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New Era Dawns



Oleksiy Honcharuk, Ukraine's new prime minister, addresses parliament during its first session on Aug. 29. The newly selected Cabinet of Ministers watches from the gallery on the upper left. The new parliament, in which President Volodymyr Zelensky's Servant of the People party has a majority, was sworn in and launched a marathon session of appointments and voting. (Oleg Petrusiuk)

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New political era begins with marathon session

BY BERMET TALANT,
MATTHEW KUPFER

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Oleksiy Movchan looks so young, he could easily pass for a university student on a study tour to the parliament. But the green badge on his gray suit reads "Servant of the People."

A 25-year-old former manager at public e-procurement system ProZorro, Movchan was elected as a lawmaker in a single-member district of the city of Kremenchuk in Poltava Oblast, defeating oligarch and political heavyweight Kostyantyn Zhevago.

"I want to achieve a functioning economy," he tells the Kyiv Post when asked about his goals as a lawmaker. "We are a country with eternal great potential that for some reason has not been realized."

Movchan is one of 424 members of the parliament that took the oath of office on Aug. 29, marking the beginning of a new political era for Ukraine.

Compared to previous legislatures, it is younger, more diverse, and less experienced. Eighty percent of its members are new to politics. They are farther from old-school Ukrainian politicking and closer to the Ukrainian public — in most cases, they were members of the public just months ago.

They carry on their shoulders the double burden of great hopes, which have been placed upon them by a public tired of old political elites and corruption, and of the same intractable problems Ukraine has struggled with for years, which they are expected to solve.

In his address to the lawmakers, President Volodymyr Zelensky, whose Servant of the People party now holds 247 seats, stressed this theme.

"You have everything you need to go down in history as the parliament that did the impossible, that made everything (previous) parliaments didn't accomplish for the past 28 years a reality — the parliament without fights, no-shows, voting for absentees," he said.

"Otherwise you will go down in history as the parliament that existed for just a year," Zelensky continued. "This is our probation period. I already know that dismissing parliament isn't so scary."



New members of parliament from President Volodymyr Zelensky's ruling Servant of the People party report to work for the first session of the Verkhovna Rada on Aug. 29. The 424-member parliament, elected on July 21, approved numerous appointments and gave initial approval to many new laws in an all-night session. (Volodymyr Petrov)

Zelensky's success as president largely depends on the parliament and the government that he forms after Ukrainian voters handed him full power. Regardless of the ultimate results, this experiment in governance is unprecedented in Ukraine's history.

Young and old

The air in the parliament hall is filled with buzz and excitement. New lawmakers enthusiastically chat with reporters, pose for selfies, and talk about their big ambitions.

"One of my main goals is to defeat corruption, defeat the desire of public officials on all levels to take office in order to make money," says Olga Vasilevska-Smagliuk, a former investigative journalist. "For this, I am working on a draft law on (creating) the state service of financial investigations that will investigate economic crimes."

She is one of 88 women in this parliament — a historic record for Ukraine.

As a member of the foreign policy committee, Svyatoslav Yurash, the youngest lawmaker elected at the age of 23 with the Servant of the People, will work on reforming Ukraine's diplomatic service and changing the ways his country interacts with Ukrainian diasporas.

"Because of how young this parliament is, we are trying to build a Ukraine where young people want to stay, where everyone wants to return, not flee," he told the Kyiv Post.

Seasoned politicians, who now find themselves in the minority, also made it into parliament. They had some advice to offer their younger colleagues, many of whom could be their children or grandchildren.

Yuriy Boyko, leader of the second largest faction, the 43-member,

pro-Russian Opposition Platform — For Life party, advised new lawmakers to learn from the past.

"Look back at the fate of the previous parliament and do not repeat their mistakes when parliament lived separately from the people, worked on its own political ambitions and ignored the needs of the people."

Former President Petro Poroshenko returned to the parliament with his rebranded faction, European Solidarity, which holds 27 seats. He says his team will serve as a check on Servant of the People, should they lead the country in the wrong direction.

"The goal of our team is to move the country toward European and Euro-Atlantic integration," he said. "If the ruling party crosses the red line, we will do everything to stop them and to protect the European future."

Unlike them, 22-seat Batkivshchyna faction announced that it will side with the president's party, although its hopes to coalesce with the majority were not heard.

"We will not go into opposition to the president and Servant of the People. We will work outside of the majority," said Batkivshchyna's long-time leader Yulia Tymoshenko.

Lesya Vasylenko, a member of the smallest faction, the 17-seat Voice, said her party will not take sides.

"We do not see ourselves in

opposition. Rather, we see ourselves above the process," she told the Kyiv Post. "When there are things to be criticized, we shall do it. When there are things being done well, we will support them."

No delay

Normally, lawmakers would call it a day after their swearing-in. But the new parliament did not want to delay, and the official ceremony was followed by the first plenary session.

Day turned into evening, and voting continued into the night.

By midnight, the parliament selected its speaker, committees, the new Cabinet of Ministers, and the new prosecutor general.

Oleksandr Korniyenko, a lawmaker from Servant of the People, looked weary as he answered journalists' questions about dozens of laws his party wanted to pass on the first day, such as stripping lawmakers of parliamentary immunity.

"Lots of tasks...we'll work until morning," he told the Kyiv Post afterwards. "We still have some work to finish in the committees. It is hard to focus. But our morale is high. We are moving fast."

David Arakhamia, leader of the Servant of the People faction, said the party aims to stay this productive throughout its tenure.

"Every day that the parliament will work, we will vote for at least 10 draft laws." ■

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Ukraine's new Cabinet of Ministers includes two noteworthy holdovers

BY KYIV POST

During its first session on Aug. 29, the new Ukrainian parliament voted for a new prime minister and Cabinet.

The new Cabinet includes 17 ministers, as opposed to the 25 ministers that served in the outgoing Cabinet led by Volodymyr Groysman. Several ministries were disbanded and merged with others, such as the agriculture ministry, the sports ministry, and the ministry of the occupied territories.

Here is the full list of Ukraine's new ministers:

Oleksiy Honcharuk

prime minister



Until recently, Honcharuk, 35, was deputy head of President Volodymyr

Zelensky's office on economic development and reforms and often followed Zelensky during his recent travels to the Ukrainian regions. Before that, he headed the Better Regulation Delivery Office, a European Union-funded think tank aimed at improving the business environment and Ukraine's investment climate.

A lawyer by education, Honcharuk ran his own firm and was an adviser to Ihor Shevchenko, ecology minister, and Stepan Kubiv, economy minister.

In 2014, Honcharuk also unsuccessfully ran for parliament from the Sylva Lyudey (Power of the People) party, which received less than one percent support.

Dmytro Kuleba

deputy prime minister in charge of European integration



Kuleba, 38, is a Ukrainian diplomat. He has served as the permanent representative of Ukraine in the Council of Europe since 2016. Before that, Kuleba was a special envoy of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry.

Mykhailo Fedorov

deputy prime minister and minister of digital transformation



Fedorov, 28, ran a digital marketing agency before joining Zelensky's presidential campaign as the head of digital operations. He went on to work in Zelensky's administration as deputy chief of

staff. The position of minister of digital transformation is a new one. See the Kyiv Post's interview with Fedorov on page 5.

Arsen Avakov

interior minister



Avakov is the longest-serving Ukrainian minister, having been in the interior ministry since February 2014. He is the most controversial appointee in the new government. Civil society has held multiple protests in recent months demanding Avakov's resignation due to his ineffectiveness and suspected corruption. Before the vote for the government, Zelensky told his party's lawmakers that Avakov has to stay, according to Prime Minister Honcharuk.

Andriy Zahorodniuk

defense minister



Since July, Zahorodniuk, 44, has been appointed Zelensky's defence adviser and a member of the advisory board of the Ukroboronprom state arms producer, which has been involved in several corruption scandals. In 2014, he volunteered to help Ukrainian soldiers on the frontlines and, in 2015, headed the Reforms Project Office of the Ministry of Defense aimed at reforming the defense sector. He worked there along with another volunteer, David Arakhmiya, who now heads Zelensky's party faction in parliament.

Zahorodniuk has diplomas in law and finance. He is the founder and head of the Discovery company, which produces drilling equipment. His father, Pavlo Zahorodniuk, is a member of the supervisory board of Ukrnafta oil company, more than 40 percent of which is controlled by oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky.

Vadym Prystaiko

foreign minister



Prystaiko is a career diplomat who has held numerous posts in the foreign ministry since 1994. He served as Ukraine's Ambassador to Canada between 2012 and 2014. Since 2017, he has served as first deputy head of Ukraine's foreign ministry and led Ukraine's mission to NATO. He briefly served as deputy head of Zelensky's presidential office.

Tymofiy Mylovanov

economy minister



Mylovanov is the honorary president of the Kyiv School of Economics and an associate professor at the U.S. University of Pittsburgh. He has been deputy chairman of the board of the National Bank of Ukraine since 2016.

Oksana Markarova

finance minister



Markarova is one of only two ministers who were in Volodymyr Groysman's government and went on to join Honcharuk's Cabinet. She has been heading the finance ministry since June 2018. She is a technocrat who has stayed away from politics.

Denys Malynuska

justice minister



Malynuska, 37, is a business lawyer. He was a consultant of the World Bank and deputy chairman of the board of the Better Regulation Delivery Office in the economy ministry. Honcharuk, the prime minister, was the chairman of the board.

Dmytro Dubilet

minister of the Cabinet of Ministers



Dubilet, 34, is a businessman and the founder of Monobank, the first Ukrainian internet bank. In 2012–2016, he headed the IT department of Privatbank, Ukraine's largest bank, which was then owned by oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky. It was later nationalized by the Ukrainian government to save it from bankruptcy. His father, Oleksandr Dubilet, headed this bank in 1997–2016.

Zoryana Skaletska (Chernenko)

health-care minister



Skaletska is a healthcare expert, lawyer, and deputy dean of the faculty of law at Kyiv Mohyla Academy. Her ex-hus-

band, Oleksandr Chernenko, was a lawmaker with former President Petro Poroshenko's party in the previous parliament.

Vladyslav Kryklii

minister of infrastructure



Kryklii, 32, was elected to parliament on Zelensky's Servant of the People party list. He is a former head of the Main Service Center of the Ministry of Interior Affairs and a former adviser to Arsen Avakov, the interior minister. In 2015, he was the deputy head of the traffic police. Kryklii denied being dependent on Avakov and told the Chesno civic watchdog that he mainly worked in the ministry with Eka Zguladze, Avakov's deputy head in 2014–2016, who was responsible for the police reform. Chesno found that Kryklii was the final beneficiary of the company Vebiks LLC, which is under investigation for being a fictitious firm used for money laundering. Kryklii claimed that he had left this company in 2016 and wasn't involved in its activities since then.

