

Theater

Raymonda (two-act ballet). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600

Sunday, May 5

Live music

Invitation to Jazz (jazz classics, versions of Ukrainian folk songs). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-300

Miscellaneous

Turbulent (video installations by Iranian artist Shirin Neshat exploring gender inequality). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Albrecht Dürer (engravings from Kharkiv Art Museum's collection). The Khanenko Museum. 10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Hr 80 for adults, Hr 40 for students, Hr 20 for pupils and retirees

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Ego Sum Rex! (colorful portraits of male archetypes by Sasha Bob). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

The First Names (painting by the leading Ukrainian 20th-century artists: Ivan Marchuk, Tetiana HOLEMBIYEVSKA and others). Kyiv History Museum. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Hr 45. Hr 30 for retirees, school and university students. Free for orphaned children, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, conscript soldiers and sailors, veterans and any museum employees

Reforming the Space (sculptures by Ukrainian artists and French artist Jaume Plensa). M17. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Hr 100. Hr 70 for children, students and retirees

Ain't Nobody's Business! (collective exhibition exploring displays of sexuality). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

I Am a Woman. We Are Women (various artworks by Petro Ryaska exploring a woman as the first home to every person). Bursa. 12-8 p.m. Free

Igor Redkin (sculptures, paintings and designs). It's Not the Louvr. 12-11 p.m. Free

Movies

Leonardo (exhibition on screen). Kyiv Cinema. 3 p.m. Hr 150

Theater

Tosca (opera in Italian). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600

Venues

- Classical Music
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National Philharmonic of Ukraine (2 Volodymyrskyi Uzviz St.) +38044 278 6291
Live Music
Caribbean Club (4 Petiury St.)

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Docker Pub (25 Bohatyrska St.) +38050 358 5513
Clubs
Closer (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska St.) +38067 250 0308
Dom Music Bar (10/5A Petra Sahaidachnoho St.) +38096 011 0515
Khvylovyi Bar (18 Verkhniy Val St.) +38063 443 0925
Otel' (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska St.)

- +38063 618 0145
River Port (67 Nyzhniy Val St.) www.facebook.com/riverportkyiv
Miscellaneous
America House (6 Mykoly Pymonenka St.) +38063 343 0119
Bursa Gallery (11B Kostiantunivska St.) +38044 537 7007
Izone (8 Naberezhno-Luhova St.) +38067 622 8794
It's Not the Louvr Gallery Bar (4

- Viacheslava Lypynskoho St.) +38068 211 0123
The Khanenko Museum (15-17 Tereshchenkivska St.) +38044 235 3290
Kyiv History Museum (7 Bohdana Khmelnytskoho St.) +38044 520 2825
M17 Contemporary Art Center (102-104 Antonovycha St.) +38067 310 6631
Mystetskyi Arsenal (10-12 Lavrska

- St.) +38044 288 5225
Triptych Global Arts Workshop (34 Andriivskyi Uzviz St.) +38044 279 0759
VDNH (1 Akademika Hlushkova Ave.) +38067 824 1631
Voloshyn Gallery (13 Tereshchenkivska St.) +38044 467 0007
Pinchuk Art Center (1/3-2 Velyka Vasylkivska St.) +38044 590 0858

- Kyiv Cinema (19 Velyka Vasylkivska St.) +38044 234 7381
Kyiv-Mohyla Academy's Cinema Club (27 Naberezhno-Khreshchatytska St.) https://www.facebook.com/KinoklubKMA/
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Zhovten Cinema (26

- Kostiantynivska St.) +38044 428 5757
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Aside from death toll, war's legacy includes environmental catastrophe

BY GABRIEL HARDY-FRANÇON
HARDYFRANCON@KYIVPOST.COM

During war, environmental concerns are hardly the first thing on people's minds. But after the conflict ends, damage to the environment is often one of the war's lasting effects.

This is why Brendan Duprey, an American environmental specialist who is part of a larger organization called the Truth Hounds, is monitoring the environmental impact of the war in eastern Ukraine.

With the help of locals, he is trying to build a rich database tracking the situation in line with the standards of the International Criminal Court, or ICC. And his mission aims to fill a gap in public knowledge about the Donbas war and, potentially, bring those responsible for the damage to justice.

Before him, there had been just a handful of reports on the subject. But "much of the data collected was recycled from other reports and failed to obtain first person accounts of the problems along with factual evidence," Duprey told the Kyiv Post in a recent interview.

"(My) research filled this gap by collecting extensive data from first person accounts and triangulating it with additional primary and secondary source literature to verify those accounts."

Truth Hounds' mission

Since their foundation in 2014, the Truth Hounds' mission has been to document war crimes and crimes against humanity in different countries of eastern Europe and the Caucasus — namely Georgia, Belarus, Armenia and Ukraine. Their goal is to hold perpetrators accountable before the ICC.

The organization has been monitoring the situation in Eastern Ukraine since the very beginning of the conflict in April 2014 between Ukrainian forces and Russian-backed fighters and in Crimea since the Russian invasion.

However, after the passage of a May 2016 United Nations resolution calling for the protection of the environment in areas affected by armed conflict, the organization enlarged its mission.

"The resolution called for all member states to continue to support the development and implementation (of) projects aimed at preventing or reducing the impact of armed conflicts on the natural environment," Duprey said.

The Truth Hounds called Duprey and made him responsible for monitoring these environmental changes in eastern Ukraine.

Early in 2019, he published his report, "Assessing Environmental Impacts of Armed Conflict: The case of Eastern Ukraine."

Duprey's research largely addresses the environmental impacts of shelling and military positions, as well as the indirect consequences of the war.

Shelling is by far the most detrimental. It has caused multiple forest fires and the destruction of infrastructure for providing water, electricity and gas to the local population. It has damaged industrial hazard sites and harmed or even destroyed nature preserves and other natural heritage sites.

Duprey also notes that coal mines close to cities like government-controlled Toretsk and Russian-occupied Horlivka are connected by underground passages. These sites could be flooding, creating a significant risk



Brendan Duprey speaks to the Kyiv Post on Feb. 7 in Kyiv. (Oleg Petrasiiuk)

of ground contamination "due to the acid going into the water," he said.

The ongoing conflict and shelling make it increasingly difficult to prevent flooding and guarantee the safety of the area. But the potential consequences of such a flood is huge.

According to the Hromadske independent television channel, which carried out its own investigation of the environmental risk in eastern Ukraine, the "Donbas mines have only been flooded once — during the

Second World War. Then, the Soviet Union needed five years to get rid of all the water."

