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What Will Be On April 22?

Ukraine Votes To Stay Course, Re-Elects Poroshenko



Now the underdog in the race, few people are counting out President Petro Poroshenko. The incumbent has many friends and advantages going into the April 21 runoff. (Volodymyr Petrov)

Ukraine Votes For Change, Elects Zelenskiy



Comedic actor Volodymyr Zelenskiy put his candidacy in the driver's seat with a stunning first-round victory, beating Poroshenko 30 percent to 16 percent. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

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Poroshenko and Kolomoisky rivalry takes center stage

BY MATTHEW KUPFER
KUPFER@KYIVPOST.COM

On March 31, as exit polls announced that comedian-turned-politician Volodymyr Zelenskiy had seized a significant lead in the first round of Ukraine's presidential election, the runner-up, President Petro Poroshenko, took the stage in front of his supporters.

"Fate has brought me to face... the puppet of (billionaire oligarch Ihor) Kolomoisky," he said.

In effect, Poroshenko was reframing the election not as one between an incumbent and a popular challenger, but between him and an influential and much maligned Ukrainian tycoon who is accused of stealing \$5.5 billion from the nation's largest bank, PrivatBank, before it was nationalized in 2016. Kolomoisky denies taking part in bank fraud.

Zelenskiy's comedy shows and his hit series, "Servant of the People," are broadcast on Kolomoisky's 1+1 television channel. And the candidate's campaign team is also using the services of Andriy Bohdan, a lawyer who has represented the interests of Kolomoisky, and the oligarch's bodyguard. That has sparked concerns that he will make concessions to the oligarch, who currently lives in Israel and refuses to return to Ukraine while Poroshenko is in office. Zelenskiy has vehemently denied that he is beholden to Kolomoisky.

But Poroshenko's accusations reflect more than a potentially effective campaign strategy. Rather, they are also the latest salvo in a long-standing feud between the Ukrainian leader and one of country's wildest oligarchs — a man who played a critical role in stabilizing the country in 2014, but soon fell out of favor with the government.

There are also serious business interests at play. In 2013, Kolomoisky was valued at \$2.4 billion. Today, his net worth stands at \$1.1 billion. While not all those losses may be a direct result of Poroshenko's actions, his presidency has undoubtedly been a major blow to the oligarch's business empire.

"They had period of partnership... when they worked together and found compromises. But there were also confrontations," says Volodymyr Fesenko, director of the Penta think tank. "And in the last year-and-a-half, it has been a conflict over PrivatBank."



A woman withdraws money from an ATM at a PrivatBank branch in Kyiv on April 4, 2019. The bank, Ukraine's largest financial institution, formerly belonged to oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky and his business partner, but was nationalized in 2016. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

Pro-Maidan oligarch

Five years after Ukraine's 2014 EuroMaidan Revolution, which drove President Viktor Yanukovich from power, it is almost difficult to remember Kolomoisky as anything other than a political enemy of Poroshenko. But it wasn't always that way.

In early 2014, after Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula, Kremlin-staged uprisings began erupting across Ukraine's east. In those heady months, Kolomoisky — one of Ukraine's wealthiest and most influential businessmen — played a central role in stemming the spread of separatism.

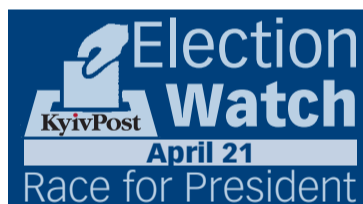
In February 2014, Kolomoisky invited Gennady Kernes, the mayor of the eastern city of Kharkiv, to visit him in Geneva, Switzerland, where the oligarch resided at that time. There he convinced Kernes to abandon Yanukovich and take the side of the post-Maidan interim Ukrainian government.

Soon, the Ukrainian authorities appointed Kolomoisky governor of his native Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, where he set about establishing order and crushing a nascent Russia-backed uprising in the city. His exact methods remain unclear, but the oligarch himself has hinted that they were violent. At one point, his team even offered a reward of \$10,000 for each separatist fighter handed over to the authorities.

Kolomoisky founded and financed the volunteer Dnipro Battalion to fight Russia in the country's eastern Donbas, and supported several other battalions.

Kolomoisky, who is Jewish, also spoke out against accusations by Kremlin officials and Russia's yellow press that Ukraine's government was Nazi or fascist.

"If Nazis made me a governor, then either they are not Nazis or I'm not a Jew," he said.



Enemy of the state?

If Kolomoisky's rise to political prominence after the EuroMaidan Revolution was meteoric, his fall from grace was just as abrupt.

In March 2015, the Ukrainian state passed a law that sharply curtailed Kolomoisky's de facto control over majority state-owned enterprises. This would start a chain of events stripping Kolomoisky of several key enterprises and assets.

In response, Kolomoisky came with armed men to blockade two such enterprises: oil-producer Ukrnafta and oil transportation monopoly Ukrtransnafta. In an interview with journalist Dmytro Gordon, Kolomoisky said these were a security guard firm, not a "private army."

Regardless of terminology, both companies were sites of a behind-the-scenes business battle between the oligarch and the state. Ukrainian state oil and gas company Naftogaz, which has struggled with the country's powerful oligarchs, owns a 50-percent stake plus one share in Ukrnafta, while Kolomoisky controls a roughly 42-percent share. And despite being entirely owned by Naftogaz, Ukrtransnafta had been led by Oleksandr Lazorko, a director allegedly tied to Kolomoisky.

The authorities claim that the Ukrainian budget lost \$600 million in unpaid taxes during Kolomoisky's control of Ukrnafta. Meanwhile, under the leadership of Lazorko, Ukrtransnafta had paid nearly \$11.3 million to store oil in reservoirs of factories controlled by Kolomoisky, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's

Schemes investigative unit reported. After the March 2015 confrontation, Poroshenko fired Kolomoisky from the position of Dnipropetrovsk governor.

The next year, the Ukrainian government once again took aim at Kolomoisky: amid rumors of massive insider lending, it nationalized PrivatBank, which Kolomoisky owned together with his business partner, Gennadiy Boholyubov. The scope of this move should not be underestimated: PrivatBank is the country's largest financial institution, making up 20 percent of the Ukrainian banking sector.

Upon taking control of the bank, the Ukrainian authorities discovered a hole of \$5.5 billion dollars in its ledger. Valeria Gontareva, then governor of the National Bank of Ukraine, announced that PrivatBank's entire corporate loan portfolio had gone to companies tied to its owners.

Most recently, on March 29, a Kyiv court placed yet another arrest on assets belonging to Kolomoisky and Boholyubov's informal Privat business group. Privat stands accused in a longstanding case of embezzling nearly \$700 million in refinancing loans provided by the National Bank of Ukraine to PrivatBank in the ten years before its nationalization.

Ukrainian prosecutors first got arrests placed on Privat assets in 2017. Among the assets currently under arrest are land plots in the Odesa Oblast Gold Coast resort and in Bukovel, the largest ski resort in Eastern Europe, located in the pristine Carpathian Mountains of Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast.

Kolomoisky has also faced business losses in another area. Since 2017, several low-cost airlines have entered the Ukrainian market, eat-

more Kolomoisky on page 16

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Where do the candidates stand on key issues?

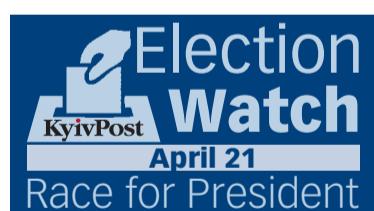


Petro Poroshenko



Volodymyr Zelenskiy

Policy	Petro Poroshenko	Volodymyr Zelenskiy
European Union and NATO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports EU and NATO membership Promises that Ukraine will apply to join EU by 2023 Promises that Ukraine will receive the NATO Membership Action Plan by 2023 Supports introducing NATO standards for the Ukrainian army 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports EU and NATO membership in general Wants Ukrainians to decide whether they want to join EU and NATO by a referendum Supports introducing NATO standards for the Ukrainian army
Crimea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promises to return Crimea to Ukraine. <p><i>"Immediately after the election we will start working on it."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Says he won't give up Crimea; doesn't give a concrete promise about returning it <p><i>"Crimea will be returned after the ruling regime changes in Russia."</i></p>
Russia's war against Ukraine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports a peaceful solution Supports Minsk peace agreements. Wants the U.S. to be part of negotiations Lobbies further international sanctions against Russia UN peacekeeping force in Donbas Rebuild Ukrainian navy and air forces Promises "to do everything" to free Ukrainian prisoners of war in Russia and in the occupied territories of eastern Ukraine <p><i>"Peace to us is the complete restoration of the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports a peaceful solution Supports Minsk peace agreements. Wants the U.S. and the UK to join negotiations International peacekeeping force Wants to stop the fighting immediately Proposes to renew state pensions for Ukrainians living in the occupied territories of eastern Ukraine Wants Russia to pay compensation to Ukraine after Crimea and Donbas are liberated <p><i>"I like Kurt Volker's (US special representative for Ukraine) plan – have a separation line, a peacekeeping mission, start with (liberating) small villages, move on to Luhansk and Donetsk."</i></p>
Economy & Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make Ukraine the eastern European transportation hub and the largest producer of agrarian goods in Europe by 2023 Make Ukraine one of five world leaders in the tech business Higher wages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow shadow businesses to legalize upon paying a 5 percent fee Continue cooperation with the International Monetary Fund (initially he spoke against it) Build new roads
Social Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the baby bonus and child benefits Contribution-based pensions Keep increasing state retirement pensions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurance-based healthcare Contribution-based pensions Introduce new benefits paid to citizens from the profits from sale and exploitation of Ukraine's natural resources (i.e. land)
Taxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substitute the corporate tax for capital gains tax 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substitute the corporate tax for capital gains tax
Corruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promises "zero tolerance for corruption" Continue the work of existing anti-corruption agencies that have been created during his presidency such as the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine and the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office <p><i>"I want to remind everyone the situation in the defense industry and in the army in 2014 - everyone has been stealing everything, all the time since the independence of Ukraine."</i></p> <p><i>"I will chop off the hands of those stealing from the army."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ban those convicted for corruption from holding government posts, forever Disallow those charged with corruption to be released on bail Government officials hired through open screening, high salaries Special anti-corruption prosecutor's office and other anti-corruption agencies independent from government influence
Reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue all current reforms such as decentralization, e-governance, currency liberalization, education reform Stands for limiting pressure of law enforcers on business Complete the healthcare reform; supports Acting Healthcare Minister Ulana Suprun 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stop the State Security Service investigations of businesses. Create a separate agency in charge of investigating economic crimes Change election legislation, introduce open-list proportional representation system for parties Pass a law allowing expulsion of lawmakers who fail at their duties Supports the healthcare reform and Acting Healthcare Minister Ulana Suprun
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious. Strongly supports the united independent Orthodox Church of Ukraine, which he helped set up, Wants to make Ukraine one of the top 10 tourist destinations in Europe Wants to increase support for Ukrainian cultural projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports environment initiatives: deforestation and plastic consumption restrictions A procedure for presidential impeachment Cancel parliamentary and judicial immunity from prosecution Allow to vote in elections online



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WORLD IN UKRAINE: FRANCE

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BY OLEKSIY SOROKIN
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Editor's Note: President Petro Poroshenko and Volodymyr Zelenskiy, who won the March 31 first-round presidential election and made it to the runoff on April 21, prepare to hold a presidential debate. As they do so, the Kyiv Post went through the two candidates' programs, statements, and interviews to compare where they stand on key issues.