Oleksiy Orzhel

energy and environment minister



Orzhel, 35, was elected to parliament on Zelensky's Servant of the People party ballot. He is a fuel and energy expert and head of the energy sector at the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO) in the economy ministry. In 2006–2014, he worked at the national commission that regulated energy and utility services. BRDO chair Oleksiy Honcharuk is now prime minister.

Hanna Novosad

education minister



Novosad, 29, was elected to parliament on Zelensky's Servant of the People party ballot. Novosad lives in Kyiv and works at the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, where she has been leading the Directorate for Strategic Planning and European Integration since 2017. She started working for the ministry in 2014 after the victory of the EuroMaidan Revolution as an adviser to then-Minister of Education Serhiy Kvit. The ministry calls its strategic planning directorate an "analytical 'think

tank.'" Novosad is a graduate of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (Politics) and Maastricht University (European Studies).

Volodymyr Borodyansky

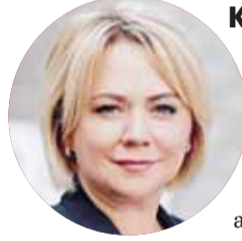
minister of culture



Borodyansky, 45, began his work in the media market in 1998, when he became the commercial director of the Moskovskij Komsomolets newspaper in Ukraine. He rose through the ranks, becoming Alfa Bank's media department head. In 2004, he became the head of the board of directors of STB television channel. On July 29, Zelensky appointed Borodyansky as his adviser-at-large.

Oksana Koliada

minister of veterans' affairs



Koliada, 38, is a lawyer and a law enforcement officer. In 2003–2015, she was an officer at the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In 2015–2017, Koliada headed the communications and press department at the Ministry of Defense. In 2016–2017, she was the head of a working group developing a strategic communications system for the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Alyona Babak

minister of the development of local communities



Babak was elected to parliament in 2014 on the ticket of the Samopomich party. In her time in office, she held the position of deputy chairman of the parliamentary committee on construction, housing and town planning. She focused on decentralization during her time in parliament.

Yulia Sokolovska

minister of social policy



Sokolovska, 34, was an adviser-at-large in the finance ministry, previously working in the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, and focusing on budgeting. She also reportedly headed the healthcare reform department for USAID. ■

Editorials

Good and bad picks

Now, the hard work begins for the new president, new prime minister and new Cabinet. The newness will wear off soon and people will start quickly to judge them by their actions.

Ukrainians and their friends have a long wish list for the new leaders, ranging from creating better conditions for investment to creating rule of law and ending oligarch privileges and monopolies.

There were some very hopeful picks made by President Volodymyr Zelensky and his chosen prime minister, Oleksiy Honcharuk. We are particularly excited that Finance Minister Oksana Markarova is staying put. We are hopeful about the appointment of others who have good reputations, such as Dmytro Kuleba as deputy prime minister in charge of European integration, Mykhailo Fedorov as deputy prime minister and minister of digital transformation, Andriy Zahorodniuk as defense minister and Tymofiy Mylovanov as economy minister. In all, it appears that Honcharuk favored people he worked with as head of the Better Regulation Delivery Office. That's where Denys Maluska, the new justice minister, and Oleksiy Orzhel, the new energy minister, worked.

Unfortunately, the presence of Interior Minister Arsen Avakov will taint the Cabinet's ability to be a reformist one. He's a toxic figure who has blocked police reform and has credible accusations of corruption against him. President Volodymyr Zelensky will live to regret keeping Avakov in power. Avakov's continuing presence also fuels more suspicions that billionaire oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky has an outsized influence on the new administration. There are other troublesome choices, including Vladyslav Kryklii as minister of infrastructure.

As parliament met late into the night on Aug. 29, it made other key appointments, including replacing the useless Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko with Ruslan Ryaboshapka, who has a much better reputation.

We hope this Cabinet gels into a truly effective group of reformers. There's plenty that needs to be done and Ukrainians will give their support as long as the government puts the public interest above all.

No to China

Motor Sich is one of Ukraine's great assets, employing 20,000 people in the southeastern industrial city of Zaporizhia to make engines for helicopters and airplanes, both civilian and military, and for cruise missiles. It is also in great need of investment.

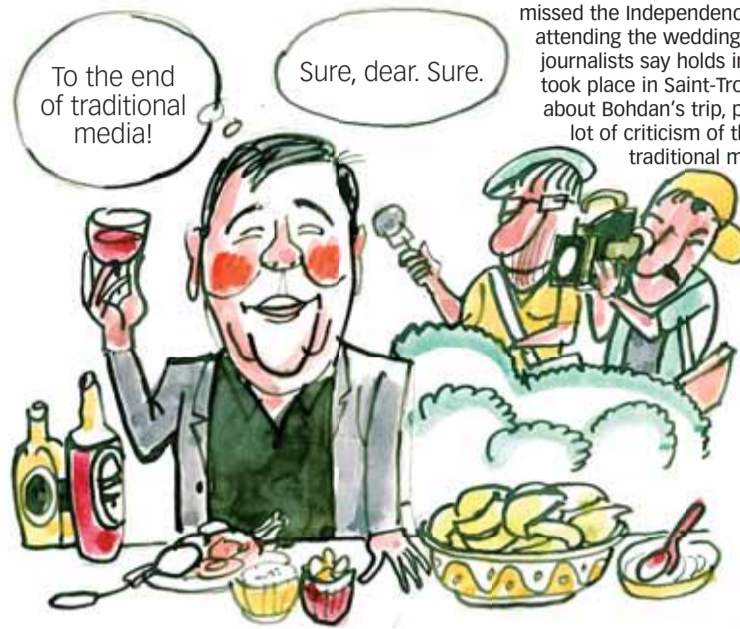
But Ukraine should refuse, on national security grounds, Beijing Skyrizon Aviation's attempt to acquire the company. China has been no friend of Ukraine in Russia's war. Not only has China refused to adopt Western sanctions against the Kremlin, it has increased its trade and ties with Ukraine's enemy.

U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton was right to visit Kyiv on Aug. 27 and warn Ukraine against letting the sale go through.

"Military and sensitive technologies should not reach enemies or potential enemies," Bolton told the Evropeiska Pravda website. "We inform friends and partners about the danger of Chinese investment." If Motor Sich is Chinese-owned, it could end up supplying Russia's military openly or, more likely, secretly — an unthinkable turn of events for a nation that has lost 7 percent of its territory and 13,000 citizens to Russia's war. While Ukraine banned military exports to Russia in 2017, the suspicions are that Motor Sich's products ended up in Russia through other intermediary nations.

Moreover, few details of the deal have been disclosed due to the strict and often excessive secrecy of Ukraine's defense industry. Ultimately, President Volodymyr Zelensky will have to decide whether the purchase spearheaded by Chinese businessman Wang Jing should go through.

Ukraine's Western partners need to come up with an alternative investor for Motor Sich. Still, this should really be an easy call for Ukraine. An aspiring NATO member that is reliant on billions of dollars in Western assistance, put up by nations that have sacrificed economically by imposing sanctions on Russia, must choose the side of democracy. And that is not the side that China is on.



NEWS ITEM: Andriy Bohdan, chief of staff for President Volodymyr Zelensky, missed the Independence Day celebration in Kyiv because he was attending the wedding of Andriy Dovbenko, a lawyer who Ukrainian journalists say holds influence in the Justice Ministry. The wedding took place in Saint-Tropez, a town on the French Riviera. A report about Bohdan's trip, published by Ukrainian journalists, provoked a lot of criticism of the chief of staff, who is notoriously hostile to traditional media.



NEWS ITEM: In an interview with the Censor.net news website, Ukrainian oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky veered off into a tangent and talked profusely about women and money. He said women have a lot of expenses, such as manicures, and tend to take a lot of their husbands' money to pay for it. He said that male lawmakers might need a higher salary than their female colleagues in order to finance their wives, but acknowledged it would be seen as sexism.



NEWS ITEM: U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton flew into Kyiv on Aug. 27, reportedly to prevent the Ukrainian side from selling a major stake in aircraft plant Motor Sich to Beijing Skyrizon Aviation. The sale would put China in possession of powerful military technologies it currently doesn't have.



NEWS ITEM: President Volodymyr Zelensky gave an interview to Stanislav Boklan, a Ukrainian actor who starred alongside him in "Servant of the People," a comedy series that helped him win the presidency. Zelensky hasn't given any interviews to traditional media outlets since becoming president in May. He did, however, publish many videos on social media, including one where he's driving a car and talking about current issues, which was dubbed "Zelensky giving an interview to a Tesla."

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Reformer & Anti-Reformer Of The Week



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Activist leads campaign for Arsen Avakov's resignation as minister.

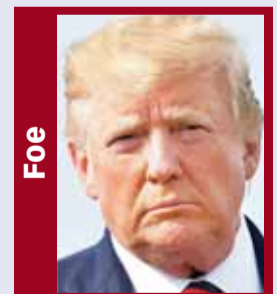


Volodymyr Zelensky
President approves Arsen Avakov as minister despite graft accusations.

Ukraine's Friend & Foe Of The Week



Donald Tusk
In contrast to another Donald, the European Council president is tough on Russia.



Donald Trump
For second week in a row, he earns title for his subservience to Kremlin dictator Vladimir Putin.

VOX populi:

What do you think of Volodymyr Zelensky's first 100 days?

Feel strongly about an issue? Agree or disagree with editorial positions in this newspaper?

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Fedorov's plan to digitize Ukraine, slay corruption

BY DENYS KRASNIKOV
KRASNIKOV@KYIVPOST.COM

As a digital marketer with his own agency, Mykhailo Fedorov had a dream. He wanted to take over the digital side of a presidential campaign one day.

That dream came true earlier than he expected when Volodymyr Zelensky, then just a comedy actor, asked him to run his digital campaign in the upcoming presidential race.

The campaign was a success, and Zelensky was sworn in as Ukraine's sixth president in May. Fedorov stayed close to him, but was given a different task: taking charge of Ukraine's electronic government initiative.

This tech-savvy 28-year-old from the southeastern city of Zaporizhia now aims to make it possible for Ukrainians to vote, run a business, and receive public services online.

Elected to parliament from Zelensky's Servant of the People party, Fedorov was appointed deputy prime minister and minister of digital transformation on Aug. 29 during the new parliament's first session.

After only four years in business and less than a year in politics, he has become a central figure in Ukraine's tech sphere: he decides what laws and budget resources Ukraine needs to develop e-government. More importantly, he will design a brand new ministry responsible for information technology.

And Fedorov is confident that he will succeed. He believes that digitalization can become Ukraine's national idea and unite Ukrainians, while also — through transparency — helping rid the country of corruption and simplify the dialogue between citizens and the state.