The war has also affected other local industries. The Avdiivka coke plant, the Bakhmut Agrarian Union's pig farm, and the phenol plant in Novhorodske have all been seriously damaged too.

The shelling near the Bakhmut pig farm "blew up a part of the tailing pond for the pig waste... which went into the local water waste and made people and cattle sick," Duprey explained.

On one occasion, a switch pipe in the occupied territories was hit during the shelling and exploded. Because these pipes are often near pipes with clean water, the explosion contaminated the local water supply. People who then drank the water had to be treated in the hospital, Duprey said.

The report also highlights indirect consequences of the conflict that prevent the adequate management of high-risk sites.

For example, the near absence of maintenance in the grey zone — a strip of land between government-controlled and occupied territories — and tax cuts both limit local environmental programs. This, in turn, increases the risk of long-term environmental issues.

No effective measures

Ukraine's Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources is somewhat conscious of the situation, Duprey says. It has even called for a more comprehensive analysis of the environmental situation.

But if the government's official position is to call for more research on this subject, its actions do not reflect this.

In April 2014, Ukrainian authorities passed a law that established a moratorium on regular and ad-hoc

inspections of industrial sites in the conflict zone.

"Do you think that these sites are complying with regulations?" Duprey said. "The potential for them to emit pollutants and not follow safety procedures is very high."

That law was aimed at keeping industries from leaving the area because complying with environmental regulations is costly, he says.

"They created this law to reduce the ability of inspectors to go there and check the sites," he added.

Original work

Despite these problems, Duprey sees some possibilities to improve the environmental situation in the region. He hopes that a ceasefire can be effectively implemented in Donbas in order for inspectors to access the grey zone and assess the damage.

In the meantime, he is currently working to create a real time database "where local people can upload information — pictures and video clips — of environmental issues that are happening constantly."

This could, in turn, inform decision-makers and the public. By raising national and international awareness, Duprey hopes to build up popular pressure to push the government to take effective action to preserve the environment — or at least to avoid a catastrophe.

But it will take time. Once such a database exists, locals must be trained to use it and keep track of incidents.

Duprey and his team hope that their findings can also be used as an index for further research on the environmental effects of war — "not only in Eastern Ukraine, but in other conflict areas around the world," he says. ■



Drug bust

National Police Deputy Chief Vyacheslav Abroskin (second from the left) and Andriy Kikhtenko, head of the National Police's drug enforcement unit (third from the left) hold a briefing on a drug raid in Kyiv on April 24. Law enforcement officers detained foreign citizens who were involved in drug trafficking and seized more than 300 kg of heroin. (UNIAN)

Latest Russian threat: Giving passports to Donbas residents

BY ILLIA PONOMARENKO

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With Russia's war on Ukraine in the Donbas and its occupation of Crimea recently entering their sixth year, the Kremlin is now preparing to inflict another blow against Ukraine's sovereignty.

On the afternoon of April 24, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree allowing individuals living in the Russian-occupied parts of eastern Ukraine to gain Russian citizenship through a simplified procedure.

In all, the decree would allow more than 3 million Ukrainian citizens "permanently living in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts of Ukraine" to be eligible to apply for Russian passports, even though under Russian law they ordinarily wouldn't meet a number of criteria for gaining Russian citizenship.

These criteria include residing in Russia for at least five years, having a residence permit, having a legal source of income, renouncing foreign citizenship, and being proficient in the Russian language.

Instead, Donbas residents wishing to gain Russian citizenship will be able to contact Russia's Interior Ministry and file an application along with copies of identification documents issued by the Russian-controlled authorities in the occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts.

Since February, Russia has officially recognized the "passports" issued by its occupation authorities in eastern Ukraine, although it has never diplomatically recognized the areas as being separate from Ukraine.

Citizenship requests submitted by residents of the Russian-occupied parts of Ukraine's Donbas will now be processed in a shortened period of just three months, according to the decree.

Moreover, as the Russian Interior Ministry clarified later in the day, Donbas residents who want to get Russian passports will not even have to renounce their Ukrainian citizenship — which means that they will still be entitled to enjoy social benefits from Ukraine and visa-free travel in the Schengen Area of Europe.

The new regulation came into effect immediately after its official publication.

Vladislav Surkov, a Russian presidential aide who is said to be responsible for running part of the Russian-occupied Donbas from the Kremlin, called the move "the duty of the Russian Federation to those speaking and thinking in Russian."

Those living in the Russian-occupied part of Donbas "now find themselves in a difficult situation because of the repressive actions of the Kyivan regime," Surkov told Russia's state-controlled TASS news agency.

Surkov also falsely claimed that "Ukraine refuses to recognize them as its citizens by invoking a trade blockade, not allowing them to vote, and using military force against



Local civilians cross the Donbas frontline into the Russian-occupied area at the entry point of Stanytsia Luhanska close the occupied city of Luhansk on Dec. 14, 2017. (Oleh Petrasjuk)

them."

Putin himself claimed the move to be "of a purely humanitarian nature" and compared it to Poland issuing the Pole's Card to ethnic Poles (although this is not a passport and does not grant citizenship or residency rights), and to the actions of Romania, which he claimed issues its passports to ethnic Romanians living in Ukraine too — although this is, in most cases, illegal in Ukraine.

"Why should Russians living in Ukraine be different from Romanians, Poles, and Hungarians?" he said during his April 25 summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Vladivostok.

Cause for further war?

Just several days before that, on April 18, Russia dealt another blow to Ukraine by banning exports of oil, oil products, coal, and pipes to the country starting from June 1.

The abrupt new move to allow issuing Russian passports to Ukrainians in the Donbas immediately provoked a strong reaction in Ukraine and beyond, with officials voicing fears that there would be an escalation of Russia's undeclared war on Ukraine.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin called the move "a continuation of aggression and meddling in our domestic affairs" and "the new 'passport' stage of (Russia's) occupation of the Donbas."

In a video address to the nation, incumbent President Petro Poroshenko said that the Kremlin's move was "an attempt to justify and legitimize Russia's military presence in the occupied parts of the Ukrainian Donbas."

He also called on Kyiv's partners to strengthen sanctions against the Kremlin.

Volodymyr Zelenskiy, Ukraine's president-elect, issued a written

statement, denouncing Russia as "an aggressor state waging a war against Ukraine."

Meanwhile, the chairman of Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council, Oleksandr Turchynov, gave a graver assessment.