Editorials

Breaking the oligarchy

The decisive April 21 round of the Ukrainian presidential election pits the billionaire oligarch incumbent, Petro Poroshenko, against the millionaire entertainer Volodymyr Zelenskiy, who gained national prominence on billionaire oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky's TV channel.

Ukraine's political culture has been labeled "oligarchic pluralism," falling short of a true democracy, although voters still have a choice among competing interests.

As Vitaliy Shabunin and Olena Halushka wrote in an insightful op-ed published by the Washington Post on April 1: "Besides ongoing Russian aggression, Ukraine's biggest problem remains its oligarchs. Many Ukrainian oligarchs rely on a network of Western banks and lawyers to launder the proceeds of their corruption and to whitewash their reputations in the West. Oligarchs own the top five television stations in Ukraine, and television still serves as the primary source of information for 74 percent of Ukrainians."

Shabunin and Halushka ended optimistically: "Ukrainians know what they want: a normal, European democratic state free from Russia. A synergy of civil society, international partners and reformers in government will continue to push us in that direction, regardless of who becomes the next president."

After getting only 16 percent of the vote on March 31, just a bit over half of Zelenskiy's total, Poroshenko's re-election bid is in trouble. Some of this is not his fault. Ukrainians have shown reluctance to entrench power. But some of his problems are of his own making. Not only is he an oligarch, he's an oligarch-friendly one, with sweet deals remaining for such fellow moguls as Rinat Akhmetov and Dmytro Firtash.

Zelenskiy's ties to Kolomoisky, meanwhile, are under scrutiny. He would be wise, if elected, to demonstrate his independence from Kolomoisky by choosing advisers not linked to the owner of 1+1 TV channel, and my showing he is independent with a complete reformist agenda. A good start would be for him to adopt ex-Finance Oleksandr Danylyuk's proposals for sweeping changes to Ukraine's corrupt and unreformed law enforcement institutions, including the General Prosecutor's Office and Security Service of Ukraine, as well as the establishment of a truly independent unit to investigate financial crimes.

In the long run, however, Ukraine must take more steps to remove the influence of oligarchs over the economic, political and media life of the nation. We look forward to the day when a presidential contender does not need to be an oligarch or have an oligarch's backing. Then we'll have a real democratic breakthrough.

More debates!

Both of Ukraine's two finalists for president brought spice to the contest by issuing dueling videos. Comedic actor Volodymyr Zelenskiy started on April 3 by accepting President Petro Poroshenko's challenge to debate. He insisted that the event take place in Kyiv's Olympic Stadium and is televised by all networks. Zelenskiy also called on the president to stop the insults and start treating him as the serious presidential candidate that he is. Poroshenko responded with a video of his own, accepting Zelenskiy's conditions. With the two videos, it looks likely that the contenders will debate on April 19, only two days ahead of the vote.

We hope this is the start of a positive trend. Debates are required in the political culture in many Western nations, including the United States. Voters have been known to defeat candidates who duck their opponents.

Ukraine, unfortunately, doesn't have a strong culture of political debate. For instance, while the law specifies that one debate should take place on the Friday before the vote, there is nothing to prohibit a series of debates.

Typically, front-runners avoid debates, fearing that an unscripted event may damage their election chances. Those trailing in the polls, by contrast, push for such exposure as their best hope. This year, the roles are reversed from 2014, when the front-runner Poroshenko refused to debate his rival Yulia Tymoshenko. But now, trailing badly in 2019, he needs this forum. Frequent debates should be mandatory.

NEWS ITEM: President Petro Poroshenko and actor-turned-politician Volodymyr Zelenskiy made it in the presidential election runoff, scheduled to take place on April 21. After the first-round vote, Poroshenko challenged Zelenskiy to debate, and Zelenskiy agreed but said he wanted to do it at the Olympic Stadium, Ukraine's biggest sports arena. Things got more absurd when the candidates challenged each other to pass drug and alcohol tests.



NEWS ITEM: Leader of Batkivshchyna party Yulia Tymoshenko lost her third presidential race on March 31. Before that, she lost the presidency to Viktor Yanukovich in 2010 and to Petro Poroshenko in 2014.



NEWS ITEM: In the March 31 election, Ukrainians voted at 100 polling stations abroad, including one in Antarctica. Thirty-seven Ukrainians living at the Ukrainian research base Vernadsky cast the ballots. President Petro Poroshenko was the most popular among them. One person at the base voted for Oleksandr Moroz, who dropped out of the race after the ballots were printed, making some wonder whether the vote for Moroz ("frost" in Ukrainian) was a joke related to the low temperature in Antarctica.



NEWS ITEM: One of the biggest surprises of the March 31 election was the success of Ihor Smeshko, the former head of the Security Service of Ukraine. Smeshko entered the race in January after spending 14 years away from the public eye, and unexpectedly won 6 percent of the votes, earning him sixth place in the election.

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NATO at 70 shows power of alliance in preserving peace

BARBORA MARONKOVA

When NATO turned 60 in 2009, many commentators made jokes about NATO reaching its “retirement age.”

Ten years later, NATO is ready to celebrate its 70th anniversary on April 4, facing the most complex security challenges in a generation. These include a more assertive Russia, cyber and hybrid threats, terrorism, and instability across the Middle East and North Africa. In response, NATO has stepped up again, responding to many challenges at the same time.

At no time in its history has NATO had the luxury of resting – for forty years, NATO successfully deterred the Soviet Union from aggression against Western Europe. In the 1990s, NATO undertook its first out of area operations and crisis management function helping to end conflicts in the Western Balkans. It oversaw a successful enlargement from 16 to nearly 30 members of the Alliance in the span of 20 years.

NATO stays committed to its Open Door Policy and assists with reforms to those who expressed their aspiration to join the Alliance, including Ukraine.

After 9/11, NATO took a lead role in the international response in Afghanistan and continues in its fight against terrorism, for example by training Afghan and Iraqi security forces and contributing to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

NATO has expanded its network of partnerships around the world including with international and regional organizations such as the United Nations, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union, and the African Union.

Over more than 25 years, the Alliance has developed a network of partnerships with non-member countries from the Euro-Atlantic area, the Mediterranean and the Gulf region, and other partners across the globe. NATO pursues dialogue and practical cooperation with over forty nations on a wide range of political and security-related issues. NATO's partnerships are beneficial to all involved and contribute to improved security for the broader international community.

This author was recently asked to name a political figure that has most contributed to NATO's history and place in the world. Every era has its hero: from General Eisenhower who became the first Supreme Commander Allied Forces Europe in 1950 to Secretary General Manfred Wörner who oversaw the end of the Cold War and fall of Berlin Wall. At the occasion of the NATO's 40th anniversary in 1989 he said: “NATO remains the backbone and the lighthouse of mankind's future in freedom and peace.”

The current Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg just received an extension of his mandate to lead the organization until Sept. 30, 2022. This will make him one of the longest-serving secretary generals with a total of eight years.

To this date, 13 secretary generals have led the organization since its creation, navigating it through difficult periods, adapting and modernizing it to the needs of its time whilst preserving its key values and principles. NATO is a collective defense organization built around political consultations and consensus with a goal of preserving peace and stability of its



NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg addresses a joint meeting of the U.S. Congress as U.S. Vice President Mike Pence and U.S. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, Democrat of California, listen on April 3, 2019 at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC. Stoltenberg joined foreign ministers of NATO countries in Washington to mark the 70th anniversary of the alliance. (AFP)

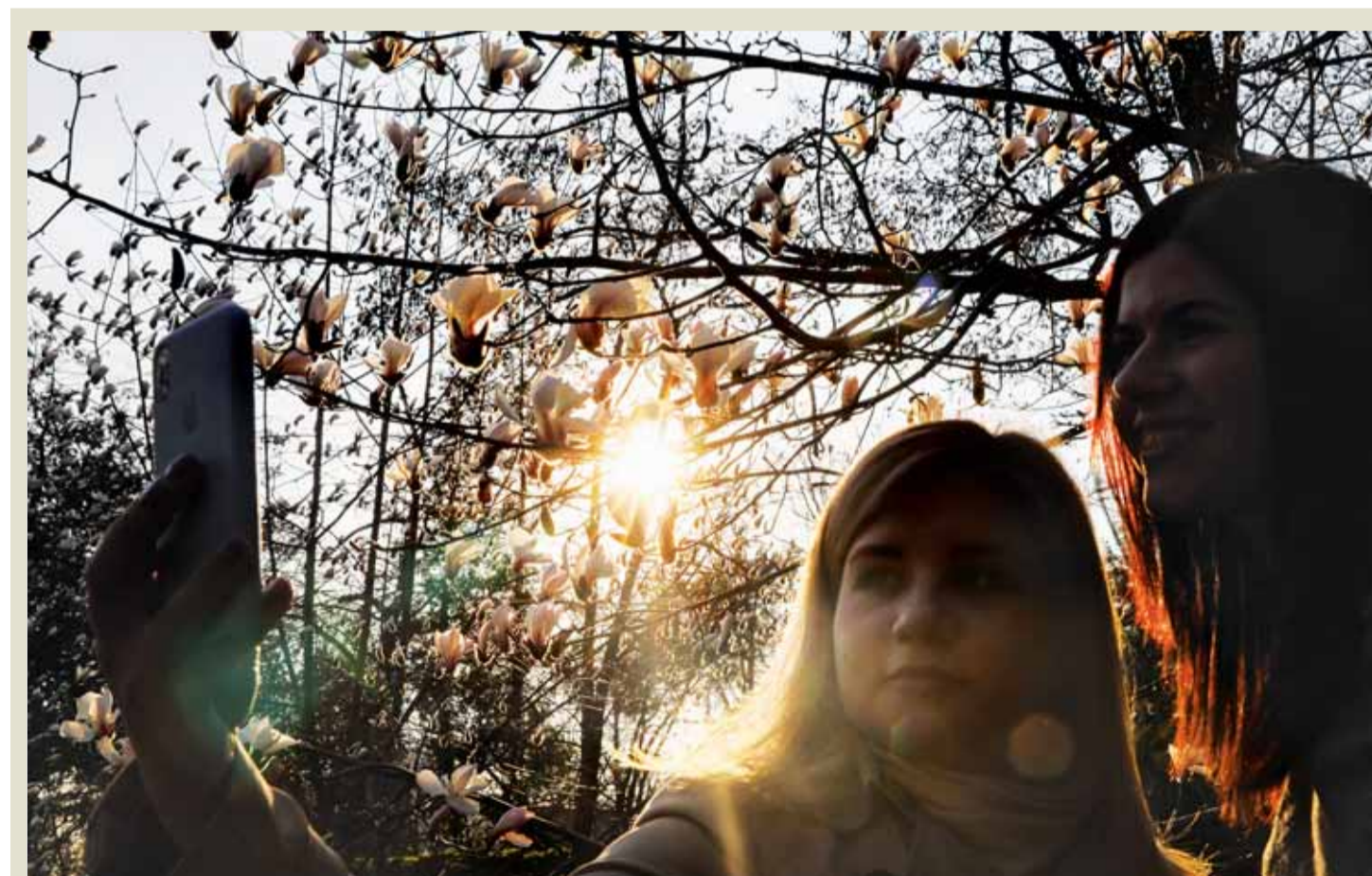
members. And for 70 years, NATO has accomplished just that – an unprecedented period of peace and security for the citizens of North America and Europe.

As NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg

says: “Our world is changing and NATO is changing with it. But our commitment to one another endures. For 70 years, we have worked together to prevent conflict and preserve peace. And standing with unity and resolve,

NATO will remain a pillar of stability for generations to come.”

Barbora Maronkova is the director of the NATO Information and Documentation Center in Ukraine. ■



Spring has sprung

Two women take a selfie under the blooming magnolia trees at the Fomin Botanical Garden in Kyiv on April 3, 2019. (Photo by Volodymyr Petrov)

Experts: Poroshenko needs a near-miracle to win race

BY OKSANA GRYTSENKO
GRYTSENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

After it became clear that political satirist Volodymyr Zelenskiy would defeat President Petro Poroshenko in the March 31 first round of voting, the incumbent president addressed voters of the rival he will face on April 21 to say he “has heard” their message.

Poroshenko reminded that April 1, the next day after the vote, is a Fool’s Day, referring to Zelenskiy’s profession, and all laughs should be over after that.

“My friends, it’s no joke,” he said.

But the “no joke” situation is, in fact, the one in which Poroshenko is in now. He faces a steep uphill battle in his quest to win another five-year term and defeat Zelenskiy in the second round on April 21.

According to the election results, more than 5.7 million people voted for Zelenskiy and only 3 million for Poroshenko.

All polls predict that Zelenskiy will defeat Poroshenko in the second round. According to the forecast by Rating group conducted in late March, Zelenskiy will win by 20 points — 39 percent of votes against 19 percent for Poroshenko, with a huge number yet undecided.

With such a gap, Poroshenko will have to do nearly the impossible to defeat Zelenskiy in the second round, experts say.

“I just cannot see it, unless Zelenskiy self-destructs,” Timothy Ash, a London-based political analyst, wrote in an op-ed.

Volodymyr Fesenko, head of the Penta political think tank, said Poroshenko still might win though “it’s very hard, the gap is very big.”

There is one precedent in Ukraine’s political history in 1994, when Leonid Kuchma lost to Leonid Kravchuk in the first round of presidential election but beat him in the second round. The gap between them in the first round was 7 percentage points, half that between Zelenskiy and Poroshenko.

Televised debate

On election night on March 31, Poroshenko called on Zelenskiy to participate in a televised debate.

Zelenskiy accepted, insisting in a video address on April 3 that they should take place at Ukraine’s largest stadium Olimpiyskiy, and Poroshenko should publicly admit that “he would debate not a puppet, a clown, a bumpkin, but a presidential candidate, Volodymyr Zelenskiy.”

Poroshenko took the challenge in another video address late at night. “Stadium it is,” he said.

Ukrainian public broadcaster UA Pershiy made a statement that it can hold the debates at the stadium on April 19, on the last Friday before the run-off, as the law requires.

Fesenko said the debate may play in favor of Poroshenko, who is an experienced politician and good speaker. Poroshenko will try to create a contrast between himself and a “weak and incompetent” Zelenskiy.

It, however, will not necessarily



A man comes out of a voting booth in Kyiv on March 31, 2019, the day Ukraine held the first round of its presidential election. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

work. In the presidential campaign of 2004, a better educated Viktor Yushchenko failed to win the debate against Viktor Yanukovich, who had much weaker speaking skills but was well-prepared.

In the presidential campaign of 2014, Poroshenko refused to debate with former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, who is an accomplished public speaker. Both Poroshenko and Zelenskiy ignored a debate with Tymoshenko on March 29.

Low electoral turnout

Though the polls were predicting Zelenskiy’s victory, many had doubts that his largely young electorate will eventually come to the polling stations. But the electoral turnout of 63 percent proved they were wrong.

Fesenko believes that the higher turnout will be in the second round, the better chances Zelenskiy will have. “If it is at least 55 percent then Zelenskiy wins,” he said. “If it is less than 50 percent than Poroshenko gets a chance.”

A poll by Rating group conducted in late March showed that 19 percent of voters of Tymoshenko, 18 percent of voters of ex-SBU chief Ihor Smeshko, 16 percent of voters of ex-energy minister Yuriy Boyko and 15 percent of voters of ex-defense minister Anatoliy Hrytsenko were ready to support Zelenskiy as their second choice. For Poroshenko, a significant flow of voters was possible only from Grytsenko (13 percent) and from nationalist candidate Ruslan Koshulynsky (14 percent), according to the same poll.

In this situation Poroshenko’s team will likely try to persuade people who voted for other candidates, fist of all the voters of Tymoshenko and Grytsenko, who became the third

and the fifth in the first round, to ignore the run-off, Fesenko said.

Poroshenko’s consultants could also try to distract the young electorate from going to the polling stations on April 21. “They will try to organize some free concerts, shows, deliver the free tickets, anything to distract them from the vote,” he said.

Concessions

On April 2, a group of friends of a murdered activist Kateryna Gandziuk claimed Poroshenko’s low result in the first round was caused by ignorance to the demands of civil society.

“You can go on listening to your allies who brought you to 16 percent in comparison to 54.7 percent in 2014 and you will see your crash in the second round. Or you can get your head out of the sand at last and do what you should have done long ago,” they wrote on a Facebook page “Who ordered the killing of Katia Gandziuk?”

The activists demanded Poroshenko to fire his party members Andriy Hordeev and Yevhen Ryshchuk from the posts of governor and deputy governor of Kherson Oblast and allow prosecution of them. Activists suspect both officials of ordering Gandziuk’s murder, which they deny. They also demanded Poroshenko stop cooperating with the tainted Odesa’s mayor Gennadiy Trukhanov and Kharkiv’s mayor Hennadiy Kernes and pressure for an investigation of dozens of attacks on activists.

On April 1, the experts of Anti-Corruption Action Center, an anti-corruption watchdog, urged Poroshenko to fire Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko, head of anti-corruption prosecution Nazar Kholodnytsky and deputy head of SBU state securi-

ty service Pavlo Demchyna, all of whom are suspected of corruption and sabotage of investigations into graft. They demanded to support stripping of impunity of lawmakers and change independent judicial governance bodies.

“We see no movements from Poroshenko to fulfill these tasks so far,” the experts of Anti-Corruption Action Center said in the report, adding that his competitor Zelenskiy has already signed promises to fulfill most of these demands if he gets elected.

Poroshenko responded to the anti-corruption demands with offering on April 2 that the government conduct tests on a lie detector for officials of Ukroboronprom, state-run defense company. In late February — early March journalists of the Nashi Groshi investigative program revealed massive embezzlement in the defense sector, involving Ukroboronprom, which was conducted by Poroshenko’s ally Oleh Hladkovskiy and his son Ihor Hladkovskiy.

On April 3, Poroshenko also ordered the government to conduct a rather symbolical decrease of the utility gas prices of 17 kopeks per cubic meter. For a family of three people, it would be a saving of less than Hr 2 (\$0.07) per month, according to Kyiv Post’s calculations.

Smear campaign

Poroshenko could also try to destroy Zelenskiy’s reputation in the few weeks remaining between the two rounds. In his speech on election night, Poroshenko has already openly called his competitor a “puppet of (oligarch Ihor) Kolomoisky.”

Zelenskiy, whose TV show is being screened at Kolomoisky’s 1+1 TV

channel, denies links to Kolomoisky other than business ones.

Ads claiming Zelenskiy is totally dependent on Kolomoisky were widely used on social media before the first round. Since early April, the strategy apparently changed. The new ads target alleged incompetence of Zelenskiy, showing a man who resembles him, as a chief commander unable to take a decision, a doctor, incapable to conduct surgery or a pilot who doesn’t know how direct an airplane.

Balazs Jarabik, a nonresident scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, believes Poroshenko’s strategists will continue using Kolomoisky’s card against Zelenskiy as well as continue portraying him as a candidate allegedly linked to Russia.

Fesenko said that there will be more revelations about business and even family of Zelenskiy. “They may go even up to talking of Zelenskiy’s nationality through stressing on these issues are normally not being accepted well here,” Fesenko said. Zelenskiy years ago admitted being Jewish.

In late March, historian Oleksandr Palii, a vehement supporter of Poroshenko, wrote on Facebook that “President of Ukraine should be Ukrainian and Christian,” a post that sparked many outraged comments.

On April 2, former Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili and reformist lawmaker Sergii Leshchenko, both big critics of Poroshenko, claimed that prominent Israeli political technologist Moshe Klughaft arrived in Kyiv to contribute in Poroshenko’s reelection. Poroshenko’s press people denied this.

“It will be a lot of very interesting things in the coming weeks,” Jarabik said. ■



Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko speaks at his campaign headquarters in Kyiv, after the first round of Ukraine's presidential election, on March 31, 2019. (Volodymyr Peytov)

Taras Berezovets: Poroshenko needs to take dramatic action before April 21 runoff

BY BRIAN BONNER
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Pryamii TV host Taras Berezovets wants President Petro Poroshenko to win his re-election bid on April 21.

And he thinks there's a chance. After all, in an interview with the Kyiv Post, Berezovets noted that Poroshenko's rating was 5 percent several months ago, when people gave him "no chance to be in the second round."

He said the president "made a huge and very successful campaign" in recovering on March 31 to win 16 percent of the vote, beating back ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko by less than 3 percentage points, and making it into the decisive round.

Comedic actor Volodymyr Zelenskiy is Poroshenko's favored opponent, outside of pro-Russian member of parliament Yuriy Boyko, who finished in fourth place.

But Zelenskiy's margin in the first round — 30 percent to Poroshenko's 16 percent — presents a huge gap to bridge.

Berezovets said that he supports Poroshenko as the wiser of the two men, and because of his strong pro-European stance. Zelenskiy, by contrast, "is very pro-Russian in his mind."

The Poroshenko campaign should not become over-confident because of Zelenskiy's political inexperience, he said.

Poroshenko needs to deploy his full skills as a persuasive speaker "to address voters of those candidates who lost in the first round."

Instead of trying to get the los-

ing candidates to endorse him, he should strive to win over their followers by identifying and endorsing the best parts of the programs of the fallen rivals.

Poroshenko should address voters of these candidates directly," Berezovets said, for example saying that he will fulfill certain policies championed by ex-Defense Minister Anatoliy Hrytsenko, another losing candidate.

The president should also woo opinion leaders such as Slava Vakarchuk, the front man of the Okean Elzy rock band.

Moreover, Berezovets advised, Poroshenko should stop depicting Zelenskiy and his voters as "bastards, rascals, cowards" and should make it clear he respects the choices of people.