"Eventually, people will stop noticing the government. They'll be using it like they use Uber or Booking.com — only when they need it," he told the Kyiv Post in an interview earlier this month. "Government will become a service."

Grand strategy

Fedorov and his 10-person team say they have been "very busy" since Zelensky took office: They have been



Mykhailo Fedorov, a new deputy prime minister of Ukraine, talks to the Kyiv Post on Aug. 9, 2019, before his appointment to the Cabinet. Fedorov's goal is to digitize Ukraine's government to make it less corrupt and more service-oriented. (Oleg Petrasiiuk)

working on a digital roadmap for the country.

According to Fedorov, the most laborious task so far has been understanding the legacy their predecessors left them. A basic audit revealed that, for 28 years of Ukrainian independence, government officials had not "managed to agree on a mutual strategy" and thus acted incoherently, he says.

"They seem to have always argued with each other, they showed selfish ambitions instead of teamwork."

Nobody tracked progress in the IT sphere, knew how many online registries actually functioned, or even knew the budget for Ukraine's digitalization, he says. As a result, electronic services appeared chaotically and people did not use them.

From now on, everything will be different, the techie claims. Calling himself a "visionary," Fedorov has already come up with a digital strategy for the next 5 years to create what President Zelensky and Fedorov call

the State in a Smartphone project.

Based on this strategy, Fedorov has assigned some 100 tasks to various government agencies. He says he has an online dashboard to supervise their progress.

Fedorov himself is directly involved in auditing the registries, preparing draft laws, introducing internet identification tools and rolling out new e-services.

With the parliament's first session, he and other newly elected lawmakers from Servant of the People will start implementing his goals. The party will have a simple majority in the parliament, holding 254 out of 423 seats. 226 votes are enough to pass laws in Ukraine.

"But for now, we are doing the maximum we can with no official roles," Fedorov told the Kyiv Post.

Busy September

What can Fedorov do without legislative authority? He and his team have been preparing 35 draft laws for Ukraine's tech industry and e-government.

These are laws on cybersecurity, e-residency, storing data in the cloud, radio frequencies needed to cover rural Ukraine with 4G internet, and technical neutrality — all long-awaited in by the tech industry.

In fact, it was the industry players — tech companies, associations and nonprofits — that wrote these drafts. The president's digital aide just collected them and refined them.

"We asked the business what they wanted the government to work on," he says. In many cases, business people handed his team draft laws they would like to have passed.

After the team of lawyers who work for Fedorov has revised the drafts to make sure they are up-to-date and align with the e-govern-

ment roadmap, Fedorov will hold what he calls a "Digital Day" in the parliament to pass the most important laws all at once. He promises to do it in September.

Corrupt registries

Another one of Fedorov's projects promises to be controversial.

His office will carry out an audit of Ukraine's numerous registries: from the general population registry to more specific ones like the registry of entrepreneurs. Fedorov says there are at least 250 of them, "but nobody knows for sure."

This unaccountable bureaucracy opens the door for corruption. Fedorov claims that shady individuals stand behind every registry and take bribes to change the information recorded there, sometimes illegally.

"They passed the word to me through different people" that they want to meet, he says. But Fedorov is reluctant to do that — he does not want to be associated with these shady characters.

"Although," he adds, "I am kind of curious how everything works, and they know for sure."

After the audit, however, Fedorov aims to make the registries electronic and, thus, fully transparent. That should make it impossible for anyone to change information within them anonymously.

An Estonian firm that has reformed registries in Estonia, a country viewed by many as a role model in terms of its e-government, will take on the task of combing through the registries here. Fedorov's team will spend up to \$150,000 on the project, with the money coming from international donors like Swiss development agency EGAP and USAID.

This is money well spent, Fedorov says, because maintaining some of the paper registries now costs \$20 million a year, which he terms "high-way robbery."

Useless ID cards

E-services rely on interconnected electronic registries. But they also require people to be able to identify themselves online. Introducing tools for that is another priority task for Fedorov and his team.

There are currently three potential identification tools: a phone number, an electronic key and a mobile app. Fedorov's team is going to work on all of them, but they put a lot of trust in a mobile app called SmartID.

"But I don't really care how people will sign their online docs. The main thing is to make the process more convenient for them," Fedorov says.

The previous government, however, used a different approach, which is now obsolete, according to Fedorov. Ex-President Petro Poroshenko introduced smart ID cards, a plastic piece of identification used in place of paper domestic passports.

These cards have a special chip built in for identifying their holders online. But the previous government lacked legislation to make them work. As a result, since their introduction in 2016, Ukraine has issued only 1.3 million ID cards for 44 million Ukrainians.

In 2018, the government fully replaced paper passports with smart ID cards, so more people will soon have them. But there's a problem: Ukraine has no devices to read them, which makes the cards useless on the internet.

As a result, Ukraine will have to skip many technologies that it has missed, like ID cards, and start using MobileID and SmartID right away, Fedorov says.

"(The ID cards) are a thing of the past. Today everything is done on the phone. We will simply have to pass over some stages of our evolution."

'Little offshore'

Despite having no proper e-government at the moment, Fedorov already plans to share its benefits with other nations — in advance.

He envisions Ukraine possessing e-residency, something Estonia has had since 2016. But Ukraine's version will be better, Fedorov claims.

Being an e-resident in Estonia means one can use all its e-government services remotely, including business registration and the services of European Union banks. However, the e-residency card holder does not have a residency permit or a visa and pays the flat 20-percent Estonian tax rate.

"And we have a 5-percent tax for entrepreneurs. This can make us a little offshore and open us up to the world. It's great marketing for the country," the former marketer says.

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The digital team of Volodymyr Zelensky's presidential campaign works at the campaign's office on Feb. 27, 2019. (Volodymyr Petrov)

Ukraine, Russia prepare for first major prisoner swap

BY OKSANA GRYTSENKO
GRYTSENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

The last days of summer have given much hope to dozens of families of Ukrainian political prisoners held in Russia and Russian-occupied Crimea.

State leaders, lawyers, and human rights officials have all hinted that a major exchange of Ukrainians for Russians imprisoned in Ukraine may soon take place as a result of negotiations between President Volodymyr Zelensky and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin.

"I'm personally working on this issue," Zelensky told journalists on Aug. 23. He added that "the first results should be seen in the coming days."

On the same day, Putin's spokesperson, Dmitry Peskov, vaguely confirmed "the start of dialogue" between Zelensky and Putin. He also said Putin discussed the possible prisoner exchange with French President Emmanuel Macron during a visit to France in mid-August.

Insiders and the families of prisoners are tight-lipped about the number and names of people who would be included on the exchange list. But a few leaks in the media suggest it would be dozens of people



Ukrainian sailors sit inside a defendants' cage prior to a court hearing in Moscow on July 17, 2019. The 24 Ukrainian sailors were captured in November by the Russian FSB secret service near the Kerch Strait as they tried to pass in three vessels from the Black Sea to the Azov Sea. (AFP)

on both sides. There are at least 120 Ukrainian political prisoners in Russia and Crimea.

If the exchange takes place, it will be the first mass release of Ukrainians from Russian prisons since Russia started its war against Ukraine in 2014. During more than five years of fighting, Russia has released only seven Ukrainian political prisoners.

Signs of exchange

At least eight Ukrainian political prisoners have recently been transferred to Moscow from prisons in different Russian regions, which many saw as a sign of their imminent release.

On Aug. 29, Russian media reported that the most famous Ukrainian political prisoner, Crimean film director Oleg Sentsov, was transferred from a prison in Siberia to a jail in Moscow. Sentsov's lawyer, however, hasn't confirmed this.

Sentsov, who was sentenced to 20 years in prison in Russia, nearly died in 2018 after 145 days on hunger strike, during which he demanded the release of all Ukrainian political prisoners.

On Aug. 20, Russian journalist Victoria Ivleva said she had delivered the food parcels for five Ukrainian political prisoners to Moscow's Lefortovo jail. They include Volodymyr Balukh and Oleksandr Kolchenko, who were captured in Crimea, Ukrainian nationalists Stanislav Klykh and Mykola Karpyuk, who were sentenced for alleged fighting on the Chechen side in the First Chechen War, which both deny.

The fifth prisoner was Pavlo Hryb, a 21-year-old student who had been abducted in Belarus in 2017, illegally transferred to Russia and sentenced to six years in Russian prison for alleged terrorist activity. Hryb has severe liver problems and his father said he could die in prison without urgent treatment.

The next day, Ivleva reported that she had also delivered parcels for Ukrainian

journalist Roman Sushchenko, 63-year-old pensioner Olexii Syzonovych and one more Ukrainian political prisoner, whose relatives asked that she not give his name.

On Aug. 22, citing its own sources, Russia's RBK news website reported that Kyiv and Moscow had agreed to release 33 people each. RBK did not give the names.

Another potential sign of the approaching exchange was the release of Ukrainian-Russian journalist Kirill Vyshynsky. Many expected Vyshynsky to be up for prisoner exchange.

The former head of the Kyiv office of Russia's propagandistic RIA-Novosti news agency, Vyshynsky was arrested in Kyiv in May 2018 and is charged with high treason. In July, Zelensky offered to exchange Vyshynsky for Sentsov.

Based on its sources in the Prosecutor General's Office, the Ukrainska Pravda news website reported that Vyshynsky might be released separately from the main swap in exchange for Sentsov, Kolchenko, and Sushchenko.



Kirill Vyshynsky, a journalist at Russia's propagandist RIA Novosti news agency leaves the appeals court in Kyiv on Aug. 28, 2019 after he was released on condition he not leave the country and appear for his trial. (AFP)

How many prisoners?

Maria Tomak from the Media Initiative for Human Rights counts at least 120 Ukrainians currently imprisoned in Russia and the Crimean peninsula, which was annexed by Russia in March 2014.

They include Ukrainian nationals who protested the annexation of Crimea, were arrested in Russia for opposing the country's aggression against Ukraine, or are just seen by Russia as Ukrainian nationalists. About 35 of them are currently held in Crimea, Tomak said. Sixty-eight prisoners are Crimean Tatars, the indigenous people of Crimea whose activists are widely persecuted by Russian authorities.

There are also 24 Ukrainian military sailors, who were captured by the Russian coast guards and officers of the FSB security service in neutral waters of the Black Sea near Crimea in November. Ukraine sees them as prisoners of war, while Russia, which doesn't admit its involvement in the war against Ukraine, is trying them as criminals in civilian courts for allegedly trespassing on Russian territory. In May, an international maritime court ordered Russia to release the Ukrainian sailors, but Moscow said it would not recognize the court's jurisdiction in this case.

On the other side of the border, there are also from 22 to 25 Russians who were captured by Ukrainian authorities in the war-torn Donbas region or other parts of Ukraine. They are charged with fighting or engaging in terrorist or subversive activity against the Ukrainian state, said Olga Reshetylova, from the Media Initiative for Human Rights, who keeps a record of imprisoned Russians.