By issuing its passports in the Donbas, Russia was laying the legal groundwork that would enable it to more easily deploy its armed forces there, he said.

"It has to do with the fact that Russian legislation allows for the deployment of its armed forces to protect Russian citizens overseas," the official said on April 24.

"There can be only one answer to that: amplifying our defensive potential and an appropriate international reaction regarding the Kremlin's criminal acts — along with growing sanctions pressure on the aggressor state."

Borys Babin, former presidential envoy to Crimea, compared the move to Russia's earlier strategy of issuing its passports to residents of the Georgian region of Abkhazia in the early 2000s. During the 2008 war with Georgia, this was used by the Kremlin as justification for its military intervention in the region and its subsequent occupation and formal recognition of the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

"Russia has launched the Abkhazian scenario in Ukraine's east," the expert wrote on his Facebook page on April 21. "Russian citizenship for the residents of the occupied territories is the first formal stage. When the aggressor state will recognize the independence of the 'people's republics' (meaning the areas of the Donbas under Russian-occupation) is an open question."

He also called for breaking all diplomatic ties with Russia.

The U.S., the U.K. and the

European Union have all supported Kyiv, issuing strong statements of condemnation against the Kremlin's move. They labeled it another attack on Ukraine's sovereignty. And late on April 25, Ukraine appealed to the United Nations Security Council over the matter.

Process launched

Putin's decree did not come as a complete surprise.

As far back as April 17, the Russian newspaper Kommersant reported the Kremlin's intention to start issuing Russian passports to residents of

the occupied Donbas after the presidential elections in Ukraine.

Citing sources in the Russian government, the newspaper also reported that all necessary infrastructure for accepting citizenship applications had already been deployed in Russian regions bordering Ukraine's Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, particularly in the cities of Shakhty and Novoshakhtinsk in Russia's neighboring Rostov Oblast.

Just a day after the decree's publication, Russian-occupation authorities in Donetsk reported that a "simplified procedure" for crossing the border with Russia would be launched on May 3.

Moreover, according to the head of the Russian-occupation authorities in Donetsk, Denis Pushilin, those who want to apply for Russian passports will be transported to Russian territory "in a centralized way."

According to Pavlo Lysyanskiy, the Verkhovna Rada ombudsman for Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, the whole process of offering Russian citizenship to residents of the Russian-occupied parts of Ukraine has a much longer history.

"It's all predictable, they've prepared this," the official said late on April 24.

"It's a clear scenario: The Russian-occupation authorities working in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts are ready for this, and the decree is a signal for them to start. They were making lists and invited people to submit preliminary applications to get (Russian) passports. These applications were being handed over to representatives of the occupation administration."

According to Lysyanskiy, this process of inviting local civilians to acquire Russian citizenship has been going on for as long as two years. ■

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US brewery is inspired by Chornobyl catastrophe

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GLEN SPEY, N.Y.— American-Ukrainian radiation expert Vasyl Lenchuk's idea for opening his own brewery came together while he was working around the ruined reactor at the Chornobyl nuclear power station.

Lenchuk, 55, was born in the state of New Jersey to Ukrainian refugee parents who arrived in the U.S. in 1947.

Like many other children of Ukrainian immigrants, Lenchuk grew up to be a patriotic American but also steeped in the culture and history of the land of his parents. He speaks Ukrainian, attended Ukrainian Saturday schools and took part in cultural activities like traditional choirs and dance groups.

Lenchuk, who joined the U.S. Navy in 1984, was still at college studying the health implications of nuclear, biological, and chemical exposure when, in 1992, he got his first opportunity to visit the devastated Chornobyl power station as a volunteer on a medical team.

One of Chornobyl's four reactors had exploded in April 1986, causing the world's worst nuclear accident and sending radioactive pollution spewing into the atmosphere. A radiation cloud swept over large swathes of Ukraine, including the capital, Kyiv, and Belarus, and reached areas of western Europe, Scandinavia, Britain and Ireland.

The then Soviet government at first denied anything had happened, thus exposing millions of unwitting men, women and children to dangerous levels of radiation.

Lenchuk spent several months with an American medical team studying and providing assistance to



From left, Vasyl and Cindy Lenchuk with assistants Alexandere Pitre and Christine Triffari stand behind the Shrewd Fox tap room bar on April 7 in Glen Spey, New York. (Askold Krushelnycky)

victims of the nuclear catastrophe — particularly children vulnerable to thyroid cancer.

Back in the U.S. he continued his

studies, obtaining Master of Arts qualifications as an expert on the consequences for humans of nuclear, biological and chemical exposure

serving in the Navy as a radiation safety officer.

In 1997 he traveled again to Chornobyl, this time working for Bechtel, a company being paid by the U.S. and other Western countries to secure the nuclear plant's ruined reactor and prevent it from causing further damage.

Mapping radiation

Lenchuk mapped out the areas affected by radiation and their levels of contamination to minimize radiation exposure for people working on the construction of a new structure to enclose the destroyed nuclear reactor and contain the tons of radioactive debris lying around it.

He lived until 2000 with his future wife, Cindy, in Slavutych, the town housing workers looking after the plant's three functioning reactors and wrecked fourth unit.

He also traveled to other parts of Ukraine to assess radiation concerns as the American Department of Defense took part in dismantling the silos where Soviet-era nuclear missiles were stored.

The American Embassy regularly organized breaks away from the irradiated zones for U.S. personnel, and these led to Lenchuk and Cindy becoming familiar with Ukrainian beer.

One of the places they visited several times was Chernihiv, home to

one of Ukraine's largest breweries. Lenchuk was surprised at how good the beer was. Then another break took him to Zhytomyr and a countryside surrounded by hops — a key component of beer.

"We stopped at a little restaurant where the owner made his own beer. I asked for a taste and it was delicious. I was hooked on Ukrainian beers," Lenchuk said. The idea started to ferment of eventually brewing beer as a future business. However, it took more years working as a radiation expert before he and Cindy could advance those plans.

Lenchuk's work took him to many strange places, including Russia's arctic areas, where the Soviets carried out nuclear tests, and to the deserts in the U.S. state of New Mexico, where America built its first atomic weapon in 1945.

Since 2010, he has worked as a private consultant advising American authorities such as the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the New York City Fire Department and various law-enforcement agencies on how to deal with nuclear, biological and chemical accidents or terrorist attacks.

That allowed time for the Lenchuks to finally realize their plans to start their own brewery.