Additionally, Berezovets said, Poroshenko should make it clear that the second term won't be a repeat of the first five years.

To signal changes, Berezovets said that the president needs "to fire some government officials, especially in law enforcement — unpopular people — and make popular nominations."

Berezovets didn't identify by name those officials, but Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko is among the most unpopular and controversial of Poroshenko's law enforcement choices.

Finally, and "the most complicated thing for him," Berezovets conceded, is for Poroshenko to "arrest some corrupted people" to signal that a second-term presidency "will be completely different and the pres-

ident is changing" and will fight corruption.

Berezovets was a deputy campaign manager in 2014 for Tymoshenko before switching alliances.

He thinks she no longer has a bright political future outside of leading a faction in parliament that is likely to gain no more than 30 seats in parliament in the October elections.

"She was completely outdated," Berezovets said of her inability to win the presidency after three tries.

He believes the next two weeks will be "very dirty" in terms of campaigning, with "every possible scandal" coming out, which will come as no surprise.

And he said that Poroshenko is certain about winning.

"He is confident that he can make it. He thinks he has enough time and resources," Berezovets said. "He believes he can win."

But, Berezovets said, Poroshenko could be hindered simply by the reluctance of Ukrainian voters to re-elect the same person — they've only done it once in history, and that was Leonid Kuchma in 1999.

If Zelenskiy does win, he said, it will give more impetus among lawmakers for reducing the powers of the president and making Ukraine a true parliamentary republic, something that Tymoshenko also championed during her campaign.

He said that Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman will likely emerge as the big winner if Zelenskiy wins because he will likely stay in the post until the fall parliamentary elections. ■



Billionaire oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky, the former owner of PrivatBank, sits at the Football Federation of Ukraine congress in Kyiv on March 6, 2015. (UNIAN)

Kyiv court arrests Kolomoisky assets as part of probe into embezzlement

BY DARIA SHULZHENKO
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Kyiv's Pechersky District Court has ordered the arrest of assets belonging to a number of companies connected to the former owners of PrivatBank, billionaire oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky and his business partner Gennadiy Boholyubov.

The latest arrest was ordered by the court at the request of the Prosecutor General's Office under a criminal case into the embezzlement of over Hr 19 billion in refinancing funds issued to PrivatBank by the National Bank of Ukraine, or NBU.

According to the court's decision, which was published on March 29, the assets of 10 Privat companies connected to the former owners of PrivatBank are to be frozen. The assets are to act as a guarantee for the repayment of PrivatBank's debts for refinancing.

"The arrest of the property will give an opportunity to reimburse losses caused as a result of a criminal offense," the court statement reads.

The court hearing took place on March 22, in Kyiv.

On April 1, the District Administrative Court of Kyiv finished its hearing on Kolomoisky's lawsuit against the NBU, the Deposit Guarantee Fund, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, and the National Securities

and Stock Market Commission regarding the nationalization of PrivatBank.

According to a statement published on the court's website, the next hearing will be held on April 18, 2019.

"Ihor Kolomoisky, in particular, asks the court to declare the NBU board's decision regarding the classification of PrivatBank as insolvent to be illegal and asks to cancel it," the statement reads.

The statement published by Kyiv's Pechersky District Court, also reads that PrivatBank officials gave \$18–73 million in loans to 42 companies controlled by the Privat business group for "the purchase of products."

"However, the goods were never supplied," the statement reads. "(Moreover), the funds were not returned within the time stipulated by the agreements."

As the bank teetered on the edge of collapse in December 2016, the Finance Ministry was forced to step in and nationalize PrivatBank, the largest bank in Ukraine, in order to prevent the destabilization of the entire financial market.

The NBU, the country's central bank, has also filed a lawsuit at a Geneva tribunal claiming Hr 6.64 billion (\$246 million) from Kolomoisky, stating that the oligarch had been the guarantor of five refinancing loans before PrivatBank was nationalized. ■



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Mayors don't deliver for Poroshenko on March 31

BY OLEG SUKHOV
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The mayors of Ukraine's largest cities, except for Lviv, have endorsed President Petro Poroshenko's re-election campaign.

Yet his results in the March 31 presidential election in Dnipro, Kharkiv and Odesa — all cities with at least 1 million residents — lagged far behind those he received in the 2014 presidential election. The results in Kyiv and Lviv, where Poroshenko is more popular, were better.

Civic activists and political analysts attribute Poroshenko's bad showing in Dnipro, Kharkiv and Odesa to their mayors' reluctance to heavily use administrative resources and commit voting fraud as well as their questionable loyalty to Poroshenko.

On March 31, Poroshenko got 9 percent in Odesa Oblast, 8 percent in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast and 8.52 percent in Kharkiv Oblast. This can be compared to 41.8 percent in Odesa Oblast, 44.7 percent in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast and 35.3 percent in Kharkiv Oblast in 2014.

In Kyiv, whose Mayor Vitali Klitschko is also allied to Poroshenko, the result was better: 25.6 percent, compared to 64 percent in 2014. Surprisingly, Poroshenko received the best result in Lviv, whose Mayor Andriy Sadovy is in opposition to him: 35 percent in Lviv Oblast voted for the president, compared to 70 percent in 2014.

Imitation of support

Dmytro Bulakh, head of the Kharkiv Anti-Corruption Center; Vitaly Ustymenko, head of the AutoMaidan civic group's Odesa branch, and Artem Romanyukov, head of Dnipro's Civic Control group, said that city governments in their respective cities had used administrative resources only in a limited way. They said that city administrations had campaigned for Poroshenko among public sector employees.

They argued, however, that Kharkiv Mayor Gennady Kernes, Odesa Mayor Gennady Trukhanov and Dnipro Mayor Borys Filatov pretended to support Poroshenko but in fact did little to help him. Political analyst Volodymyr Fesenko



Kharkiv Mayor Gennady Kernes votes in the March 31 presidential election in Kharkiv. Analysts say he failed to help his political ally President Petro Poroshenko win more votes in the city. (UNIAN)

added that Klitschko had not helped Poroshenko either.

"They didn't help at all," Fesenko said. "Both Kernes and Trukhanov imitated support. They ostensibly supported Poroshenko but in fact if they had wanted they would have used their administrative resources and added 10 to 15 percentage points to Poroshenko."

The most effective way to demonstrate loyalty would be through pressuring election commissions and rigging election results, he added.

"Without using brute force at polling stations, it's impossible to achieve desired results," Ustymenko said.

Vote buying

The only resource that could have helped Poroshenko in the big cities was his alleged vote buying scheme using local government subsidies, Fesenko said. It has apparently given him up to 5 percentage points nationwide, he added.

Poroshenko's campaign denied the existence of the alleged scheme, which is being investigated by the police.

In February Interior Minister Arsen Avakov, who reportedly has a conflict with Poroshenko, exposed the Poroshenko campaign's alleged nationwide vote-buying scheme. Avakov said it involved 200,000 paid campaign workers, was expected to cover from 700,000 to 6 million voters and would cost some \$56 million.

Avakov said that voters identified as loyal to Poroshenko were asked by campaign workers to fill in applications for such state subsidies.

Ustymenko argued, however, that the alleged vote-buying scheme had apparently malfunctioned in Odesa and had not achieved the result that Poroshenko wanted.

On a leash

Poroshenko has so far used criminal cases to keep Trukhanov and Kernes on a leash, Fesenko argued. Poroshenko has denied using law enforcement to pressure them.

In August a Poltava court closed a case against Kernes, who had been charged with kidnapping two EuroMaidan Revolution activists,

torturing them and threatening to kill them in January 2014. Kernes' critics attributed the closure of the case to a deal with Poroshenko aimed at supporting his re-election.

Kernes has also been investigated over embezzling up to Hr 15 billion by allocating land to fake cooperatives. However, he has not been officially charged in this case, and Bulakh also attributes this to an alleged deal with Poroshenko.

Kernes has denied all accusations of wrongdoing.

Meanwhile, Trukhanov has been investigated in several corruption cases and was arrested in 2018 for allegedly embezzling Hr 100 million. However he has been released without bail and has not been suspended from his job, and an illicit enrichment case against him was closed earlier in March.

Moreover, Russia has confirmed that Trukhanov had Russian citizenship. However, Ukrainian authorities have failed to react to this fact despite the ban on double citizenship for officials.

Trukhanov has also denied all

accusations of wrongdoing. His critics, including Ustymenko, attribute Trukhanov's ability to stay afloat to his alleged deal with Poroshenko.

Romanyukov also said that Filatov could have been pressured through several cases opened against Kolomoisky and his allies in 2015. They were investigated over alleged kidnapping, embezzlement, hijacking and organized crime and denied the accusations.

Switching sides?

Ironically, Filatov, Kernes and Trukhanov used to have links to Kolomoisky, who is accused of backing Poroshenko's competitor Volodymyr Zelensky, although Zelensky and Kolomoisky deny that they are political allies.

Filatov used to be a business partner and close ally of Kolomoisky. In 2014 to 2015, he was a deputy of Kolomoisky when he was the governor of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast.

Since then, they have parted ways, with Filatov allying himself with Poroshenko and backing his nomination for presidency in January.

Meanwhile, Kernes has backed Vidrodzhennya (Revival), a party linked to Kolomoisky.

Ustymenko argued that Kolomoisky and Trukhanov had a close partnership back in 2014 to 2015, when Kolomoisky ally Igor Palytsya was the governor of Odesa Oblast. Kolomoisky also has major business interests in Odesa, mostly in real estate.

Ustymenko and Fesenko said that Trukhanov, Filatov and Kernes might switch back to Kolomoisky.

"It's easier for (Trukhanov's group) to switch their allegiance to Kolomoisky instead of organizing some fraud during the election and saving hopeless Poroshenko with a colossal disapproval rating," Ustymenko said.

Fesenko said that Zelensky's victory could be more beneficial for Kernes and Trukhanov because they believe he will be a weak president. He said that the mayors saw that a majority of the population supported Zelensky and they don't want to go against the trend.

"Regional elites will begin to play with neutrality," Fesenko said. "Why should they bet on supporting Poroshenko?" ■



Dnipro Mayor Borys Filatov



Kharkiv Mayor Gennady Trukhanov



Kharkiv Mayor Gennady Kernes



Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko



Lviv Mayor Andriy Sadovy

Top 7 surprises of March 31 Ukrainian presidential vote

BY OKSANA GRYSSENKO
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Unlike most of Ukraine's presidential candidates, the country's pollsters were happy with the results of the first round of the presidential election, which showed their predictions had been largely spot on.

As they predicted, political satirist and actor Volodymyr Zelenskiy came first by a wide margin, followed by President Petro Poroshenko and former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko.

The election results also showed that people of all ages and from all regions had come to vote, despite fears of low turnout. About 800,000 more people came to vote on March 31 than in the presidential election of 2014. Only in Zakarpattia Oblast the turnout was under 50 percent.

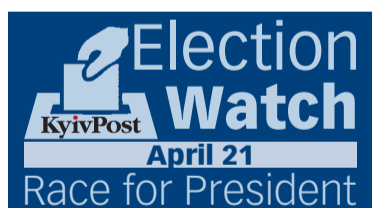
The fact that the official results were close to the results of the exit polls indicated there were no major election violations, although some fraud likely took place in the Donbas.