The figure differs depending on whom one considers Russian. Some of the prisoners have double nationalities and refuse to be sent to Russia through exchange procedures.

The activists of the Media Initiative for Human Rights also counted at least 130 military and civilian Ukrainian prisoners held on the territory of the Russian-controlled parts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts. The last major prisoner swap between the

more Prisoners on page 7

TOP 10 KYIV POST exclusives online this week

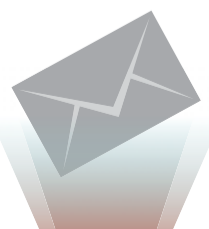
1. Get lost, Giuliani
2. Concerns mount over future of EuroMaidan cases under Zelensky
3. Bolton arrives in Kyiv to warn Ukrainian authorities of risks of Chinese investment
4. Why Ukraine's statehood collapsed 100 years ago
5. Zelensky takes early steps to bolster nation's independence
6. Ukraine's bizarre balconies explained
7. 28th Anniversary of Ukraine's Independence
8. Report says Bohdan attended controversial lawyer's wedding in France
9. Speculation intensifies over fate of Avakov, other ministers
10. America marks Ukrainian Independence Day



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Russia holding at least 120 Ukrainians as war prisoners

Prisoners from page 6

Ukrainian government and Russia's proxies there happened in December 2017, when 74 Ukrainian prisoners were released in exchange for 233 people imprisoned in Ukraine.

Tomak said that, while the prisoner exchange with the Russian-controlled parts of Donbas is a part of the regular peace talks in Minsk, the situation with Ukrainians imprisoned in Russia and Crimea is much more difficult.

"There are no platforms for negotiations about these people," she said.

Previous releases

Since 2014, there were just four cases when Ukraine managed to reach a deal with Russia on the release of its nationals from Russian prisons, Tomak said.

In May 2016, Russia released Ukrainian pilot Nadiya Savchenko when Putin pardoned her after years of negotiations and pressure on Russia. In June 2016, Russia also released Crimean activist Gennadiy Afanasyev and pensioner Yuriy Soloshenko, who traveled to Moscow for personal reasons in 2014 but was captured there and accused



Activists and relatives of Ukrainian political prisoners in Russia hold placards with the demand to intensify prisoner exchange during a rally in Kyiv, on June 1, 2019. (Volodymyr Petrov)

of spying for Ukraine. These two were released in exchange for Olena Hlishchynska and Vitaliy Didenko, pro-Russian journalists from Odesa sentenced in Ukraine for separatism.

In October 2017, through the mediation of Turkey, Russia released Akhtem Chygoz and Ilmi Umerov, two Crimean Tatar politicians and

leaders of the Mejlis, the highest representative body of the Crimean Tatar people.

In March 2018, Russian authorities released two Ukrainian border guard officers, Ihor Dziubak and Bohdan Martson, in exchange for two Russian FSB officers, Vladimir Kuznetsov and Askar Kulub. The

Ukrainian border guards were kidnapped by Russians in October 2018 in Sumy Oblast while patrolling the state border. The two Russians were captured by Ukrainian soldiers in June 2017, when they sailed by boat from Crimea to Ukrainian mainland territory. They claimed they had gotten lost. ■

Russia's war against Ukraine kills 29 soldiers this summer; 3,009 overall

BY OLENA GONCHAROVA
GONCHAROVA@KYIVPOST.COM

As Ukrainian authorities hope to revive peace talks with Russia, the death toll for Ukrainian troops killed in action keeps growing.

Since the start of the year, at least 72 Ukrainian soldiers – 29 of them in summer alone – have been killed in Donbas, according to a Kyiv Post

count based on military and media reports.

The overall death toll for Ukrainian military killed in action since hostilities began in 2014 has reached 3,009 soldiers as of Aug. 29.

After getting elected in April, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has called for a four-way meeting with Russia, Germany, and France, known as the Normandy

Format. Moscow has said there is interest in renewing peace discussions, but no date has been set. On Aug. 26, French President Emmanuel Macron said the leaders of the four countries will hold talks in September aimed at ending the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Read the full story at www.kyivpost.com



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'Untouchable'

One of the biggest scandals in Hollywood comes down to one person, movie mogul Harvey Weinstein. The film industry was shook after dozens of women accused him of sexual abuse in 2017. The person, who was believed to be untouchable buying the silence of his victims for years, finally fell to disgrace. The documentary features multiple interviews with Weinstein's former colleagues and accusers. It takes a look at his career rise as a successful producer and a co-founder of the Miramax company, as well as follows his path to the times when he lost his reputation.

"Untouchable." Check screenings in the full list of events.

Friday, Aug. 30

Live music

Music on the Helipad (Chuck Wansley, GeeJay, Volga Funk). Parkovi. 7:30 p.m. Hr 290-400

Music & Motion: Dennis Adu Septet and Alina Sokulska (jazz music and dance). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 170-650

Clubs

Arapu (electronic dance music). River Port. 10 p.m. Free

Avantage: Omon Breaker, S.A. Tweeman and others (electronic dance music). Otel'. 11:30 p.m. Hr 200-300

Bal Under the Trees: David, Nemo, Shenko (electronic dance music). Mezzanine. 11:59 p.m. Hr 150-250

Miscellaneous

New York - Ilovaik: A Choice (an exhibition dedicated to Markiyana Paslowsky, a Ukrainian-American who died in Ukraine's east fighting Russian aggression). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 50, Hr 25 for pupils, students and retirees. Free for people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee

Island (children's book illustrations by Soviet Ukrainian artists Ada Rybachuk and Volodymyr Melnychenko). Ya Gallery. 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Let's Make a Paradise Together (artworks exploring the utopia of building a new society removed from the globalized world). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Big Circle (contemporary art exhibition exploring the transformation of non-objective art). M17 Contemporary Art Center. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Hr 100, Hr 70 for children, students and retirees

Gairat Baimatov. The Caravan of Visions (graphics and paintings by Uzbek contemporary artist). Kyiv History Museum. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Price to be announced

Alium (sculptures by Anzhelika Honchar exploring the vulnerability of human bodies). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Blue Monday (paintings, graphics by Roman Mykhailov and Borys Kashapov exploring the swinging transition from joy to struggle that modern people experience). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Distinguished Women (art exhibition dedicated to the U.S. Women's Equality Day). America House. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Donbas: Black Gold (photo exhibition by Serhii Korovainyi depicting the work of miners in Donetsk Oblast). America House. 12 p.m. - 9

p.m. Free. Bring ID

The Forbidden Image (photographs by Boris Mikhailov and artists from the Kharkiv School of Photography exploring the forbidden). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

Yaroslav Derkach. Non-Objective Objects (sculptures by Ukrainian contemporary artist). Tsekh Art Gallery. 2 p.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Movies

Untouchable (documentary in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 12:55 p.m. Hr 55

The River Wild (adventure, crime, thriller in English). America House. 6:30 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Once Upon a Time in Hollywood (comedy, drama in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Cinema City. 7 p.m. Hr 120-130

Saturday, Aug. 31

Live music

Armenian Jazz: Marietta Arushanyan and Crocodile Project. Caribbean Club. 7 p.m. Hr 150-350

Clubs

Pasha Couture, Mika J. Cooper (electronic dance music). UBK. 11 p.m. Hr 100. Visitors must be over 21

Mesivo and Zmei: Pharaoh and Yogg, Rapha and others (electronic dance music). Otel'. 11 p.m. Hr 250

Toy. Experimental: Yoshitaca, Noizar, Plastik (electronic dance music). River Port. 11:55 p.m. Price to be announced

Miscellaneous

Distinguished Women (art exhibition dedicated to the U.S. Women's Equality Day). America House. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Donbas: Black Gold (photo exhibition by Serhii Korovainyi depicting the work of miners in Donetsk Oblast). America House. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Island (children's book illustrations by Soviet Ukrainian artists Ada Rybachuk and Volodymyr Melnychenko). Ya Gallery. 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

New York - Ilovaik: A Choice (an exhibition dedicated to Markiyana Paslowsky, a Ukrainian-American who died in Ukraine's east fighting Russian aggression). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 50, Hr 25 for pupils, students and retirees. Free for people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee

Let's Make a Paradise Together (artworks exploring the utopia of building a new society removed from the globalized world). Izone. 10

a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Gairat Baimatov. The Caravan of Visions (graphics and paintings by Uzbek contemporary artist). Kyiv History Museum. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Price to be announced

Alium (sculptures by Anzhelika Honchar exploring the vulnerability of human bodies). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free

The Forbidden Image (photographs by Boris Mikhailov and artists from the Kharkiv School of Photography exploring the forbidden). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

Coffee Quest Fest (over 50 coffee shops stands, barista battles and entertainment). VDNH. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Hr 100-120. Free for children under 14, people with disabilities

Charity Weekend (festival celebrating healthy lifestyle and raising money for charity). Platforma Art Factory. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Hr 250. Children from 4 to 16 - Hr 100

Movies

Once Upon a Time in Hollywood (comedy, drama in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Cinema City. 7 p.m. Hr 120-130

Untouchable (documentary in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 7:20 p.m. Hr 105

Shows

Htrk, Vanligt Folk (pop). Mezzanine. 8 p.m. Hr 450

Theater

I'm Not Running (theater recording in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Multiplex (Lavina Mall). 3 p.m. Hr 190-240

Sunday, Sept. 1

Miscellaneous

New York - Ilovaik: A Choice (an exhibition dedicated to Markiyana Paslowsky, a Ukrainian-American who died in Ukraine's east fighting Russian aggression). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 50, Hr 25 for pupils, students and retirees. Free for people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee

Let's Make a Paradise Together (artworks exploring the utopia of building a new society removed from the globalized world). Izone. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Big Circle (contemporary art exhibition exploring the transformation of non-objective art). M17 Contemporary Art Center. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Hr 100, Hr 70 for children, students and retirees

Gairat Baimatov. The Caravan of Visions (graphics and paintings by Uzbek contemporary artist). Kyiv History Museum. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Price to be announced

Alium (sculptures by Anzhelika Honchar exploring the vulnerability of human bodies). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free

The Forbidden Image (photographs by Boris Mikhailov and artists from the Kharkiv School of Photography exploring the forbidden). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free

Coffee Quest Fest (over 50 coffee shops stands, barista battles and entertainment). VDNH. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Hr 100-120. Free for children under 14, people with disabilities

Movies

Once Upon a Time in Hollywood (comedy, drama in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Cinema City. 7 p.m. Hr 120-130