Remembering Chornobyl

Widows carry pictures of their late husbands who were "liquidators" sent in to clean up after the Chornobyl nuclear power plant explosion during a ceremony to pay tribute to the victims of the Chornobyl disaster on April 26, 2018. (Volodymyr Petrov)



The Ukrainian-American Shrewd Fox Brewery in Glen Spey, New York produces 12 varieties of craft beer and two ciders. (Courtesy)

Extraordinary origins of American brewery amid Chornobyl ruins

Chornobyl from page 16

Crafty fox, craft beers

In 2014, the Lenchuks bought industrial-grade brewing equipment which they set up in the town of Eldred in New York. They named their enterprise the Shrewd Fox Brewery — derived from a fox called "Lys Mykyta" (Mykyta the Fox), the hero of a children's story penned by Ukrainian poet and author Ivan Franko.

Mykyta is described as "khytryi" — a Ukrainian word sometimes translated as cunning or sly. "To me that implied an underhand quality to Lys Mykyta, whereas I always thought of him as a smart, playful character like Bugs Bunny," Lenchuk said. "Mykyta isn't bad — he's a shrewd fox."

The brewery produces 12 varieties of craft beer and two ciders. This year Lenchuk expects to brew 200 barrels each containing 31 gallons — a total of around 23,400 liters. Each beer and cider has a distinct, full flavor and names to match, such as Kutya Osela Winter Farmhouse Ale, using buckwheat and honey, Baba Yaga Harbooz Pumpkin Ale and Kozak Porter.

The Eldred location also houses a bar which began serving customers in 2015. Eldred was chosen because it's just a few kilometers away from the little town of Glen Spey, nestled in the picturesque Catskill Mountains scenery, where decades ago Ukrainian-Americans, including Vasyly Lenchuk's parents in 1975, started building weekend homes for breaks away from the bustle of places like the cities where they worked, mostly in the states of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Gradually, more Ukrainian-

Americans moved in and started spending the entire summer there. They built a Ukrainian Orthodox and a Greek Catholic church and a summer camp for their children. As the years passed, holiday homes turned into primary homes and facilities for retired people.

The whole area now has a strong Ukrainian flavor. Blue-and-yellow flags abound, there is a monument to Ukrainian World War II freedom fighters and streets are named after Ukrainian historical figures. Annual cultural events and summer camps draw thousands of visitors of Ukrainian descent.

When a lease on a suitable building in Glen Spey became available last year, the Lenchuks snapped it up, re-investing the profits from their first "tap room" in Eldred into the far larger new facility, which has a restaurant and can seat around 100 people.

Its splendid wood-paneled interior and imposing bar began their life in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in the 1920s, when America outlawed alcohol during the years called the Prohibition Era.

Illicit, secret bars called "speak-easies" sprang up to slake thirsts and, after Prohibition ended in 1933, someone bought and transported the hidden architectural gem to Glen Spey.

"In our business model, the enterprise is primarily a brewery rather than a bar," Lenchuk said.

The plan is that customers will buy a third of the brewery products for home consumption, another third will be sold to other bars, restaurants, wholesalers or alcohol retail outlets and only one third will be drunk "in-house."

"We make craft beers sourced from local ingredients, grown to

avoid using chemicals, additives and preservatives and with a view to sustainability," Lenchuk said. "We use pure Catskills water from wells and weave in a Ukrainian twist. All the spent products from the brewing process go to farms for feeding livestock. None of the waste goes into landfills."

He said large breweries use huge industrialized farms providing little employment: "They bury the little guy (small business). By contrast our model preserves small local farms and puts money back into the local economy."

The tap rooms serve traditional Ukrainian fare like varenyky (stuffed dumplings) and a variety of smoked sausages that make a perfect, cholesterol-boosting accompaniment to the beers and cider.

The Lenchuks care deeply about events playing out in Ukraine, keenly following the war and recent elections. They hope that, along with the Ukrainian food and folksy-themed beers, customers will also imbibe some of Ukraine's history and culture.

Last autumn, the couple held an "Uktoberfest" — the first they hope of an annual Ukrainian Catskills take on Munich's famed beer festival — featuring bands and other entertainment.

On April 20, as the thirty-third anniversary of the Chornobyl disaster approached, Lenchuk gave a talk to an audience in the Glen Spey tap room about the nuclear explosion.

He explained how it not only spurred demands for Ukrainian independence but also caused a chain reaction of imagination leading to the creation of the Shrewd Fox Brewery. ■



Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko speaks in front of the Tomos decree, a church document granting canonical independence, during an Orthodox Christmas service in St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv on Jan. 7, 2019. (Oleg Petrasuiuk)

Does Poroshenko still have a political future after stunning defeat?

Poroshenko from page 2

Better from a distance?

Still, there are several reasons to believe history will judge the Poroshenko presidency less harshly than Ukraine's voters did on April 21.

While Poroshenko failed to stop the war, he also presided over an astonishing recovery of the Ukrainian armed forces, which five years after the EuroMaidan are much more up to the task of defending the country. During his time as president, Ukraine survived times where the very existence of the state appeared to be under threat.

Poroshenko has also managed to retain the goodwill of Ukraine's Western friends and backers, to the point that many clearly wanted to see him win another term. Although the Ukrainian economy withered under his rule, in the later part of his term shoots of recovery have started to appear, with increased GDP, steadier and lower inflation, and a more stable currency.

Poroshenko's term also saw the granting of a visa-free trav-

el regime to the Schengen Area countries in June 2017, and the coming into effect of the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement in full force on Sept. 1, 2017.

And Poroshenko was instrumental in securing the granting of a Tomos, or deed of autocephaly, to the new Ukrainian Orthodox Church in December 2018, undoing three centuries of ecclesiastical domination of the church in Ukraine by the Moscow Patriarchate — a major historical event.

These achievements might put a shine on the Poroshenko presidency from a distance in time — one that is not apparent at present, close up.

It is to be hoped that Poroshenko is the last "oligarch" president of Ukraine, and that Ukraine's next president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, can fulfill the public wish for change that has propelled him so spectacularly into office.

But going by the evidence of Poroshenko's long political career, which has seen him dodge and weave around setbacks to rise to the highest posts in the country, it would also not be wise to count him out yet. ■

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Hectic campaign ends with fair, calm election

Election from page 3

from Poroshenko's circle, who are suspects in a massive embezzlement case linked to the people of disgraced ex-President Viktor Yanukovich. The subpoenas were first sent weeks ago by a controversial prosecutor within the agency, but denounced by Lutsenko as nonsense.