Still, there were a number of other facts that made the first round of the election both surprising and unusual. Here are the top seven of them.

1. Young chose winner

Lots of candidates tried to mobilize younger voters, but only Zelenskiy managed to do it effectively. Pre-election polls and exit polls show that more than 60 percent of his voters are under 40. His result of 30 percent proves that millions of young people came to vote for him.

"This is the first time that people under 40 have supported the leader in the vote," said sociologist Inna Volosevych, the deputy director of research company Info Sapiens. "We haven't seen this in the past."



However, she added that the overall number of young voters on March 31 was not as large as in 2014. In 2014, 16 percent of those who participated in the presidential election were under 30, while this time it was 14 percent. But most of them apparently supported Zelenskiy.

2. Smeshko surprise

The little-known former head of the Security Service of Ukraine, Ihor Smeshko, who announced his run for president two months before the election, unexpectedly received 6 percent of the vote and took 6th place among the 39 candidates.

More than 1.1 million people voted for him, which is just 200,000 less than voted for ex-defense minister Anatoliy Grytsenko, who invested significantly more resources in his campaign.

Smeshko received the highest sup-



Presidential candidate Ihor Smeshko votes at a polling station in Kyiv on March 31, 2019. (UNIAN)

port in central Ukraine. In his native Khrystynivka, a city of 10,000 people in Cherkasy Oblast, he won at all four polling stations.

The polls show Smeshko is especially popular among people over 50 who liked the fact that he was professionally experienced, but not tainted by political scandal. "Smeshko is a new face (in politics) for many middle-aged people," Volosevych said.

3. Boyko did well

Former energy minister and openly pro-Russian politician Yuriy Boyko received almost 11.7 percent of the votes, which is about 2 percent more than the exit polls had predicted. Volosevych said some people who voted for Boyko probably refused to admit it to sociologists, knowing their pro-Russian choice could be criticized in a country that has been under attack by Russia since 2014.

The electoral map shows that Boyko, who met with Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev in Moscow only a week before the vote, won not only in the war-torn Donbas region, where he was the most popular candidate, but also at many polling stations all over Ukraine.

Boyko received support in some villages in Chernihiv and Sumy oblasts in northern Ukraine near the Russian border, in Zakarpattia in Ukraine's far west, in the southern part of Odesa Oblast, in western Chernivtsi and Volyn oblasts, and at a polling station in Kyiv.

This reveals that many people, up to 15 percent according to sociological polls, remain pro-Russian regardless of the war, political analyst Volodymyr Fesenko wrote in his blog.

4. Donbas suspicious

While Boyko took most of the votes in Donetsk Oblast, Poroshenko's results there were suspiciously high. He received 12.6 percent of the overall vote, when polls conducted in early March by the Rating sociological group showed him receiving just 5-percent support in the oblast.

Some civilian polling stations in Donetsk Oblast recorded anomalously high percentages for Poroshenko.

Andriy Grudkin, an election observer from the civil soci-

ety group Sylny Gromady (Strong Communities), who observed the election in the city of Toretsk, told the Kyiv Post there had been large-scale ballot stuffing in favor of Poroshenko in the city. Photos and videos of the alleged ballot stuffing have been published.

Poroshenko's campaign and the Central Election Commission have denied the accusations.

U.S.-based electoral geographer Alexander Kireev and Roman Udot, who works at the Russian indepen-

dent election monitoring agency Golos, published charts that they say show large-scale deviations from the normal distribution of votes in Donetsk Oblast, which they interpret as tampering in favor of Poroshenko.

Donetsk Oblast police reported on April 2 that they have opened criminal cases into alleged vote fraud in the city of Bakhmut and Mangush District. The Opora election watch-

more Surprises on page 10

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Most first-round winners go on to take presidency

In Ukraine's seven presidential elections to date, only one candidate has come from behind after the first round to win in the second. That was Leonid Kuchma in 1994, who ended up beating Ukraine's first

president, Leonid Kravchuk, after coming second in the first round. Since regaining independence in 1991, Ukraine has had two one-round presidential elections and five two-round ones.

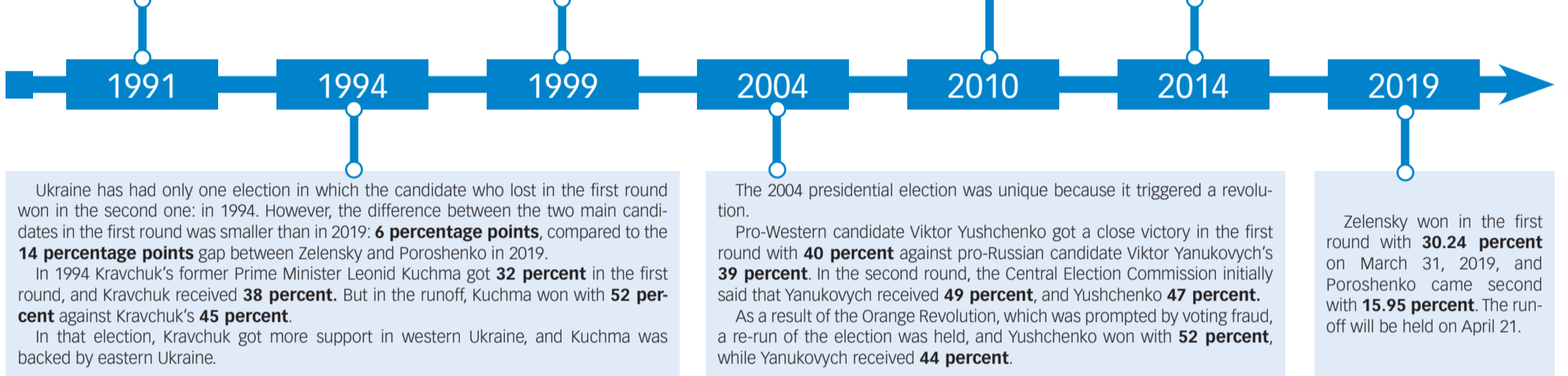
Under Ukrainian law, a candidate becomes president if he or she wins with more than 50 percent in the first round. A second round is held if no candidate gets more than 50 percent.

The biggest percentage that a candidate has ever gotten in Ukraine was in 1991, when Leonid Kravchuk, an ex-Communist Party official, won in a landslide against nationalist candidate Vyacheslav Chornovil, surpassing him by **39 percentage** points and receiving **62 percent**. Similarly to current presidential candidate Volodymyr Zelenskiy, Kravchuk won in most regions all over Ukraine, while support for Chornovil was limited to three regions in western Ukraine, like President Petro Poroshenko in 2019.

The biggest difference (**15 percent**) in the first round of a two-round election was in 1999, when Kuchma beat Communist Party candidate Petro Symonenko with **38 percent** against Symonenko's **23 percent**. The gap was close to the 14 percent difference between Zelenskiy and Poroshenko in 2019. Kuchma then proceeded to win the runoff with **58 percent** against Symonenko's **39 percent**. Kuchma's decisive win was mostly a result of his campaign message that Symonenko's victory would be tantamount to a resurrection of the Soviet Union – similarly to Poroshenko's use of the Russian threat in his campaign. Symonenko was more popular in southeastern Ukraine, and Kuchma had more support in the west in the 1999 election.

The 2010 presidential election was the reverse of the 2004 one, since a pro-Russian candidate won. Yanukovich got 35 percent in the first round and 49 percent in the run-off, and ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko received 25 percent in the first round and 45 percent in the second one. Yanukovich had the advantage of being an opposition candidate, while disaffection with Tymoshenko's government damaged her.

The biggest-ever landslide in Ukraine's history was 2014, when Poroshenko won in a one-round election with **55 percent**, while the runner-up, Tymoshenko, received only **13 percent**. The election was anomalous since it came amidst Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and voters were persuaded to elect a commander in chief without risking two rounds.



These are the noteworthy events of the March 31 first round of vote

Surprises from page 9

dog also said it was looking into the alleged violations.

5. Mayors didn't help

Though Poroshenko tried to enlist the support of the mayors of Ukraine's largest cities – Kharkiv's Hennadiy Kernes, Odesa's Gennadiy Trukhanov, and Dnipro's Borys Filatov – during his campaign, it apparently didn't help him.

Poroshenko won in none of the polling stations in Kharkiv or Odesa. In Dnipro, he won in just one small polling station on the outskirts of the city, located in a hospital.

Nevertheless, Poroshenko received strong support in Kyiv, especially in its central areas, and Zelenskiy beat him in the capital by only 2 percent. Voters in Kyiv's suburbs mostly supported Zelenskiy.

6. Soldiers split vote

An even bigger blow for Poroshenko

was his relatively weak support among the country's soldiers, whom he had attempted to court with his campaign slogan "Army. Language. Faith."

Poroshenko and Zelenskiy split the vote almost 50–50 at military polling stations in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, which means that around half of the nation's soldiers are ready to see Zelenskiy as their commander-in-chief.

The vote results showed that Poroshenko received only about 400 more votes than Zelenskiy from soldiers. He won at 40 military polling stations out of 79. The other 39 were won by Zelenskiy.

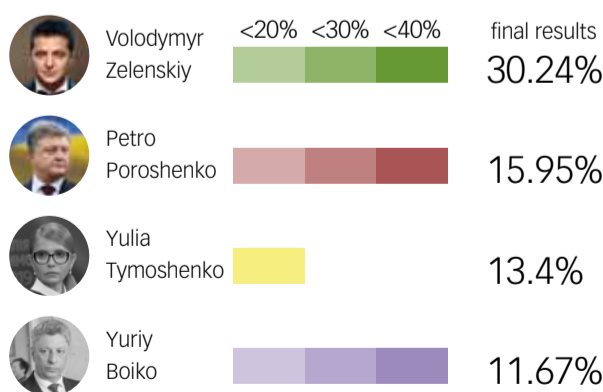
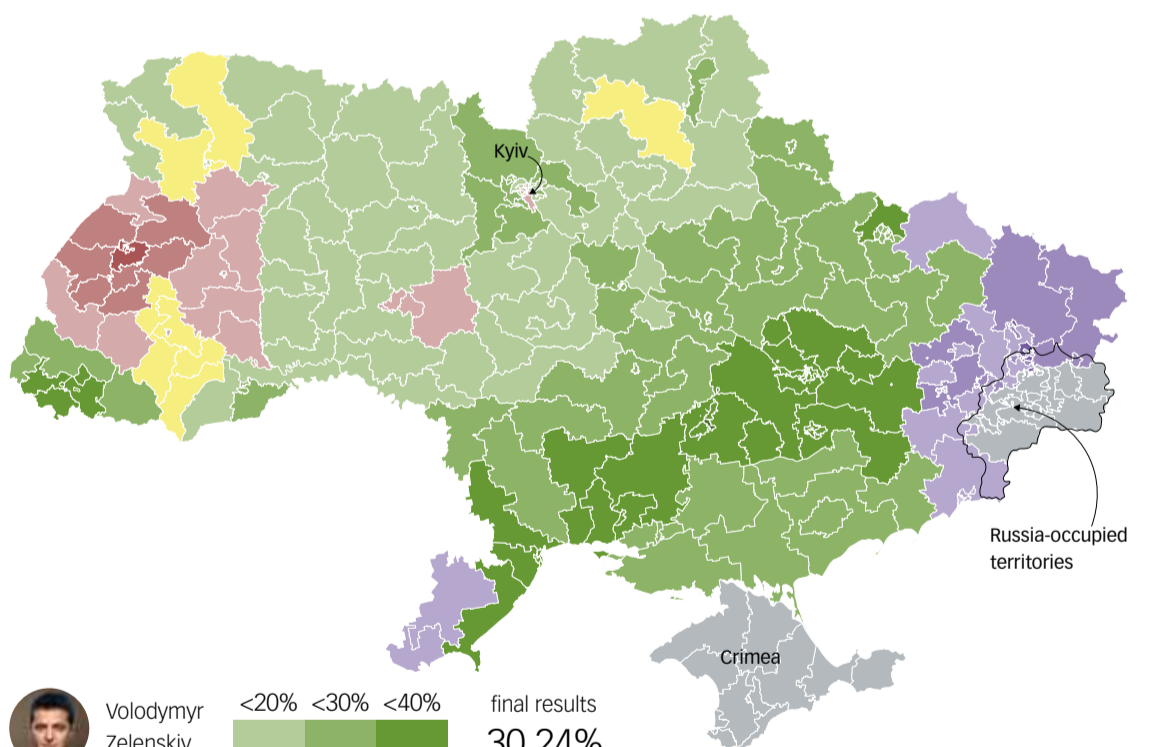
7. Tymoshenko's oblast