Untouchable (documentary in English with

Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 7:20 p.m. Hr 105

Shows

Ot Vinta (folk-rock). Docker Pub. 7 p.m. Hr 150-1,750

Monday, Sept. 2

Miscellaneous

Island (children's book illustrations by Soviet Ukrainian artists Ada Rybachuk and Volodymyr Melnychenko). Ya Gallery. 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Big Circle (contemporary art exhibition exploring the transformation of non-objective art). M17 Contemporary Art Center. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Hr 100, Hr 70 for children, students and retirees

Alium (sculptures by Anzhelika Honchar exploring the vulnerability of human bodies). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Blue Monday (paintings, graphics by Roman Mykhailov and Borys Kashapov exploring the swinging transition from joy to struggle that modern people experience). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Movies

Untouchable (documentary in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 12:55 p.m. Hr 55

Once Upon a Time in Hollywood (comedy, drama in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Cinema City. 7 p.m. Hr 120-130

Tuesday, Sept. 3

Live music

Rock on the Beach (covers by Ruki V Bryuki band). UBK. 7 p.m. Hr 250-350

Miscellaneous

New York - Ilovaik: A Choice (an exhibition dedicated to Markiyana Paslowsky, a Ukrainian-American who died in Ukraine's east fighting Russian aggression). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 50, Hr 25 for pupils, students and retirees. Free for people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee

Big Circle (contemporary art exhibition exploring the transformation of non-objective art). M17 Contemporary Art Center. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Hr 100, Hr 70 for children, students and retirees

Alium (sculptures by Anzhelika Honchar exploring the vulnerability of human bodies). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Blue Monday (paintings, graphics by Roman Mykhailov and Borys Kashapov exploring the swinging transition from joy to struggle that modern people experience). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free



RetroMuzFest

The best of Ukrainian 1930-60s retro music combined with retro dancing, cars and fashion are the highlights of the RetroMuzFest, an international music festival named after Bohdan Vesolovsky. Vesolovsky was a Ukrainian composer who created over 130 popular songs over his years living in pre-World War II Lviv and Zakarpattia, and then Vienna and Montreal, where he died. He composed mainly in the genres of tango, foxtrot and waltz, music for entertainment in Ukrainian that was lacking at the time. RetroMuzFest will feature many of Vesolovsky's lyrical and patriotic songs played by the bands Wszystko, Shpylyasti Kobzari and other artists. Opera singer Viktoriya Lukianets and folk singer Illaria will perform retro songs with the Honored Ukrainian Radio Symphony Orchestra. The Embassy of Lebanon that founded the festival will present the Lebanese tango dancers Mazen Kiwan and Sahar Abou Khalil.

RetroMuzFest. Ukrainian Radio Recording House (5B Leonida Pervomaiskoho St.) Sept. 5. 7 p.m. Hr 100-350

Distinguished Women (art exhibition dedicated to the U.S. Women's Equality Day). America House. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID 📄

Donbas: Black Gold (photo exhibition by Serhii Korovainyi depicting the work of miners in Donetsk Oblast). America House. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID 📄

The Forbidden Image (photographs by Boris Mikhailov and artists from the Kharkiv School of Photography exploring the forbidden). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free 📄

Movies

Untouchable (documentary in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 12:55 p.m. Hr 55 📄

Once Upon a Time in Hollywood (comedy, drama in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Cinema City, Multiplex (Sky Mall, Prospect, Atmosphere, Komod). 7 p.m. Hr 90-250 📄 📄 📄

Theater

The Forest Song (ballet). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600 📄

Wednesday, Sept. 4

Live music

Jazz on the Terrace (covers by Old Fashioned Band). Vsi Svoi D12. 7 p.m. Hr 350-500 📄

Blues Matters (covers by Bloom Band). Docker-G Pub. 9 p.m. Free 📄

Miscellaneous

New York - Ilovaik: A Choice (an exhibition dedicated to Markiyana Paslavska, a Ukrainian-American who died in Ukraine's east fighting Russian aggression). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 50, Hr 25 for pupils, students and retirees. Free for people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee 📄

Big Circle (contemporary art exhibition exploring the transformation of non-objective art). M17 Contemporary Art Center. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Hr 100, Hr 70 for children, students and retirees 📄

Allium (sculptures by Anzhelika Honchar exploring the vulnerability of human bodies). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free 📄

Blue Monday (paintings, graphics by Roman Mykhailov and Borys Kashapov exploring the swinging transition from joy to struggle that modern people experience). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free 📄

Distinguished Women (art exhibition dedicated to the U.S. Women's Equality Day). America House. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID 📄

Donbas: Black Gold (photo exhibition by Serhii Korovainyi depicting the work of miners in Donetsk Oblast). America House. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID 📄

The Forbidden Image (photographs by Boris Mikhailov and artists from the Kharkiv School of Photography exploring the forbidden). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free 📄

Movies

Untouchable (documentary in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 12:55 p.m. Hr 55 📄

Once Upon a Time in Hollywood (comedy, drama in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Cinema City. 7 p.m. Hr 120-130 📄

Theater

Zaporozhian Beyond the Danube (opera in Ukrainian). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600 📄

Thursday, Sept. 5

Live music

Jazz on the Beach (covers by National Academic Brass Orchestra). UBK. 7 p.m. Hr 350-450 📄

Queen Symphonic Tribute (by GosOrchestra). Green Theater. 7 p.m. Hr 250-500 📄

RetroMuzFest: Wszystko, Shpylyasti Kobzari, Alfonso Oliver and others (Ukrainian retro music of 1930-60s). Ukrainian Radio. 7 p.m. Hr 100-350 📄

Autumn Playlist (piano covers by Pavel Ignatyev). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 180-

650 📄

Queen Tribute (by Rock You band). Docker Pub. 8 p.m. Hr 125-1,400 📄

Miscellaneous

New York - Ilovaik: A Choice (an exhibition dedicated to Markiyana Paslavska, a Ukrainian-American who died in Ukraine's east fighting Russian aggression). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 50, Hr 25 for pupils, students and retirees. Free for people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee 📄

Big Circle (contemporary art exhibition exploring the transformation of non-objective art). M17 Contemporary Art Center. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Hr 100, Hr 70 for children, students and retirees 📄

Blue Monday (paintings, graphics by Roman Mykhailov and Borys Kashapov exploring the swinging transition from joy to struggle that modern people experience). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free 📄

Distinguished Women (art exhibition dedicated to the U.S. Women's Equality Day). America House. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID 📄

Donbas: Black Gold (photo exhibition by Serhii Korovainyi depicting the work of miners in Donetsk Oblast). America House. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID 📄

The Forbidden Image (photographs by Boris Mikhailov and artists from the Kharkiv School of Photography exploring the forbidden). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free 📄

Theater

Swan Lake (ballet). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-1,000 📄

Friday, Sept. 6

Classical music

Opera Vera (opera music by Verdi, Puccini, Giordano). Ukrainian Radio. 7 p.m. Hr 80-150 📄

Live music

Jazz Arsenal: Urban Gypsy and Olga Chernyshova (gypsy jazz covers). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 7 p.m. Hr 250-450 📄

Clubs

Portfavor: Udda, Kreida, Kiddmisha and others (electronic dance music). River Port. 9 p.m. Price to be announced 📄

Crobot Muzik: N-Ter, DJ Xed, See Jay and others (electronic dance music). Otel'. 11:30 p.m. Hr 200-250. Visitors must be over 21 📄

Judaah, Myn, Sariim, Jana Woodstock (electronic dance music). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 300-350. Visitors must be over 21 📄

Miscellaneous

New York - Ilovaik: A Choice (an exhibition dedicated to Markiyana Paslavska, a Ukrainian-American who died in Ukraine's east fighting Russian aggression). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 50, Hr 25 for pupils, students and retirees. Free for people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee 📄

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Blue Monday (paintings, graphics by Roman Mykhailov and Borys Kashapov exploring the swinging transition from joy to struggle that modern people experience). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free 📄

Distinguished Women (art exhibition dedicated to the U.S. Women's Equality Day). America House. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID 📄

Donbas: Black Gold (photo exhibition by Serhii Korovainyi depicting the work of miners in Donetsk Oblast). America House. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID 📄

The Forbidden Image (photographs by Boris Mikhailov and artists from the Kharkiv School of Photography exploring the forbidden). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free 📄

Silence (paintings by contemporary Ukrainian artists Marina Shkarupa and Igor Prokofiev). Triptych. 7 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Free 📄



Literary Kurazh Bazar

The biggest charity market in Kyiv is about to hold its second event dedicated to literature – Literary Kurazh Bazar. This time the market will sell books of various genres, topics and formats including paper, electronic, audio and Braille. Apart from that, Kurazh Bazar will provide its guests with entertainment such as live music show of Ukrainian singer of Crimean Tatar origin Jamala, the winner of 2016 Eurovision song contest. The market will also hold lectures, book presentations, discussions and workshops. The event will be as usual raise money from the ticket sales for charity. **Literary Kurazh Bazar. VDNH (1 Akademika Hlushkova Ave.) Sept. 7-8. 12 p.m. - 11 p.m. Hr 150. Free for pregnant women, children under 12, retirees, people with disabilities and war veterans**

Shows

Zanias (electronic music). Mezzanine. 8 p.m. Hr 350 📄

Jonathan Livingston (pop). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 150-390 📄

Tabula Rasa (rock). Docker Pub. 10 p.m. Hr 125-1,400 📄

Advantage Project (jazz). 32 Jazz Club. 8 p.m. Hr 400 📄

Com Truise (electronic music). UBK. 7 p.m. Hr 650 📄

Theater

Manon Lescaut (opera in Italian). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600 📄

Saturday, Sept. 7

Classical music

Vivaldimania: Vivaldi, Bach (vocals by Olha Tabulina, Natalia Sikorska on harpsichord). St. Catherine Church. 6 p.m. Hr 150-250 📄

Vivaldi. Seasons (by Kyiv Metropolis Orchestra). Architect's House. 7 p.m. Hr 245-475 📄

Mozart, Mendelssohn Bartholdy (by Academic Symphony Orchestra, Ingrid Fuzjko Hemming on piano). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 80-400 📄

Live music

Botanica Jazz (covers by Old Fashioned Band). Gryshko Botanical Garden. 7 p.m. Hr 300-450 📄

AC/DC Tribute (by The Jack band). Docker-G Pub. 9 p.m. Hr 100-125 📄

Clubs

Soft Touch: Alex P, Horhe, Why Bro and others (electronic dance music). River Port. 11 p.m. Price to be announced 📄

Mathew Jonson vs. Dandy Jack (electronic dance music). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Price to be announced 📄

Miscellaneous

Distinguished Women (art exhibition dedicated to the U.S. Women's Equality Day). America House. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free. Bring ID 📄

Donbas: Black Gold (photo exhibition by

Serhii Korovainyi depicting the work of miners in Donetsk Oblast). America House. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free. Bring ID 📄

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Silence (paintings by contemporary Ukrainian artists Marina Shkarupa and Igor Prokofiev). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free 📄