Lutsenko, who endorsed Poroshenko for re-election, was notably absent from Poroshenko's headquarters on election night. So was Poroshenko's former protégé, Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman, and the Mayor of Kyiv, Vitali Klitschko, who both endorsed him.

What's next?

Zelenskiy's inauguration has yet to be scheduled. According to the law, it can happen no later than June 3. Poroshenko's inauguration in 2014 took place less than two weeks after Election Day.

To schedule the inauguration, parliament will need to vote for it. It is in parliament's interest to postpone it until late May: Then the inauguration would take place less than six months before the parliamentary election, scheduled for October. That will mean that Zelenskiy cannot dissolve parliament and schedule a snap election — something he said he has been considering.

On April 25, Zelenskiy complained that the Central Election Commission was intentionally holding off the official announcement of his victory to postpone the inauguration and prevent him making such a move. "This is unfair," Zelenskiy said in a video he published on social media — the



Children watch as an elderly woman fills out her ballot in front of her house in the village of Korolivka, Kyiv Oblast on April 21, 2019, during the second round of Ukraine's presidential election. Elderly people who cannot come to the polling stations can vote at home. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

first he has recorded since the election. "The president, who has the trust of 73 percent of the people, has the right to at least consider (dissolving parliament)."

Whenever it happens, the parliamentary election is likely to see many new parties.

Prime Minister Groysman announced on April 22 that he was going to create and lead a party, giving no further details. Lawmakers Yegor Sobolev and Semen Semchenko, former members of the Samopomich Party, said they will be starting a reformist party

of their own.

Businessman and Kyiv city council member Serhiy Gusovskiy is also starting a party. His will be a conservative liberal.

Also, former deputy prime minister Roman Bezsmertniy said in January that he was starting a neo-conservative party, to be named Movement +380 after Ukraine's international dialing code.

However, these new parties may find it hard to gain a foothold in parliament in October. An April poll by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology shows that 25 percent of Ukrainians support Servant of the People, the party of Zelenskiy, named after his satirical TV show. It was registered in 2018 and has not yet been active. Neither its ideology nor its members are known.

The second most-popular party, supported by nearly 16 percent of Ukrainians, is Opposition Platform — Za Zhyttya, a pro-Russian party led by populist lawmaker and TV personality Vadym Rabinovich and Russian President Vladimir Putin's friend and unofficial representative in Ukraine, Viktor Medvedchuk. Their candidate, Yuriy Boyko, came fourth in the first

round of the presidential election on March 31, winning nearly 12 percent of the vote, mainly in eastern Ukraine.

According to the poll, other parties that will reach the 5-percent minimum needed to get into parliament are also the ones connected to top presidential candidates: Poroshenko's Bloc (14 percent), Yulia Tymoshenko's Batkivshchyna (12 percent), Anatoliy Grytsenko's Civic Position (5.1 percent) and Ihor Smeshko's Strength and Honor (5 percent).

Russia is watching

As Ukraine waits for its new president to take to power, Russia has been flexing its muscles.

The hostile neighbor that annexed Ukraine's Crimean peninsula in 2014 and has been waging a war that killed over 13,000 people in eastern Ukraine took new steps to apply pressure to the country, likely trying to improve its hand in any future negotiations with Zelenskiy.

The first blow came before the election. On April 18, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said that Russia would ban exports of crude oil, oil products, and coal to Ukraine starting from June 1.

When asked about the ban, Zelenskiy confessed that he didn't know "this issue profoundly" and suggested Ukraine could search for alternative imports from Western countries.

An even stronger signal came after the election, when the Russian government moved to simplify the procedure of receiving Russian citizenship for Ukrainians living in the parts of eastern Ukraine occupied by Russian and Russian-backed forces since 2014. Now, Ukrainians from the occupied territories can get Russian passports no later than three months after applying.

The provocative decision was met with harsh criticism in the U.S., the U.K., and the European Union. Ukraine asked the United Nations Security Council to call a meeting and discuss Russia's move.

Both Poroshenko and Zelenskiy condemned the decision, but while Poroshenko recorded a video address on the matter, Zelenskiy put out a written statement.

Meanwhile, Putin first commented on the Ukrainian election only four days after it took place, on April 25. He called Zelenskiy's landslide victory "a complete and utter failure of Poroshenko's policies." ■



As lovely as a painting

An artist works on a painting in the Hryshko National Botanical Garden in Kyiv on April 24, 2019. (Volodymyr Petrov)

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Discover Ukrainian Orthodox Easter traditions during the long weekend from April 27 to May 1.



NAONI orchestra melds folk and modern music



Members of the Ukrainian pop band Onuka and musicians from the Ukrainian National Academic Orchestra of Folk Instruments perform as the interval act during the final of the Eurovision song contest in Kyiv on May 13, 2017. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

BY ARTUR KORNIENKO
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A lone surma, a Ukrainian folk trumpet, blares a Cossack military call. It is followed by the pounding of lytavras, or Cossack kettledrums. Another surma joins in to repeat the call, raising to a final note that brings to life a whole orchestra of Ukrainian folk instruments — banduras, kobzas, tsymbaly and many others.

The music is the Zaporizhian March by the Ukrainian National Academic Orchestra of Folk Instruments, or NAOI. Its first conductor Viktor Hutsal arranged the march for the orchestra in 1970, but was sacked by the Soviet authorities for performing it.

"I was fired because the march had such a great powerful force," he says.

Fifty years after NAOI's formation, Hutsal conducted the march at the start of the orchestra's anniversary concert, bringing the audience to a standing ovation.

Most of them are admirers of the Ukrainian folk and classical music tradition that NAOI has carried on, through rain and shine. But there are others who have discovered the orchestra because of its collaboration with modern artists.

NAOI's guest act performance with electro-folk band Onuka at Eurovision Song Contest 2017 in Kyiv has been watched over 5 million times on YouTube, highlighting

how Ukrainian folk instruments, like trembitas, sopilkas and buhay, can be used in tandem with modern electronic music.

"Nobody had heard anything like it," Hutsal says. "And then the whole world saw it — the expression, the vividness, the beauty!"

Soviet heritage

Ukraine was the third largest republic of the Soviet Union but one of the last to get its own orchestra of national folk instruments. Hutsal says that this way the Russian Soviet authorities tried to suppress Ukraine's national identity.

Instead, the Soviet authorities opened departments of Russian folk instruments in Ukrainian schools

and sent Russian folk orchestras on tours to Ukraine to play on balalaika, gusli and bayan. Hutsal himself started playing music on the domra, a string instrument generally considered to be Russian.