Tymoshenko, who came third in the first round and was thus knocked out of the presidential race, did manage to win in Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast in western Ukraine.

The electoral map also shows

In-depth look at March 31 first-round presidential election in Ukraine

The map shows the winning candidates in each of the 199 electoral districts of Ukraine.



Source: Central Election Commission

Comedy actor Volodymyr Zelenskiy and President Petro Poroshenko were the two leaders in the March 31 presidential election and made it to the second round that will take place on April 21. Zelenskiy won in 19 of the 24 oblasts of Ukraine. He saw the biggest success in his native Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, winning 45.3 percent of the votes there. Poroshenko won only in two oblasts of Western Ukraine. Pro-Russian candidate Yuriy Boyko won in two eastern oblasts, while ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko won in one western oblast.

she won a lot of support in prisons and detention centers, including the Kachanivska penal colony in Kharkiv Oblast, where she was imprisoned by the regime of former President Viktor Yanukovich from 2011 to 2014.

Tymoshenko portrays herself as a defender of the poor – that's why she has a lot of support in villages and also in prisons, Volosevych explained. She added that Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast is the

poorest of the western Ukrainian regions and has the least number of people with a higher education: Tymoshenko voters also tend to have lower educational qualifications. ■

China gives Naftogaz \$1 billion on debt financing, investment

BY JACK LAURENSEN
LAURENSEN@KYIVPOST.COM

China has been eyeing strategic investments and acquisitions across Ukraine for at least a year now – but a Chinese state-owned credit firm appeared to up the stakes on April 2 as it inked a deal to provide \$1 billion in insurance coverage to Ukrainian energy conglomerate Naftogaz.

Naftogaz said that the new Chinese insurance from Beijing-based Sinosure is essentially a financial guarantee on the company being able to attract debt financing and further direct investment from China.

The China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation, widely known under the brand name Sinosure, is a state-owned enterprise in China that specializes in export credit insurance – mostly for high-value goods that China needs.

Naftogaz is the state-owned Ukrainian oil and gas monopoly that handles the extraction, refinement and transportation of natural gas and oil.

Under the terms of the deal, Sinosure will provide Naftogaz with \$1 billion worth of insurance, allowing the Ukrainian energy monopoly to attract an equivalent amount of debt financing and direct investment from China.

State-owned Sinosure has strong links to the ruling Chinese Communist Party, and was established in 2001 as the result of a merger between now-defunct parts of the People's Insurance Company of China and the China Export and Import Bank.

Naftogaz's new insurance coverage will attract \$160 million in guarantees at the initial stage, followed by a later injection of \$800 million for new projects according to a Naftogaz press statement issued on April 2.

The initial \$160 million will be used to finance existing gas projects for Naftogaz's natural gas subsidiary, UkrGasVydobuvannya, Naftogaz said, adding that the company needs to finance existing contracts with Chinese companies who are supplying drilling equipment.

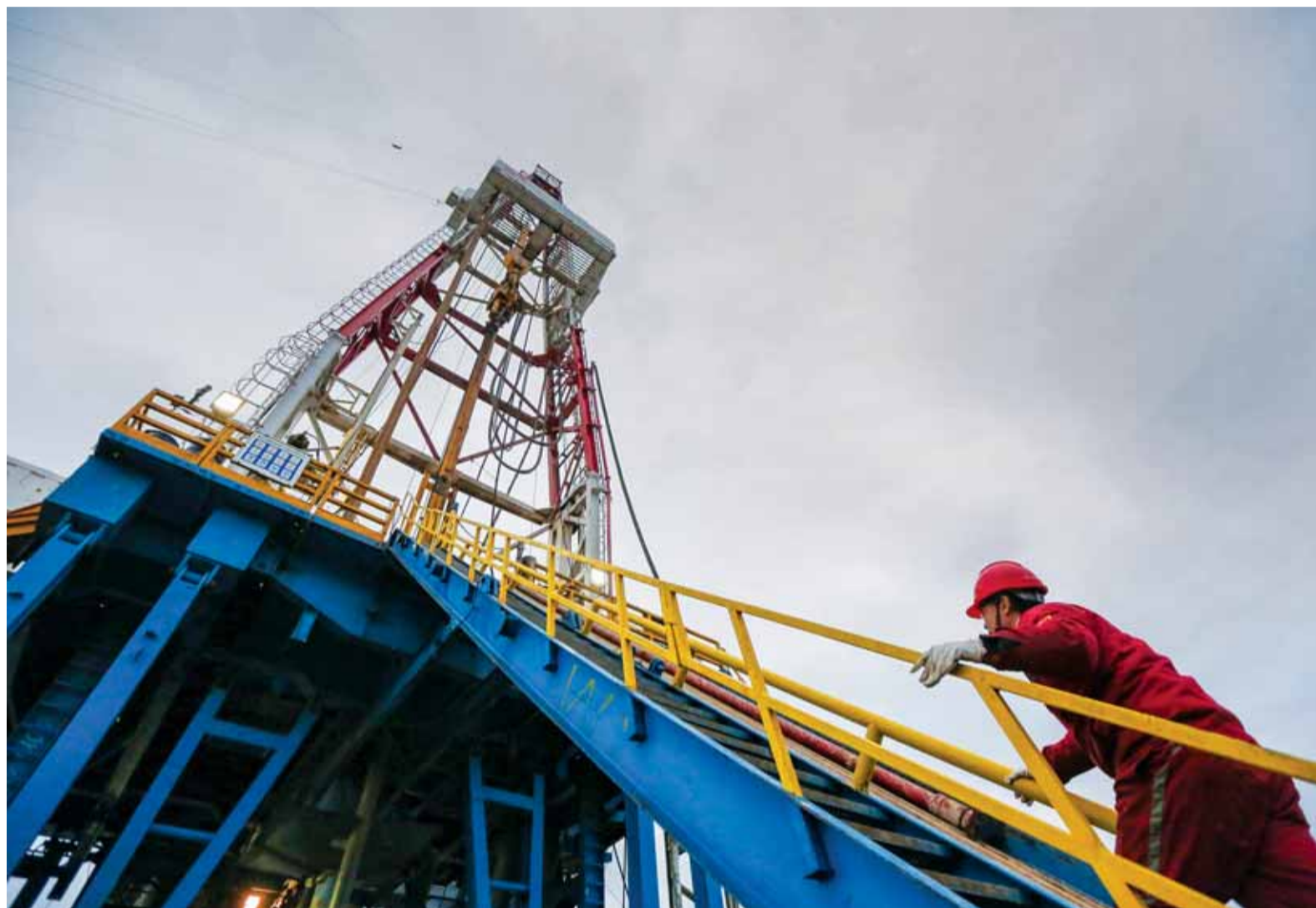
In its press statement, Naftogaz notes that the group is already cooperating with Chinese companies, including Sinosure.

"In 2018, due to insurance cover from Sinosure for UkrGasVydobuvannya, 13 drilling rigs worth about \$140 million with a 5-year payment delay were purchased. The machines are being purchased from the Chinese company Honghua International, a member of the State Aerospace Concern of the People's Republic of China," Naftogaz said.

Growing ties

Data shows that China might replace Russia as Ukraine's largest single-nation trading partner if growth rates in bilateral commerce between the two countries remain steady or increase.

According to Ukraine's Economy Ministry, bilateral trade between China and Ukraine increased by about 20 percent through 2018. In



A worker from the Chinese company Beiken Energy climbs the stairs at a drilling rig on the Yablunivsky gas field in Poltava oblast on Oct. 26, 2018. The Yablunivsky gas field is operated by UGV, a fully-owned subsidiary of the Ukrainian, state-owned energy giant Naftogaz. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

January-November of last year, trade turnover between the two countries amounted to \$8.82 billion.

If such an upward trade trend increases, or at least remains steady – as most observers and analysts expect it should – Ukrainian-Chinese trade could total \$10 billion by the end of 2019, trade officials have said.

By comparison, Ukraine-Russia trade was \$11.1 billion at the end of 2017, and it hasn't changed much.

Troubling acquisitions

But China's business strategy in Ukraine, sometimes labeled mercantile opportunism, has raised some concerns in Ukraine and abroad.

On Feb. 26, the Kyiv Post reported that investors from China with strong ties to its government and armed forces would likely acquire a majority stake in Ukrainian aerospace giant Motor Sich, one of the world's most important manufacturers of engines for military helicopters.

Days earlier, the Chinese and the Russians announced that they were ready to move ahead on a joint venture to build next-generation military helicopters.

In December 2018, the Kyiv Post reported that China's Bohai Commodity Exchange Co. would be allowed to acquire more than 25 percent of Ukraine's PFTS Stock Exchange, a leading Ukrainian stock exchange and trading system based in Kyiv.

Chinese investments into Ukraine no longer come as a surprise. In

infrastructure alone, Beijing has pledged at least \$7 billion to major new projects, mostly in the form of loans. Ports and highways that can transport heavy goods are especially interesting to China, and Ukrainian Infrastructure Minister Volodymyr Omelyan has said more such investments are coming.

Ukraine's Western and NATO allies, especially Japan, the United States and the United Kingdom have expressed strong concerns about China's interest in Ukraine – they warn that investments are largely driven by Chinese self-interest and could pose a security threat to the alliance and Ukraine.