Blue Monday (paintings, graphics by Roman Mykhailov and Borys Kashapov exploring the swinging transition from joy to struggle that modern people experience). Lavra Gallery. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Free 📄

Literary Kurazh Bazar (charity market with books of various genres, topics, and formats – paper, electronic, audio, and Braille). VDNH. 12 p.m. - 11 p.m. Hr 150. Free for pregnant women, children under 12, retirees, people with disabilities and war veterans 📄

The Forbidden Image (photographs by Boris Mikhailov and artists from the Kharkiv School of Photography exploring the forbidden). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free 📄

Cheese Market (craft cheese by Ukrainian producers). Vsi Svoi D12. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free 📄

Kyiv Beer Festival (festival featuring 60 beer producers, food courts). Platforma Art Factory. 11 a.m. - 11 p.m. Hr 120-170 📄

Kyiv Jazz and Whisky Festival. VDNH. 3 p.m. - 11 p.m. One-day ticket - Hr 200, two-day ticket - Hr 300 📄

Shows

Nik Barrell, Sliding Holders, Alexey Yarovenko Band (blues). Docker-G Pub. 8 p.m. Hr 100-125 📄

Motorolla (rock). Docker Pub. 10 p.m. Hr 125-1,400 📄

Elevation Trio (jazz). 32 Jazz Club. 8 p.m. Hr 400 📄

Theater

The Barber of Seville (opera in Italian). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600 📄

Sunday, Sept. 8

Classical music

Symphonies of the Universe: Brahms, Rossini (by Kyiv Virtuosi orchestra). National Music Academy. 7 p.m. Hr 200-550 📄

Miscellaneous

New York - Ilovaik: A Choice (an exhibition dedicated to Markiyana Paslavska, a Ukrainian-American who died in Ukraine's east fighting Russian aggression). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 50, Hr 25 for pupils, students and retirees. Free for people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee 📄

Big Circle (contemporary art exhibition exploring the transformation of non-objective art). M17 Contemporary Art Center. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Hr 100, Hr 70 for children, students and retirees 📄

Literary Kurazh Bazar (charity market with books of various genres, topics, and formats – paper, electronic, audio, and Braille). VDNH. 12 p.m. - 11 p.m. Hr 150. Free for pregnant women, children under 12, retirees, people with disabilities and war veterans 📄

The Forbidden Image (photographs by Boris Mikhailov and artists from the Kharkiv School of Photography exploring the forbidden). Pinchuk Art Center. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free 📄

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Kyiv Beer Festival (festival featuring about 60 beer producers, food courts). Platforma Art Factory. 11 a.m. - 11 p.m. Hr 120-170 📄

Kyiv Jazz and Whisky Festival. VDNH. 3 p.m. - 11 p.m. One-day ticket - Hr 200, two-day ticket - Hr 300 📄

Shows

Tartak (rock). Docker Pub. 8 p.m. Hr 235-3,850 📄

Theater

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

Venues

Classical Music

● National Music Academy of Ukraine (1/3-11 Arkhitektora Horodetskoho St.) +38044 279 1242
● National Philharmonic of Ukraine (2 Volodymyrskyi Uzviz St.) +38044 278 6291
● St. Catherine Church (22 Liuteranska St.) +38044 253 6319
● Architect's House (7 Borysa Hrinchenka St.) +38050 386 7410

Live Music

● Caribbean Club (4 Petliurya St.) +38067 224 4111
● Docker Pub (25 Bohatyrskaya St.) +38050 358 5513
● Docker-G Pub (13/5 Ihorivska St.) +38095 280 8340
● Green Theater (2 Parkova Rd.) +38067 155 2255
● Parkoviy Congress and Exhibition Center (16A Parkova Rd.) +38044 594 8888
● Ukrainian Radio Recording House (5B Leonida Pervomaiskoho St.)

+38044 279 3344
● Gryshko National Botanical Garden (1 Tymiriazivska St.) +38044 285 4105

Clubs

● Closer (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska St.) +38067 250 0308
● Mezzanine (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska St.) +38063 873 7306
● Otel' (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska St.) +38063 618 0145
● River Port (67 Nyzhni Val St.) www.facebook.com/riverportkyiv
● UBK Club (Trukhaniv Island, 300 meters right of Pedestrian Bridge)

+38097 771 3143

Miscellaneous

● Izone (8 Naberezhno-Luhova St.) +38067 622 8794
● Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora (40B Moskovska St.) +38044 280 6418
● Mystetskyi Arsenal (10-12 Lavrska St.) +38044 288 5225
● Pinchuk Art Center (1/3-2 Velyka Vasylivska St.) +38044 590 0858
● Platforma Art Factory (1 Bilomorska St.) +38044 461 8810
● Vsi Svoi D12 (12 Desiatynna St.) www.facebook.com/vsi.svoi

● Tsekh Art Gallery (69 Kyrylivska St.) +38063 131 9481
● Kyiv History Museum (7 Bohdana Khmelnytskoho St.) +38044 520 2825
● VDNH (1 Akademika Hlushkova Ave.) +38067 824 1631
● Ya Gallery (49B Khoryva St.) +38044 492 9203
● Lavra Gallery (9 Lavrska St.) +38044 280 0290
● M17 Contemporary Art Center (102-104 Antonovycha St.) +38067 310 6631
● America House (6 Mykoly

Pymonenka St.) +38063 343 0119
● Triptych Global Arts Workshop (34 Andriivskyi Uzviz St.) +38044 279 0759

Movies

● Multiplex Cinema (Lavina Mall, 6D Berkovetska St.) 0800 505 333
● Multiplex Cinema (Atmosphere, 103 Stolychne Hwy.) 0800 505 333
● Multiplex Cinema (Komod, 4A Sheptytskoho St.) 0800 505 333
● Multiplex Cinema (Prospect, 1V Hnata Khotkevycha St.) 0800 505 333
● Multiplex Cinema (Sky Mall, 2T Henerala Vatutina Ave.) 0800 505 333

● Planeta Kino Cinema (34 Stepana Bandery Ave.) 0800 300 600
● Zhovten Cinema (26 Kostiantynivska St.) +38044 428 5757
● Cinema City (Ocean Plaza shopping mall, 176 Antonovycha St.) +38044 230 7230

Shows

● 32 Jazz Club (32 Vozdvyzhenska St.) +38050 462 0014

Theater

● National Opera of Ukraine (50 Volodymyrska St.) +38044 234 7165

Yanukovych's old guard is staging a comeback

BY OLEG SUKHOV
SUKHOV@KYIVPOST.COM

President Volodymyr Zelensky's critics allege that his presidency is tantamount to the comeback of former President Viktor Yanukovych's old guard.

Some of Yanukovych's allies have returned to Ukraine and others already serve in Zelensky's administration.

However, Zelensky's predecessor, Petro Poroshenko, had also refused to fire some Yanukovych associates subject to a 2014 lustration law that bars them from state jobs. Poroshenko also recruited ex-members of Yanukovych's Party of Regions for his own party.

The lustration law itself is seen by its critics as inconsistent or unfair.

Critics of Zelensky accused his administration of trying to do away with the lustration law via the Constitutional Court. Zelensky has denied the accusations, proposing instead to fire top officials of the Poroshenko era.

Oleksandr Lemenov, head of anti-corruption watchdog StateWatch, denied that there has been a comeback of Yanukovych-era cadres, given that explicitly pro-Russian parties now have less popular support.

"There's no comeback because (pro-Russian forces) have no institutional capability to win in elections," he told the Kyiv Post.



Andriy Bohdan, President Volodymyr Zelensky's Chief of Staff, applauds during a Verkhovna Rada session on Aug. 29. Bohdan is subject to the 2014 lustration law on the firing of top officials who served ex-President Viktor Yanukovych, according to the wording of the law. He denies violating the law. (Oleg Petrusiuk)

Fugitives return

Yanukovych's former deputy chief of staff Andriy Portnov returned to Ukraine on May 19 — after Zelensky's victory in the April 21 presidential election. Zelensky's chief of staff Andriy Bohdan used to be an aide to Portnov, and he has also called Portnov his friend.

Meanwhile, Renat Kuzmin, a fugitive deputy of Yanukovych's Prosecutor General Viktor Pshonka, was elected to the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine's parliament, on July 21 and returned to Ukraine. Kuzmin is on the party list of pro-Russian politician Viktor Medvedchuk's Opposition Platform.

Yanukovych's chief of staff, Andriy Klyuyev, was initially registered in the July 21 parliamentary election but later his registration was canceled.

Yanukovych's Health Minister, Raisa Bogatryyova, returned to Ukraine on Aug. 27 after a court ordered prosecutors to close a corruption case against her. However, prosecutors had not closed the case by that date and arrested her. She was released on bail. Yegor Sobolev, former head of the Verkhovna Rada's anti-corruption committee, told the Kyiv Post that Yanukovych-era fugitives are not afraid of returning to Ukraine because they are "partners in corruption" with top Ukrainian officials and law enforcers.

Sabotage of lustration

Zelensky has also been accused of directly violating the lustration law by appointing Yanukovych-era officials to top jobs. He denied the accusations.

Both his Chief of Staff Andriy Bohdan and Bohdan's Chief of Staff Oleksiy Dniprov are barred from their jobs by the wording of the lustration law. Both argue that they hold their positions legally.

Another Yanukovych-era official subject to lustration, Anatoly Kalyuzhnyak, was appointed as a deputy head of the Security Service of Ukraine's (SBU) anti-corruption unit in June.

Kalyuzhnyak had signed a Jan. 18, 2014 plan by the SBU to implement Yanukovych's so-called "dictatorship laws." This greatly cracked down on civil liberties and the EuroMaidan protesters. Kalyuzhnyak had admitted that his Inspectorate General had received the plan and submitted it to the leadership of the SBU. He said, however, that he had taken no part in drafting it.

Under Poroshenko

Poroshenko's critics, however, argue that the alleged comeback of Yanukovych's cronies started under the previous president.

Poroshenko himself was a co-founder of Yanukovych's Party of Regions in 2000 and served as economy minister under Yanukovych in 2012.

Anti-corruption activists and investigators have accused Poroshenko, his Interior Minister Arsen Avakov and his prosecutors general — Vitaly Yarema, Viktor Shokin and Yuriy Lutsenko — of blocking criminal cases against Yanukovych allies and reaching deals with them. All have denied the accusations.

About 22 percent of regional legislators from the Poroshenko Bloc and 12 percent of Verkhovna Rada members from the Poroshenko Bloc were former Party of Regions members, according to a 2016 estimate by Channel 1+1's TSN show.

Poroshenko also partnered up with Odesa Mayor Gennady Trukhanov and Kharkiv Mayor Gennady Kernes — both controversial ex-members of the Party of Regions. Yuriy Boyko, who was energy minister under Yanukovych, was heavily promoted by Pryamy, a pro-Poroshenko channel.