When the Ukrainian orchestra of folk instruments finally came to be, it was no thanks to the Soviet state. It was created in 1969 by the Musical and Choral Society, a non-governmental organization of musicians and composers limited in powers by the Communist Party. The new ensemble was to be called the Kyiv Orchestra of Ukrainian Folk Instruments.

Hutsal conducted the orches-

more **Music** on page **23**

City Life

WITH DARIA SHULZHENKO
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Explore the banks of the Dnipro on a weekend getaway from the capital

Rural Ukraine — it's a place of yellow steppes, green meadows, and birch and poplar trees reaching toward the sky. It's a land dotted with deep lakes, where rivers wind their way through wide fields and between high hills.

It also has everything you need for a relaxing getaway. And often all of that is just a short jaunt away from the big city.

This year the Orthodox Easter holiday falls on April 28 and is followed by Labor Day on May 1. That means there will be a long, five-day weekend — the perfect time to broaden one's horizons and witness firsthand the beauty of the Ukrainian countryside.

There's no need to travel far from Kyiv to do it: just an hour's drive from the capital brings beautiful scenery and fascinating historical sites.

Take the road south out of Kyiv, following the course of the Dnipro River, and you will find a number of small towns and villages with picturesque landscapes, trees in blossom, and friendly locals always ready to welcome new visitors.

All of these "no rush, no fuss" places are just a short distance south and east of the capital, and they are well worth a visit.

Trypillia

The ancient settlement of Trypillia is only 49 kilometers southeast of the busy heart of Kyiv — a 50-minute drive.

The small village, whose name means "three fields," is nestled against picturesque hills near the Dnipro. The name is believed to be connected with the village's location, as the area is split into three sections by offshoots of the river — the Stuhna, Krasna and Bobrytsia. The Divych-Hora mountain looms over the village. While the mountain is relatively small, only around 55 meters high (more of a hill, really), it's still a good place to go hiking, offering some great views of the Dnipro.

With warm weather starting at the end of April, a trip to Trypillia is a great choice for those who want to spend the weekend outdoors admiring nature's beauty.

However, Trypillia has something else to offer: a fascinating history. The Kyiv Oblast

more **Dnipro** on page **20**

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City Life

Rural rest and relaxation only an hour's drive away from Kyiv

Dnipro from page 19

Archaeological Museum is the village's top attraction, a place where one can explore the roots of Ukraine's ancient Trypillian culture, a Neolithic civilization that flourished from circa 4800 B.C. to 3500 B.C. and which was named after the village.

The museum has three halls, each exhibiting different time periods: from the Stone Age, to the time of the Kyivan Rus, to the beginning of the 20th century.

Kyiv Oblast Archaeological Museum. Trypillia. 12 Heroiv Trypillia Street. Mon-Sun, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Hr 20 for adults, Hr 15 for students, Hr 10 for children and retirees.

How to get there: Drive south out of Kyiv on the E40, then take the P01 south past Koncha-Zaspa, Kozyn and Tatsenky, then the H01 south out of Ukrayinka, and then turn left onto the P19 and drive east for about 7 kilometers to get to Trypillia.

Khalepia

Some five kilometers east of Trypillia is the small village of Khalepia, nestled between the rivers Bobrytsia and Skvyryvka.

Because Khalepia is a little-known gem even for locals, the place is quiet and clean, and an ideal spot for a relaxing weekend getaway.

The trip from Kyiv to Khalepia takes less than 50 minutes, as the village is located only about 55 kilometers southeast of the capital.

Khalepia is mostly known for its lake, said to be one of the cleanest in Kyiv Oblast. Local people call the lake and its surrounding area "places of power," and no wonder – the deep blue waters of Khalepia's lake are mesmerizing and calm, and the sight of it seems to wash away stress.

Swimming is allowed in the Khalepia lake, and it is a great escape from the upcoming summer heat. However, there is no road leading to the lake. It can only be accessed by foot. And be sure to bring snacks along too, as there are no cafes or shops nearby.

Other than that, Khalepia is also home to an old Orthodox Church, founded in 1797, and two museums dedicated to the legendary Ukrainian poet Ivan Franko and the prominent archeologist Vikentiy Khvoyka.

How to get there: Take the E40, P01, H01 and P19 to Trypillia, then follow the P19 for five kilometers east out of Trypillia, following the signs for Khalepia.

Vytachiv

Next along the riverside route from Kyiv is the historic village of Vytachiv, where one can see the remains of



The sun sets over the Dnipro River in Kyiv Oblast. The banks of the Dnipro are lined by a number of small towns and villages with picturesque landscapes and fascinating historical sites – perfect for a relaxing getaway from the capital. (UNIAN)

ancient buildings and churches.

Vytachiv is situated on hills, offering its visitors a great view over the left bank of the River Dnipro.

The village is said to have been founded in the fourth century, and it attracts archeologists from all over Ukraine searching for ancient relics.

Vytachiv's historical structures include a wooden church believed to have been built with the help of Ukraine's national poet, Taras Shevchenko.

The church is situated on one of the hills in the village near the Dnipro. Apart from that, there is a well-preserved wooden windmill and an old Ukrainian house near the church.

Unlike its neighboring village Khalepia, Vytachiv has a cafe offering traditional Ukrainian food right beside its historical sites.

For those who want to go hiking, Vytachiv offers two hills to climb:

Krasukha or Mohyla, both less than 80 meters in height.

How to get there: Take the E40, P01, H01 and P19 to Trypillia, follow the P19 south-east out of Khalepia for about 3 kilometers, and then take the turn to Vytachiv on the left.

Rzhyschiv

Even though a trip to Rzhyschiv takes a little bit more than an hour, it is still worth a visit.

The town, which is some 77 kilometers south of the capital, requires more than a day to properly explore.

Rzhyschiv is situated near the river Lehlych and is known for the nearby "flooded church." It was built in the 19th century, but left isolated on a small island after the creation of the Kaniv Reservoir.

Because it was built on a hill, the church did not wind up completely under the reservoir's waters. Now, because the general water level in

the reservoir has fallen, the church has ended up on a small island in the river. There is a bridge to the left bank of the Dnipro, but getting there from Rzhyschiv requires a trip in a small boat.

For those interested in studying Ukrainian culture, Rzhyschiv has two museums: Archeological Museum and the Museum of Art.