But Ukraine is far from alone in being subject to Beijing's attention, and other countries debate as to whether Chinese investment is a good thing. In the last 10 years, experts say that Chinese companies have invested at least \$318 billion into Europe, signalling China's relentless economic advance on the continent. ■

World in Ukraine: **Great Britain**
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'Turbulent'

Kyiv citizens and guests will finally have a chance to have a look at the world-famous video installation "Turbulent." Internationally acclaimed Iranian artist Shirin Neshat, who is currently based in New York, created the video in order to raise the gender inequality issue, especially acute in her home country, where women's rights are limited. The artist explores inequality through two public singing performances – one by a man and the other one by a woman. Although it was created more than 20 years ago, "Turbulent" addresses one of the most-talked about issues of the last few years, which have often been called "the time of women."

Turbulent. Izone (8 Naberezhno-Luhova St.) April 5 - June 16. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Friday, April 5 Classical music

Sibelius, Franck (violin concert by Vadym Brodskyi). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 80-400

Live music

Music is Coming (music from fantasy films by Lords of the Sound). Ukraine Palace. 7 p.m. Hr 300-950

Queen vs. Scorpions Tribute (Beast band). Docker Pub. 10 p.m. Hr 125-1,400

Clubs

Borys, Bru and Others (electronic dance music). River Port. 11 p.m. Hr 200

Adis Abbé (electronic). Dom. 11 p.m. Price to be announced

Etapp Kyle (techno). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 300-400. Visitors must be over 21

Miscellaneous

Fearless (photographs and installations about the history of feminism and female activists in Ukraine). Creative Women Space. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

The Ukrainian Canadians (documents, photographs, publications of Ukrainian diaspora in Canada). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 25-50

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

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

Archaic Puzzles (imaginary landscape paintings by Maksym Dietkovskiy). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Alabaster Atlas (paintings by Ksenia Hnylytska dedicated to Soviet architectural modernism). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

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

I Touch (graphics, photos, videos by Daria Koltsova). Shcherbenko Art Center. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Late (art-objects by Mariia Proshkovska exploring gender issues with emphasis on women's lives in modern society). America House. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Puzzle Connection (artworks by young Ukrainians, including artists displaced because of Russia's war in the East of Ukraine). Kyiv History Museum. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Free

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

Future Generation Art Prize (various artworks by 21 nominees for the prize). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Wooden Churches of the Carpathians

(photographs by French artist Jean-Piere Durand). Art 14. 1-7 p.m. Free

Ethno-Futurism (drawings by Andrew Getmanchuk and Ivan Dudchenko expressing "traditional views in futurist style"). Dom. 2-11 p.m. Free

Movies

Touch Me Not (drama). Zhovten. 1:55 p.m., 9:05 p.m. Hr 70, 100

Volcano (comedy, drama in Ukrainian with English subtitles). Zhovten. 2:20 p.m., 4:55 p.m., 7 p.m. Hr 80-100

Promise at Dawn (drama, romance in French with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 120

The Circus (silent film accompanied by live jazz). Architect's House. 8 p.m. Hr 175-250

In the Aisles (drama in German with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 9:15 p.m. Hr 100

Edmond (comedy, drama in French with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 9:30 p.m. Hr 120

Shows

Moon Zoo and Stone From the Sky (electronic, post-punk; psychedelic rock, trip-hop). Mezzanine. 7:30 p.m. Hr 200

Grazhdanin Topinambur (rock, ska, pop). Docker Pub. 10 p.m. Hr 125-1,400

Theater

Don Quixote (London Royal Opera recording). Planeta Kino. 7 p.m., 7:30 p.m. Hr 170-230

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

Saturday, April 6

Classical music

Kyiv Chamber Orchestra (Debussy, Ravel). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-350

Live Music

Best Hits of AC/DC (cover show). Docker's ABC. 10 p.m. Hr 125-1,250

Clubs

Pantileev, Skertl and Others (electronic dance music). River Port. 11 p.m. Hr 100-150

Timur Basha, Shakolin, Karine (electronic dance music). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 300-400. Visitors must be over 21

Miscellaneous

Fearless (photographs and installations about the history of feminism and female activists in Ukraine). Creative Women Space. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Late (artworks by Mariia Proshkovska exploring gender issues with emphasis on women's lives in modern society). America House. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free. Bring ID

The Ukrainian Canadians (documents, photographs, publications of Ukrainian diaspora in Canada). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 25-50

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

Afterimage (paintings by Artem Volokitin

and Tetiana Malinovska, sculptures by Maria Kulikovska, video art by Alina Fedotova). Voloshyn Gallery. 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Archaic Puzzles (imaginary landscape paintings by Maksym Dietkovskiy). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Alabaster Atlas (paintings by Ksenia Hnylytska dedicated to Soviet architectural modernism). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

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

I Touch (graphics, photos, videos by Daria Koltsova). Shcherbenko Art Center. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Puzzle Connection (artworks by young Ukrainians, including artists displaced because of Russia's war in the east of Ukraine). Kyiv History Museum. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Free

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

Future Generation Art Prize (various artworks by 21 nominees for the prize). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Wooden Churches of the Carpathians (photographs by French artist Jean-Piere Durand). Art 14. 1-7 p.m. Free

Ethno-Futurism (drawings by Andrew Getmanchuk and Ivan Dudchenko expressing "traditional views in futurist style"). Dom. 2-11 p.m. Free

Urban Jungle and Ceramics Markets (plants, pots, décor, posters, textiles and furniture with floral patterns, ceramic tableware by Ukrainian producers). Vsi Svoi D12. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Movies

Volcano (comedy, drama in Ukrainian with English subtitles). Zhovten. 11:45 a.m., 2:55 p.m., 7:15 p.m. Hr 80, 90, 110

Touch Me Not (drama). Zhovten. 12:40 p.m., 9:15 p.m. Hr 80, 110

Beautiful Boy (drama, biography). Zhovten. 12:55 p.m., 9:10 p.m. Hr 80, 110

In the Aisles (drama in German with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 3:45 p.m., 9:10 p.m. Hr 90, 100

Curiosa (drama, history in French with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 120

Promise at Dawn (drama, romance in French with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 9:30 p.m. Hr 120

Shows

Dakh Daughters (cabaret, world music). KPI Culture and Arts Center. 7 p.m. Hr 290-1,190

Summer of Haze (electronic dance music). Bingo. 7 p.m. Hr 300-500

Detach (alternative, rock, metal). Atlas. 8 p.m. Hr 330-950

Freel (rap). Mezzanine. 8 p.m. Hr 350

Theater

Frankenstein: Lee Miller (theater recording starring Jonny Lee Miller, Benedict Cumberbatch). Multiplex (Lavina Mall). 3 p.m. Hr 190-240

Exam (experimental, amateur play). ProEnglish Theater. 7 p.m. Hr 100

The Marriage of Figaro (two-act ballet). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 150-2,900

Sunday, April 7

Live music

Música. Pasión. Tango (piano, vocals, dancing show). Architect's House. 7 p.m. Hr 200-450

Clapton and Buddy Guy Tribute (by guitarist Pavel Geruk). Docker's ABC. 9 p.m. Free

Miscellaneous

Fearless (photographs and installations about the history of feminism and female activists in Ukraine). Creative Women Space. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

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

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

Archaic Puzzles (imaginary landscape paintings by Maksym Dietkovskiy). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Alabaster Atlas (paintings by Ksenia Hnylytska dedicated to Soviet architectural modernism). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

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

Puzzle Connection (artworks by young Ukrainians, including artists displaced because of Russia's war in the East of Ukraine). Kyiv History Museum. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Free

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

Future Generation Art Prize (various artworks by 21 nominees for the prize). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Ethno-Futurism (drawings by Andrew Getmanchuk and Ivan Dudchenko expressing "traditional views in futurist style"). Dom. 2-11 p.m. Free

Urban Jungle and Ceramics Markets (plants, pots, décor, posters, textiles and furniture with floral patterns, ceramic tableware by Ukrainian producers). Vsi Svoi D12. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Movies

Volcano (comedy, drama in Ukrainian with English subtitles). Zhovten. 11:45 a.m., 2:55 p.m., 7:15 p.m. Hr 80, 90, 110

Touch Me Not (drama). Zhovten. 12:40 p.m., 9:15 p.m. Hr 80, 110

Beautiful Boy (drama, biography). Zhovten. 12:55 p.m., 9:10 p.m. Hr 80, 110

In the Aisles (drama in German with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 3:45 p.m., 9:10 p.m. Hr 90, 100

By the Grace of God (drama in French with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 120

Curiosa (drama, history in French with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 9:30 p.m. Hr 120

Shows

Epolets (alternative, rock). Atlas. 7 p.m. Hr 340-800

Rolliks (alternative rock, rapcore). Docker Pub. 8 p.m. Hr 125-1,400

Breaky Boxes (indie rock, folk, pop). Docker-G Pub. 9 p.m. Free

Theater

Un Ballo in Maschera (opera in Italian). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600

Monday, April 8

Live music

Live Jazz Monday - Imaginarium. Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 150-350

Miscellaneous

Fearless (photographs and installations about the history of feminism and female activists in Ukraine). Creative Women Space. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

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

Archaic Puzzles (imaginary landscape paintings by Maksym Dietkovskiy). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Alabaster Atlas (paintings by Ksenia Hnylytska dedicated to Soviet architectural modernism). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Movies

By the Grace of God (drama in French with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 120

Non-Fiction (comedy, drama in French with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 9:30 p.m. Hr 120

Shows

Xiu Xiu (experimental, art rock, noise pop). Closer. 7 p.m. Hr 600

Tuesday, April 9

Classical music

Luka Okros (piano concert playing Chopin, Rachmaninoff, Liszt). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 80-400

Live music

Tall Guy Remez Quartet (Sam Cooke tribute). MK Music Space. 8 p.m. Hr 150

Miscellaneous

Fearless (photographs and installations about the history of feminism and female activists in Ukraine). Creative Women Space. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

The Ukrainian Canadians (documents,

photographs, publications of Ukrainian diaspora in Canada). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 25-50

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

Archaic Puzzles (imaginary landscape paintings by Maksym Dietkovskiy). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Alabaster Atlas (paintings by Ksenia Hnylytska dedicated to Soviet architectural modernism). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

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

I Touch (graphics, photos, videos by Daria Koltsova). Shcherbenko Art Center. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Late (art-objects by Mariia Proshkovska exploring gender issues with emphasis on women's lives in modern society). America House. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID

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

Ethno-Futurism (drawings by Andrew Getmanchuk and Ivan Dudchenko expressing "traditional views in futurist style"). Dom. 2-11 p.m. Free

Movies

Non-Fiction (comedy, drama in French with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 120

Shazam! (action, adventure, comedy). Multiplex (Atmosphere, Komod, Lavina Mall, Prospect, Sky Mall). 7 p.m. Hr 90-250

Curiosa (drama, history in French with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 9:30 p.m. Hr 120

Shows

Satelles, Wendeavor, BSXBC (post-hardcore; melodic hardcore; trash metal). Otel'. 7 p.m. Hr 200

Sepultura (metal). Bingo. 8 p.m. Hr 1,000

Theater

Spartacus (ballet). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600

Wednesday, April 10

Miscellaneous

Fearless (photographs and installations about the history of feminism and female activists in Ukraine). Creative Women Space. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