Moreover, the Justice Ministry's lustration department has also accused Poroshenko of sabotaging the lustration law by refusing to fire Presidential Administration official Dniprov, ex-Kyiv Oblast Governor Oleksandr Tereshchuk, ex-Kirovohrad Oblast Governor Serhiy Kuzmenko, ex-Luhansk Oblast Governor Yuriy Harbuz, the SBU's former top investigator, Grigory Ostafiychuk, and the ex-head of the SBU's Kyiv Oblast branch, Oleg Valendyuk. Poroshenko has denied the accusations of sabotage.

Zelensky fired almost all of the above but kept Dniprov despite the lustration law.

Many officials escaped lustration under Poroshenko by using a loophole that exempts participants of the war with Russia. In some cases they claimed to be veterans of the war without having taken part in it.

Imperfect law?

The 2014 lustration law has faced criticism. Some, including ex-members of the Party of Regions, claimed it is unfair. Others called the law inconsistent.

Sobolev dismissed those accusations.

"They, for example Bohdan, held top jobs and did not see large-scale corruption in (Yanukovych's Prime Minister Mykola) Azarov's government and kept silent," he said. "If a state official sees the government committing crimes, he or she must either stop that or resign."

Some critics claim that the lustration law was tailor-made to exempt Poroshenko. Those who served as ministers under Yanukovych for

more **Comeback** on page 11



Remembering Ukraine's fallen heroes

A woman wipes tears from her eyes before a memorial wall at St. Michael's Monastery in Kyiv in Aug. 29. She and many others came to the memorial to commemorate Ukrainian soldiers killed in the battle for the city of Ilovaisk five years earlier, one of the bloodiest events in Russia's war against Ukraine. During that battle, 336 Ukrainian soldiers were killed when Russian troops shelled two Ukrainian military columns that were retreating from encirclement in Ilovaisk, the Donetsk Oblast city of 15,000 people located 815 kilometers southeast of Kyiv. Since then, fallen soldiers' families and friends have come to the memorial wall on Aug. 29 each year to commemorate their loved ones. On Aug. 23 of this year, President Volodymyr Zelensky signed a decree to make Aug. 29 the official day of remembrance of all those killed in the struggle for Ukraine's independence and sovereignty. (Volodymyr Petrov)

Yanukovych's toxic crowd sits pretty

Comeback from page 10

more than a year were subject to lustration, while Poroshenko served for less than a year.

The law also drew criticism because it does not bar officials who served Yanukovych from elected offices, allowing Yanukovych's Chief of Staff Serhiy Lyovochkin and others to be elected to the Verkhovna Rada. Sobolev said, however, that the law would have been recognized unconstitutional if it had applied to elected offices.

Another argument is that some of those who served under Yanukovych had a good reputation.

Lemenov argued that some military officials who were subject to lustration had been praised by military experts. However, Sobolev said the law allowed the president to exempt such officials, including Hennady Vorobyov, from lustration.

Two officials who held jobs at Yanukovych's government have a reformist background, although their jobs were not high-level enough to make them subject to lustration. They are Zelensky's Deputy Chief of Staff Ruslan Riaboshapka, who is expected to become prosecutor general, and Oleksandr Danylyuk, secretary of the National Defense and Security Council.

Canceling lustration?

Zelensky's administration has been accused of cementing the comeback of Yanukovych's old guard by can-



celing the lustration law. Currently, the issue is being considered by the Constitutional Court.

In April, the Schemes investigative journalism project reported that then Constitutional Court Chairman Stanislav Shevchuk had met with Bohdan at the Constitutional Court on March 13. Shevchuk, who was fired from his job on May 14, said he had known Bohdan for 10 years.

Bohdan and Shevchuk admitted that they had met, but denied dis-

cussing the lustration law. They said they had discussed the Constitutional Court's controversial Feb. 26 decision to cancel a law criminalizing illicit enrichment as unconstitutional.

"The law is good," Lemenov said, of lustration. "It's not written in a perfect way but it doesn't mean it should be canceled through the Constitutional Court."

Lustrating Poroshenko

Zelensky denied trying to cancel

lustration and offered to expand the law on July 11 by banning top officials who served Poroshenko from government.

Lemenov dismissed the idea as a pre-election stunt that Zelensky would never try to actually implement.

The proposal prompted a discussion on whether Poroshenko's administration was fundamentally different from Yanukovych's and why lustration applied only to the

Yanukovych era.

Both administrations were accused of large-scale corruption.

"I wouldn't divide people by party — it doesn't matter if they were from the Party of Regions or the Poroshenko Bloc," Sobolev said. "Regardless of they are orange or white and blue (a reference to the colors of pro-European and pro-Russian parties) — it's all a cover for corruption. Just that some of them speak Russian, and others Ukrainian."

However, Sobolev argued that Zelensky's proposal to fire top Poroshenko-era officials was unjust.

The 2014 lustration law was an extraordinary measure applied to a government involved in murdering about 100 EuroMaidan protesters, while Poroshenko's administration was not implicated in such crimes, Sobolev said.

He said that many Poroshenko-era officials should have been fired under the "property lustration" clause of the 2014 lustration law.

The clause envisaged the disclosure of asset declarations and the firing of officials who could not explain the origin of their assets. However, property lustration effectively failed, with only some rank-and-file officials being fired.

There were also reformist officials in both parliament and the Cabinet under Poroshenko, Sobolev added. Some of them — including Danylyuk and ex-Economy Minister Aivaras Abromavicius — are currently working for Zelensky. ■

Kyiv Post

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OUR SUPPORTERS:

New people in key positions

BY KYIV POST

On its first day, Aug. 29, Ukraine's new parliament voted for several key appointees, including the new prime minister and Cabinet (see page 3), the parliament speakers, prosecutor general, and head of the State Security Service.

Ruslan Riaboshapka

prosecutor general of Ukraine



Riaboshapka was a top official at the National Agency for Preventing

Corruption in 2016-2017. However, he quit in protest of ex-President Petro Poroshenko's control over what was supposed to be an independent anti-corruption institution. Riaboshapka is a long-time

acquaintance of Zelensky's Chief of Staff Andriy Bohdan, with whom he worked in the government of ex-President Viktor Yanukovich. Riaboshapka is also a co-chair of the controversial judicial reform commission created by Zelensky. Numerous judges implicated in corruption scandals and the sabotage of reforms have been appointed to the commission.

In his new post, Riaboshapka replaces Yuriy Lutsenko, a discredited political appointee of ex-President Petro Poroshenko.



Ivan Bakanov
head of State Security Service or SBU

Bakanov, 45, is Zelensky's childhood friend, who was the long-time head of Kwartal 95, a production

studio founded by Zelensky. He has been the acting head of the SBU since May. Bakanov headed Zelensky's Servant of the People party from when it was created in December 2017 until May. He was also head of Zelensky's presidential campaign.



Dmytro Razumkov
speaker of parliament

Razumkov is a political technologist who was in charge of Zelensky's presidential campaign and, after the May election, went on to head the president's party, Servant of the People. Before that, Razumkov was a managing partner of the Ukrainian Politconsulting Group. In 2006-2010 he was a member of the

Party of Regions of ex-President Yanukovich, when the Kremlin-backed former president was in opposition. Razumkov said he was a member because he disagreed with the policy of pro-Western President Viktor Yushchenko. Razumkov's late father, Oleksandr Razumkov, was the first aide of ex-President Leonid Kuchma.

Ruslan Stefanchuk

deputy speaker of parliament

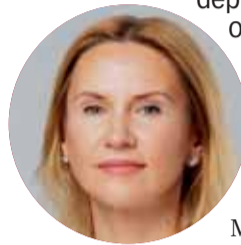


Stefanchuk is Zelensky's representative in parliament, his adviser and the ideologist of the Servant of the People party. He is a legal scholar and professor who participated in the drafting of many bills. In 2016-2018, Stefanchuk was an adviser to

Vice-Prime Minister Stepan Kubiv. In 2017, he applied to become a judge of the Supreme Court but failed to pass the competition. Stefanchuk said he has known Zelensky since college, when they both participated in KVN, a popular comedy competition.

Olena Kondratyuk

deputy speaker of parliament



Olena Kondratyuk has been a lawmaker from ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko's

Batkivshchyna party since 2007. She was an activist during the 2013-2014 EuroMaidan Revolution that overthrew President Yanukovich. Her husband is Oleksandr Bogutsky, the CEO of television channel ICTV. ■



New parliament kicks off



- 1 Lawmakers sing Ukraine's national anthem at the opening ceremony of the new convocation of parliament on Aug. 29, 2019.
- 2 President Volodymyr Zelensky takes his seat at the first meeting of the new parliament dominated by his party, Servant of the People.
- 3 Zelensky's Chief of Staff Andriy Bohdan talks to Interior Minister Arsen Avakov, who kept his post in the new government.
- 4 Lawmakers of the Servant of the People party talk to Dmytro Razumkov, speaker of the parliament (3rd from left, front row), and Deputy Speaker Ruslan Stefanchuk (center) at the chairman's tribune.
- 5 Lawmakers of the European Solidarity and Voice parties, including ex-President Petro Poroshenko, talk in the parliament hall. (Photos by Oleg Petراسиuk)



The Kyiv Jazz & Whisky Festival will take place on Sept. 7-8 at VDNH (1 Akademika Hlushkova Ave.) 3 p.m. - 11 p.m. Hr 200, Hr 300 for a two-day ticket.



Saving Ukraine's castles



WITH ARTUR KORNIENKO
KORNIENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

Weekend trip to Riga offers history, outdoors fun, beaches

RIGA, Latvia – Want to enjoy remarkable architecture, conquer a forest trail and unwind on the beach? It takes just a short flight from Kyiv and three days of vacation in Riga.

The Latvian capital of 641,000 people is a smorgasbord of culture and adventure, wrapped in a small package. And visitors can experience this vibrant city over a long weekend or as part of a longer tour of the three Baltic states.

Beyond its historic sights and the surrounding natural beauty, Riga also offers fine dining and parties at bars and nightclubs – and all at an affordable price.

But what underlies the Riga experience is the distinct cultural identity of its people and their proud history of struggle against imperial rule. Latvians cherish their roots, acknowledge difficult history and move forward as an economically and technologically developed European state.

When to come

The best time to visit Riga is in the summer when the temperature hovers around a pleasant 24 degrees Celsius, perfect for the beach.

The ultimate occasion to visit would be the Latvian Song and Dance Festival, one of the world's largest amateur choral and dancing events. It takes place every five years in July with the next one scheduled for 2021.

Riga hosts other events throughout the summer, including Rigas Ritmi jazz and world music festival in July. The city's Lucavsala Park has also become a prime venue for popular musical acts, with Ed Sheeran and Rammstein performing there this summer. Riga has plenty of live music bars, too.