Like the other villages and towns in this part of Kyiv Oblast, Rzhyschiv has not yet become a top destination for tourists. So if you're looking for a quiet place to spend a family weekend close to Kyiv – Rzhyschiv fits the bill perfectly.

How to get there: Take the E40, P01, H01 and P19 to Trypillia, then follow the P19 east to Khalepia, and then south-east for about 20 kilometers, passing through Staiky and Hrebeni, to Rzhyschiv. ■



Language law

Left: Activists take part in a rally in front of the Ukrainian parliament in Kyiv on April 25, 2019, as Ukrainian lawmakers prepare to vote on a law enforcing the use of Ukrainian in official settings. Bottom: Activists hold a giant Ukrainian flag during a rally in front of the Ukrainian parliament. The law was later passed, with 278 lawmakers voting in favor, 38 against, 7 abstaining and 25 not voting. Mainly lawmakers from pro-Russian parties voted against the law. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)



Minsk: The Soviet Union your grandmother told you about

World
Traveler



BY OLEKSIY SOROKIN
SOROKIN@KYIVPOST.COM

MINSK, Belarus — A city where people don't litter, and the police are watching you; where young people enjoy nightlife in modern bars and clubs, and the police are watching you; and where friendly people are ever willing to strike up a conversation, and the police are watching you.

The former Soviet republic of Belarus sometimes feels like the least former of the lot.

The country of just under 10 million people has been stuck in the past, at least politically speaking, since 1994, when a collective farm director called Alexander Lukashenko became president and started a run of spectacular election wins. He's into his fifth term now, and shows no sign of being prepared to stop serving the nation.

Of course, elections in Belarus are travesties of democracy, and Lukashenko's political opponents are usually either imprisoned or forced into exile. A number of them have disappeared, presumed murdered. For that reason Belarus — a nasty little police state by anyone's standards — and its capital Minsk are not the first places that spring to mind when thinking of tourist destinations.

But those who do go might be in for a surprise: pleasant bars and clubs, friendly people, good-quality food and very clean streets await the intrepid traveler.

Law and order

The term "very nice police state," though incongruous, is nevertheless an apt one for Belarus.

The wide streets of the capital Minsk, lined by imposing, old Soviet-era buildings built during the late 1940s and mid-1950s, are the distinguishing features of Minsk — most of the city was reduced to rubble during World War II.

These rebuilt streets are kept astonishingly clean — the first notable difference in comparison to Kyiv. In fact, it was hard to spot any litter at all in any public spaces. The neatness is partly due to the efficient public services, and partly to the frequently patrolling police cars, which are far more numerous than in other European cities.

And unlike in many other European cities, the sale of alcohol is permitted at night. Just don't think of opening a can or bottle of beer on the street — the police will be there instantly to dish out a fine.

Reminders of the Soviet Union are literally on every street corner: Independence Street — formerly, Soviet Street — runs right through Independence Square, where of course there's a monument to Vladimir Lenin, the founder of the Soviet Union. Lenin Street, Engels Street and Marx Street are just a few



One of Minsk's main historic attractions is Freedom Square, with its two landmarks, the Holy Spirit Cathedral (L) next to the St. Joseph Church (R). The former Catholic churches, built when Belarus was part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, were converted into Orthodox cathedrals when the commonwealth collapsed at the end of the 18th century. (Oleksiy Sorokin)

blocks away. Lenin Street also intersects with Ulyanov Street, named after Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov — yes, Lenin again.

In fact, all but a few of the streets are named after communist leaders — there's also an Internationale Street (named after the international organization of world communism) and a Komsomolskaya Street (named after the Soviet youth organization), but as a concession to the fact that this is not actually the Soviet Union, or indeed Russia, the names are written in the local Belarussian language: For example the square named after the October Revolution is called Kastychnitskaya Square (from "Kastychnika" — "October" in Belarussian.)

Otherwise, a tourist in Minsk will only encounter the Belarussian

language occasionally — perhaps a person in a bar speaking Russian with a slight Belarussian accent. Government officials prefer Russian as well, and Belarus has both Belarussian and Russian as official state languages.

Most TV channels, banks, gas stations and other large companies use Russian almost exclusively.

Food and sightseeing

Belarussian cuisine is very similar to that of Ukraine. Borsch is described as a traditional Belarussian dish, as is creamy mushroom soup and draniki, a type of potato pancake (known in Ukraine as deruny).

Prices are 10–15 percent higher than in Kyiv, with a three-course meal costing around 30–40 local

Belarussian rubles, which is about \$15. (My grandmother used to tell me that a loaf of bread in the Soviet Union cost 1 ruble, and in Belarus that is still the case, with the exchange rate standing at 2.14 rubles per dollar.)

The most interesting section of Minsk for sightseeing is the Upper Town — the historic center, with its narrow pedestrian streets, old buildings, and wide selection of bars and restaurants.

The jewel of Minsk is Freedom Square, the entrance to the Upper Town, located not far from the banks of the River Svislach, which runs through the center of Minsk. The square is surrounded by a number of Catholic churches that have been converted into Orthodox cathedrals.

The square's main attraction is the Holy Spirit Cathedral, with its double bell tower. On the square, an old Soviet bus has been turned into a souvenir store, with most of the souvenirs connected to the Soviet Union in one way or another.

When I curiously pick up a fridge magnet featuring Joseph Stalin — the Soviet dictator responsible for the torture and deaths of millions of people — a saleswoman immediately asks if I want to buy it:

"No. I don't like Stalin."

"Why not?"

"He's responsible for millions of deaths, he starved millions to death."

"Well, yes... he's part of our history. Where are you from?"

The Lenin fridge magnets were sold out.

Night life

But when the sun goes down, Minsk transforms from a Soviet nostalgia theme park into a modern, young-people's city.

Bars open their doors, offering live music and serving a range of tasty cocktails. The streets are packed with young people moving from one bar to another.

Live music is played inside the bars and on the streets, where street musicians compete for attention. One building at Internationale Street 25a (behind the cat museum) is a nightlife goldmine, with a U.S. themed bar called Honky-Tonk, an expensive club, a top-notch wine bar, a cocktail bar, and a Peruvian restaurant all under one roof.

If the weather is good, there's the chance to dance outside to garage bands playing popular Belarussian songs.

The difference between the daytime scene and nightlife, and conversations with locals gives a real sense of two parallel realities existing in Minsk, and Belarus — one in which the Soviet Union never really went away, and another in which young people enjoy life and look to the future, rather than the past.

A round trip from Kyiv to Minsk will cost you Hr 4,500 (\$160) on average. Renting a place through Airbnb for two nights in downtown Minsk will cost around \$25 per night. Museums worth visiting are the Belarus National History Museum (12 Karl Marx Street) and The National Art Museum of the Republic of Belarus (20 Lenin Street). ■



An air balloon with the portrait of Ernesto "Che" Guevara, who led the Cuban revolution, flies over the outskirts of Minsk, during the International Aeronautics Festival. (AFP)



Romancing Burns Night for charity



After skipping a year, the Kyiv Lions' Club annual charity ball took place again – for the 21st time – on April 13 in the Hilton Kyiv hotel. The event, attended by more than 200 people, raised \$31,000 earmarked for the Children's Cardiac Center in Kyiv. Pavlo Shylko, also known as "DJ Pasha," served as co-host of the event, named after Scottish poet Robert Burns (1759-1796).

- 1** A chef rolls out the traditional haggis.
- 2** From left, Kyiv Post chief editor Brian Bonner, Lions Club president Nataliya Koval and Kyiv Post commercial director Alyona Nevmerzyska pose with an award for the newspaper's sponsorship of the event.
- 3** Businessman Robert McNeil and his wife Victoria.
- 4** Ex-Lions Club President Stuart McKenzie gets on his knees to reenact his marriage proposal, made 22 years ago at a Burns Night to his wife Elena.
- 5** Singer Yana Brylitskaya performs. The night's theme was a contest between Scottish and Ukrainian songs. (Courtesy photos)

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For 50 years, orchestra strives to keep Ukrainian folk music vibrant

Music from page 19

tra's first concert on April 12, 1970, presenting the Zaporizhian March that he arranged for orchestra from the song by Yevhen Adamtsevych, a blind folk musician that played the bandura, the iconic Ukrainian plucked string instrument. The orchestra's version was a hit.

"We played an encore at every concert. In Moscow, we played it three times encore – can you imagine? The authorities saw how it lifted the spirit and inspired people to struggle, so they banned it," Hutsal says.

The Communist Party said the march had similarities to the songs of the Sichovi Striltsi, the army unit of the Ukrainian People's Republic that fought against the Bolshevik armies in 1917–1918. The march was erased from all tape recordings, and Hutsal was removed from the orchestra.

After the rule of Leonid Brezhnev ended in the early 1980s, the orchestra was appropriated by the state and given the status of a republican orchestra. Hutsal returned as the orchestra's artistic director in 1984, a post that he still occupies today.

A year later, under the last Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika, the orchestra re-recorded the march and has played it at its concerts ever since.

In 1997, six years after Ukraine declared independence, the orchestra received national status and a new name – the National Academic Orchestra of Folk Instruments.

Modern legacy

From its creation in 1969, NAONI's underlying goal was playing Ukrainian instrumental folk music, says Hutsal.

The Soviet authorities, however, wanted the orchestra to promote Communist internationalism by having them travel to all the Soviet republics and add Communist songs to their shows.

"We started a concert with playing 'The Ballad About Lenin.' It's a fact, and there's no way around it. But we outlived it, thank God," Hutsal says.

With Ukraine's independence, NAONI gained more artistic freedom, but lost extensive touring possibilities. The orchestra still occasionally travels around Ukraine and abroad, but needs more funding to tour more often and cover wider areas.



Viktor Hutsal, the artistic director and chief conductor of the NAONI orchestra, oversees a rehearsal for a joint performance with the German heavy metal band Accept. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

"We were in Crimea and the Donbas just a few times. The troubles there are the result of our inaction. We should've shown our culture there. Instead, Russia propagated its Russkiy Mir (Russian World) ideology with Osipov State Russian Folk Orchestra twice a year," says Hutsal.

For Hutsal, spreading Ukrainian culture has become NAONI's new

goal. And the state should be the one to finance the touring, he says.

One goal in which NAONI has made significant progress is in attracting younger listeners. Instead of waiting for young people to come to their concerts, the orchestra started coming to universities to perform in front of students in Kyiv. They also invited schoolchildren to see NAONI at its rehearsal room. Young people

then come themselves to attend their shows, Hutsal says.

The orchestra also keeps bringing in new musicians who want to play folk instruments. It has seen generations of musicians come and go. What started as an ensemble of seasoned folk musicians is now an orchestra of young academically educated professionals. Hutsal at 75 is the oldest of its members.

Having progressive and skilled musicians has prompted NAONI to experiment. They started working with Ukrainian artists like Oleg Skrypka and rock band Druha Rika. NAONI's latest collaboration is with the German heavy metal band Accept.

At their 50th anniversary concert, NAONI performed a Crimean-Tatar song with Jamala, the Ukrainian winner of Eurovision in 2016. People were in tears, Hutsal says, when the folk traditions of Ukrainians and the long-suffered ingenious peoples of Crimea combined in a song.

"Our orchestra has a unique tone color," Hutsal says. "And when we add the bouquet of our folk instruments to the flower of the artist's performance... the result is just beautiful." ■

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TEXT FOR 176 UAH



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Ushering in change of power



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- 1** Ukrainian president and presidential candidate Petro Poroshenko attends a debate with his rival, comedian Volodymyr Zelenskiy, at Olimpiyskiy stadium in Kyiv on April 19, 2019.
- 2** Supporters of Volodymyr Zelenskiy gather ahead of the presidential electoral debate.
- 3** People walk next to sticker reading "I do not owe you anything" in front of a polling station in Kyiv on April 21, 2019.
- 4** Ukrainian comedian and presidential candidate Volodymyr Zelenskiy kisses his wife Olena at his campaign headquarters in Kyiv on April 21, 2019.
- 5** An elderly man fills in his ballot paper in front of his house in the village of Korolivka, Kyivska oblast, on April 21, 2019.
- 6** Ukraine's presidential candidates, incumbent President Petro Poroshenko and comedian actor Volodymyr Zelenskiy, kneel during a political debate at the Olympic Stadium in Kyiv on April 19, 2019 to honor the relatives of those killed in Russia's war against Ukraine.
- 7** A people walk out of a voting in Kyiv on April 21, 2019.
- 8** An elderly man fills his ballot paper in his house in the village of Ferma, Kyivska oblast on April 21, 2019, during the second round of Ukraine's presidential election.
- 9** Ukrainian comedian and presidential candidate Volodymyr Zelenskiy reacts to the announcing of exit poll results at his campaign headquarters. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin, Volodymyr Petrov)



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