Autumn is also a great season to enjoy the colors in the parks and countryside, but temperatures fall rapidly after mid-September. In the winter, snow-bound Riga and the surrounding country can have plenty of charm. And there are many downhill skiing options, Zagarkalns ski resort among most popular.

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Dakhovskiy manor is a 19th-century Gothic Revival building located in Leskove village of Cherkasy Oblast. The manor was picked for the 12 Guards initiative that promotes abandoned Ukrainian castles and raises money for their restoration. (Oleh Kiriienko)

BY TOMA ISTOMINA
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In Western Europe, castles are major tourist magnets and money makers. But in Ukraine, most castles stand abandoned and are falling apart.

A group of volunteers wants to change that. They have created the 12 Vartovykh ("12 Guards") charity fund, which employs creative media campaigns to promote the abandoned Ukrainian castles and raise money for their renovation.

"We found such amazing castles that it was impossible to not start all of this," the founder of the initiative, Lala Tarapakina, told the Kyiv Post.

There are about 300 castles in

Ukraine. The majority are state-funded, but only a few of them were restored and are tourism destinations. Most of the castles are either in ruins or in urgent need of restoration.

New idea

The castle initiative started this summer. It originated with a traveling project Tarapakina led.

Tarapakina, 43, a marketing specialist and the author of guidebooks, started exploring Ukraine's destinations in 2014. She says that, after Russia annexed Crimea, she wanted to discover what else Ukraine had to offer tourists.

"I thought that maybe there were beautiful places that can get a new

life and we would be able to spend money in our country instead of going abroad," she said.

She found multiple picturesque places all over the country and started sharing them on an online platform called "Found in Ukraine" – "so that people have a stimulus to go off the beaten track," she said.

The traveler says she has driven 350,000 kilometers and has been to nearly every city and village in Ukraine over the last five years. During her expeditions, Tarapakina realized that Ukraine had quite a few magnificent castles that most of Ukrainians had never heard of.

"I fell in love with these castles," she says.

Tarapakina believes that these sites can be powerful tourism magnets, which is why she launched 12 Guards.

Tarapakina picked 12 castles located in six Ukrainian oblasts. Among them are those in the worst condition, such as the Khustskiy Castle built in the 12th century as a fortification of Khust, now a town in Zakarpattia Oblast. Only fragments of the building have survived.

The list also features castles that are in better shape but are little known, such as Sharivskiy Castle, a Gothic Revival building constructed in the 19th century and located in Sharivka village, Kharkiv Oblast.

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World Traveler

Weekend trip to Riga offers history, outdoors fun, beaches

Riga from page 13

Old Town, Art Nouveau

Naturally, it's best to start exploring Riga from its Old Town, a Medieval central district featuring most of the city's sights that was masterfully restored after the destruction of World War II. Gems like the Dome Cathedral and the House of the Blackheads are surrounded by cobbled streets of subtle beauty, like Troksnu Street with its quirky medieval Swedish Gate.

The Old Town also houses the Museum of the Barricades of 1991, which focuses on a series of clashes in which Latvians defended their independence from the Soviet Union, sacrificing lives while facing the Soviet special police. It has a small entrance that's easy to miss on 3 Kramu St.

One can't help but think about how the story echoes the 2013–14 clashes of the EuroMaidan Revolution in Kyiv, when Ukrainians put up barricades to defend their country's self-determination from Kremlin-backed President Viktor Yanukovich and ultimately drove him out of power on Feb. 22, 2014.

Riga's Old Town attracts many tourists, but not nearly as many as Western Europe's capitals. For a less crowded tour, the city has the so-called Quiet Center, a neighborhood featuring turn of the 20th century Art Nouveau architecture. Alberta Street has the most of these unparalleled buildings, which include nature symbols and ornamental carvings on their facades.

How to get there

Round trips flights from Kyiv to Riga average at Hr 3,126 (\$124).

Where to stay

Hotel rooms with Booking.com in central Riga start at Hr 1,260 (\$50), Airbnb apartment rentals start at Hr 756 (\$30).

The Old Town is best explored on foot, since it is compact and cars are allowed on only a few streets. The Art Nouveau district is within walking distance as well. Generally, Riga is welcoming for those who like to walk — both the bus and train stations are less than 500 meters away from the edges of the Old Town. The only drive one may have to take is from the airport, which is located 10 kilometers away.

Entertainment

Riga has a vibrant restaurant scene that offers a variety of international cuisines, including traditional Latvian cooking. Such is the specialty of the Province restaurant with its rustic interior in the heart of the Old Town. Also nearby, the Le Dome fine-dining restaurant specializes in freshly caught Baltic fish. The LIDO chain of self-service restaurants offers Latvian food on a budget.

The hidden gem in Riga's nightlife is a group of venues on Aristida Briana Street, away from the city center. The Piens coffee shop, which also has food and wine, is a favorite place for the city's hipsters to chat and dance away the night. The Labietis brewery and pub next door has a laidback atmosphere and 12 in-house beers on tap, plus more in bottles. And the One One nightclub nearby has the trendiest electronic music parties in town.

After a night of partying, the perfect place to restore one's energy is Innocent, a coffee shop that offers all-you-can-eat brunches for a fixed price. Innocent offers pizza, salads and some international food. It's located at 34 Blaumana St. close to Riga's train station, a departure point to the beaches and natural parks around Riga.

Park & Jurmala beach

It takes an hour and a half by train travelling west from Riga to reach Gauja, Latvia's most popular natu-



Riga's Old Town district contains most of the city's historical and architectural sites on the right bank of the Daugava River. (www.liveriga)



The Jurmala stretch of beaches and pine forests on the Baltic Sea starts just 15 kilometers away from Riga and extends up to 20 kilometers. It's dotted with outdoor bars and volleyball nets in the summer. (www.latvia.travel)



Many of the buildings on Riga's Town Hall Square benefited from a restoration project in 2001 after being destroyed by German bombs during World War II. (www.latvia.travel)

rapark, which stretches for about 100 km along the Gauja River Valley. The ticket both ways costs €3.62 or \$4. Trains depart every two hours from the Riga's central train station to Sigulda, the most convenient access point to the park.

Sigulda has a park information office and a bobsleigh track — a chance to experience the speedy sport at a reasonable price. A wheeled vehicle is used in the summer for €10 or \$11 per person. Visitors can ride a real sleigh in the winter for €50 or \$55.42 per person.

Almost half of the Gauja National Park is forested. It is home to about 900 different plants, 149 birds and 48 mammal species. Visitors can hike or run through the vast wooded areas or ride a boat or a canoe on

the Gauja river to see the caves, cliffs and ravines of the park.

To the east of Riga is Jurmala ("seaside" in Latvian), a picturesque stretch of beaches and pine forests along the Gulf of Riga in the Baltic Sea. The small coastal towns that make up Jurmala have strict building regulations to preserve the 19th-century wooden summer homes.

A train from Riga's central train station to Majori, the heart of Jurmala, travels about half an hour and costs €3.32 or \$3.68 both ways. Jomas Street in Majori is a strip of outdoor cafes, restaurants and hotels. It has a variety of shops that sell some of Latvia's popular souvenirs: amber jewelry, the Laima brand of chocolate and Riga Black Balsam, a medicinal drink in a neat ceramic bottle. ■

Volunteers work to save abandoned castles in Ukraine

Castles from page 13

Tarapakina called the initiative "12 Guards" to honor the so-called "guards" of the castles — local volunteers who take care of them.

Campaign

According to Tarapakina, it isn't easy to motivate people to donate money for the restoration of historical sites. She says that they are much more willing to financially help sick children or homeless animals.

The successful crowdfunding for the restoration of Notre-Dame de Paris, a medieval Catholic cathedral in France which caught fire in April, is rather an exception, Tarapakina says. That campaign raised over \$1 billion for Notre-Dame over several days.

As a result, Tarapakina decided to make the campaign as creative as possible. Along with Kyiv-based Royenko Marketing Agency, Tarapakina started promoting the initiative using the most unexpected platform — Tinder, a dating app.

They created profiles for the featured castles on Tinder which described what they were "feeling."

"Loneliness destroys... I have been alone for over 100 years. I want to meet someone, tell my story, hold some celebration or even a festival for friends," one of the castles' profiles reads.

Tarapakina says that the castles' Tinder profiles received numerous messages of praise from other users and their campaign got wide coverage in Ukrainian media.

"People from all over the world messaged (us) that they were thrilled by this idea," she said.

Apart from that, with the help of film school students, 12 Guards is making two short films about Ukrainian castles. Tarapakina says they want to present them at film festivals abroad. She hopes that such a platform as a famous film festival will help to attract the attention of the international community to the problem, especially since many of the castles didn't belong to Ukrainians back in their heyday.

Goals

As the initiative's team traveled to the castles, they tried to be socially responsible tourists and made time to at least clean something or remove some trash from the buildings.

However, Tarapakina says that they soon realized that the castles are being destroyed fast and just cleaning them isn't enough.

She says that, after their first trip to Dakhovskiy manor, a 19th-century building located in Cherkasy Oblast, they returned there a year and a half later and were surprised to discover it was in much worse condition: part of the roof had collapsed.

"The situation is sad because of its bad dynamics," Tarapakina says.

For that reason, the initiative wants to first raise money to bring castles out of the danger zone and make sure they don't go to ruins before there's an opportunity to restore them.

As for restoration, since the state doesn't provide funding for that, Tarapakina believes that it will be most effective to involve companies



The Earl Badeni Palace is a building that mixes classicism and baroque styles, which was rebuilt at the beginning of the 20th century by Polish politician Stanislaw Badeni in Koropets village, Ternopil Oblast. (Vika Sviatnenko)

interested in the development of the surrounding region.

Twelve Guards already has one successful example of such cooperation. They brought together German chemical company BASF and the Kharkiv Oblast authorities. In the end, each invested Hr 3 million (\$118,000) last year to restore Sharivskiy Castle. Part of the renovation has already been carried out.

However, Tarapakina says that the restoration of a castle costs millions of dollars, so there is a long road ahead.

The majority of the castles are located in villages and small towns, so even if they regain their attractive appearances, there is still a problem of poor infrastructure.

The director of Svirzh Castle,

Volodymyr Mandziak, says that his site rarely gets visitors — they don't even charge them for entrance. According to Mandziak, the surrounding roads and services are poor in Svirzh village.

"There's not even a place to buy a cup of coffee," Mandziak told the Kyiv Post.

But Tarapakina believes that the restoration of castles will attract investors and entrepreneurs to develop infrastructure around them and start small businesses.

Where tourists come, new hotels and restaurants always appear, she says. ■

To donate to the 12 Guards charity fund go to www.12vartovykh.com

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