The Ukrainian Canadians (documents, photographs, publications of Ukrainian diaspora in Canada). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 25-50

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

Archaic Puzzles (imaginary landscape paintings by Maksym Dietkovskiy). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free

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

Alabaster Atlas (paintings by Ksenia Hnylytska dedicated to Soviet architectural modernism). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

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

I Touch (graphics, photos, videos by Daria Koltsova). Shcherbenko Art Center. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Late (art-objects by Mariia Proshkovska exploring gender issues with emphasis on women's lives in modern society). America House. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID

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

Wooden Churches of the Carpathians (photographs by French artist Jean-Piere Durand). Art 14. 1-7 p.m. Free

Ethno-Futurism (drawings by Andrew Getmanchuk and Ivan Dudchenko expressing "traditional views in futurist style"). Dom. 2-11 p.m. Free

Movies

Lions for Lambs (drama, thriller, war). American Library. 4 p.m. Free

By the Grace of God (drama in French with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 120 🍷

Non-Fiction (comedy, drama in French with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 9:30 p.m. Hr 120 🍷

Theater

La Damnation de Faust (opera in French). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 100-1,500 🍷

I'm Not Running (British National Theater recording, drama). Multiplex (Sky Mall). 7:30 p.m. Hr 190 🍷

Thursday, April 11

Classical music

NotaBene Ensemble (Debussy, Fauré, Ravel). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-300 🍷

Live music

Caribbean Jazz Dinner Show: Freedom Jazz. Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 390-1,800 🍷

Floyd UA (Pink Floyd tribute). Docker Pub. 8 p.m. Hr 125-1,400 🍷

Miscellaneous

Fearless (photographs and installations about the history of feminism and female activists in Ukraine). Creative Women Space. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free 🍷

The Ukrainian Canadians (documents, photographs, publications of Ukrainian diaspora in Canada). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 25-50 🍷

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

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

Archaic Puzzles (imaginary landscape paintings by Maksym Dietkovskiy). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free 🍷

Alabaster Atlas (paintings by Ksenia Hnylytska dedicated to Soviet architectural modernism). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free 🍷

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

I Touch (graphics, photos, videos by Daria Koltsova). Shcherbenko Art Center. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free 🍷

Late (art-objects by Mariia Proshkovska exploring gender issues with emphasis on women's lives in modern society). America House. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID 🍷

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

Wooden Churches of the Carpathians (photographs by French artist Jean-Piere Durand). Art 14. 1-7 p.m. Free 🍷

Ethno-Futurism (drawings by Andrew Getmanchuk and Ivan Dudchenko expressing "traditional views in futurist style"). Dom. 2-11 p.m. Free 🍷

Movies

Love Machine (comedy in German with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 8 p.m. Hr 100 🍷

Shows

Face (rap, trap). Bingo. 7 p.m. Hr 450 🍷

Rodin N (indie rock, pop). Docker's ABC. 8 p.m. Free 🍷

Theater

Zorba the Greek (ballet). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 50-600 🍷

All About Eve (theater live broadcast, drama). Multiplex (Lavina Mall). 8 p.m. Hr 190-240 🍷

Friday, April 12

Classical music

Symphonic Dimension (Lysenko, Shostakovich, Schnittke). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 80-400 🍷

Clubs

Borys, Ponura and Others (electronic dance music). Otel'. 10 p.m. Hr 300 🍷

Derrick + Tonika (drum and bass). Dom. 10 p.m. Hr 150-200 🍷

Gunnar Haslam, Alex Savage, Lobanov (electronic dance music). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 300-400. Visitors must be over 21 🍷

Miscellaneous

The Ukrainian Canadians (documents, photographs, publications of Ukrainian diaspora in Canada). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 25-50 🍷

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

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

Archaic Puzzles (imaginary landscape paintings by Maksym Dietkovskiy). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free 🍷

Alabaster Atlas (paintings by Ksenia Hnylytska dedicated to Soviet architectural modernism). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free 🍷

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

I Touch (graphics, photos, videos by Daria Koltsova). Shcherbenko Art Center. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free 🍷

Late (art-objects by Mariia Proshkovska exploring gender issues with emphasis on women's lives in modern society). America House. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID 🍷

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

Wooden Churches of the Carpathians (photographs by French artist Jean-Piere Durand). Art 14. 1-7 p.m. Free 🍷

Ethno-Futurism (drawings by Andrew

Getmanchuk and Ivan Dudchenko expressing "traditional views in futurist style"). Dom. 2-11 p.m. Free 🍷

Movies

Earth (documentary in German with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 100 🍷

Shows

Benito Gonzalez Trio (jazz, piano). 32 Jazz Club. 8 p.m. Hr 700 🍷

Kadnay (indie pop, electropop). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 450-700 🍷

Latexfauna (indie pop, dream pop, synth-pop). Atlas. 8 p.m. Hr 300-900 🍷

Saturday, April 13

Classical music

The Most Beautiful Classics (Kyiv Virtuosi Orchestra playing Shostakovich, Fauré, Vivaldi, Bach and more). Cinema House. 8 p.m. Hr 50-250 🍷

Live music

KinoJazz (jazz arrangements of movie soundtracks). Architect's House. 8 p.m. Hr 275-500 🍷

Rock You - Favorite Ballads (rock hits covers). Docker-G Pub. 9 p.m. Hr 100-125 🍷

Creedence Clearwater Revival Tribute. Docker's ABC. 10 p.m. Hr 100-1,000 🍷

Clubs

Party on the Balcony with Dasha Kolomiets (dancing music, drinks on the terrace). Vsi Svoi D12. 6-10 p.m. Free 🍷

Wanduta, EasyBeats, Roman, VZA (experimental pop, electronic dance music). Mezzanine. 9 p.m. Hr 257 🍷

Tardis Night With Eli Verveine & Oscar Schubaq (electronic dance music). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 300-400. Visitors must be over 21 🍷

Miscellaneous

Late (art-objects by Mariia Proshkovska exploring gender issues with emphasis on women's lives in modern society). America House. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free. Bring ID 🍷

The Ukrainian Canadians (documents, photographs, publications of Ukrainian diaspora in Canada). Museum of Ukrainian



April 4-10

Film Program of the French Spring Festival

Five of the latest films made in France will premiere in Ukraine at the Kyiv Cinema as part of the French Spring Festival. The film program will open with a tragicomedy "Edmon" about the creation of the famous "Cyrano de Bergerac" heroic comedy by playwright Edmon Rostand. Tragicomedy "Promise at Dawn" also tells a story about a writer – the Goncourt Prize two-time winner Romain Gary – and his over-demanding mother played by Charlotte Gainsbourg. Historical drama "Curiosa" looks at the early days of erotic photography in Paris, scandalized by the relationships of the artists and models. Although titled "Non-Fiction," the only fully fictional feature film to premiere at the festival shows the lives of a writer and a publisher in Paris coping with a changing publishing industry, middle-age crisis and their wives, one of whom is played by Juliette Binoche. The most serious of the five films is François Ozon's "By the Grace of God" that retells the stories of three men who break years of silence after being molested by Catholic priests when they were children.

Film Program of the French Spring Festival. Kyiv Cinema (19 Velyka Vasylykivska St.) April 4-10. One screening – Hr 120. See all the screenings in the Entertainment Guide on pages 12-13.

Party on the Balcony with Dasha Kolomiets

Dancing, drinks and a marvelous night view of Kyiv. The organizer of the Vsi Svoi Ukrainian goods market is about to start the party season. Vsi Svoi usually holds markets on weekends at a four-story venue on Desiatynna Street and takes the opportunity to throw parties on the venue's terrace on Saturday nights. This time, Vsi Svoi's "Party on the Balcony" will provide drinks and food, as well as dance music by Ukrainian television host and DJ Dasha Kolomiets, who is famous for mixing old school hits and the latest trendy tracks, adding in her explosive positive energy.

Party on the Balcony with Dasha Kolomiets (dancing music, drinks on the terrace). Vsi Svoi D12 (12 Desiatynna St.) April 13. 6-10 p.m. Free



(Dasha Kolomiets/facebook)

April 13

Sunday, April 14

Live music

Bandura and Duduk (Roman Hrynkiv Trio). Zhovtnevyi Palace. 7 p.m. Hr 145-390 🍷

Ruki'v Bruky & Marla Marvel (rock'n'roll). Caribbean Club. 7 p.m. Hr 200-490 🍷

Hemingway Jazz (live jazz and readings of Ernest Hemingway's works). Cinema House. 8 p.m. Hr 100-350 🍷

Miscellaneous

The Ukrainian Canadians (documents, photographs, publications of Ukrainian diaspora in Canada). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 25-50 🍷

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

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

Archaic Puzzles (imaginary landscape paintings by Maksym Dietkovskiy). Triptych. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Free 🍷

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

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

Ethno-Futurism (drawings by Andrew Getmanchuk and Ivan Dudchenko expressing "traditional views in futurist style"). Dom. 2-11 p.m. Free 🍷

Ukrainian Dress Days and Jewellery Market (goods by Ukrainian brands). Vsi Svoi D12. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free 🍷

Movies

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

Ars Electronica (short films in original languages with Ukrainian subtitles). Kyiv Cinema. 7 p.m. Hr 100 🍷

Shows

LP (indie rock, pop). Palace of Sports. 7 p.m. Hr 1,000-4,000 🍷

Arek Czernysz Trio (jazz, accordion). 32 Jazz Club. 8 p.m. Hr 400 🍷

Theater

The Night of French-Ukrainian Ballet. National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 250-4,200 🍷

Slam! (comedy, amateur play). ProEnglish Theater. 7 p.m. Hr 80 🍷

Venues

Classical Music

● National Philharmonic of Ukraine (2 Volodymyrskyi Uzviz St.) +38044 278 6291

Live Music

● Caribbean Club (4 Petliuryi St.) +38067 224 4111

● Docker Pub (25 Bohatyrska St.) +38050 358 5513

● Docker's ABC (15 Khreshchatkyi St.) +38050 440 1525

● Docker-G Pub (13/5 Ihorivska St.) +38095 280 8340

● Cinema House (6 Saksahanskoho St.) +38044 287 7557

● Freedom Hall (134 Kyrylivska St.) +38067 239 8461

● Zhovtnevyi Palace (1 Heroiv Nebesnoi Sotni Alley) +38044 279 1582

● Ukraine Palace (103 Velyka Vasylykivska St.) +38044 247 2476

● Closer (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska St.) +38067 250 0308

● Dom Music Bar (10/5A Petra Sahaidachnoho St.) +38096 011 0515

● Otel' (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska St.) +38063 618 0145

● River Port (67 Nyzhnyi Val St.) www.facebook.com/riverportkyiv

Miscellaneous

● America House (6 Mykoly Pyromonka St.) +38063 343 0119

● The Naked Room (21 Reitarska St.) www.facebook.com/thenakedroom

● Pinchuk Art Center (1/3-2 Velyka Vasylykivska St.) +38044 590 0858

● Shcherbenko Art Center (22V Mykhailivska St.) +38096 801 2041

● Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora (40B Moskovska St.) +38044 280 6418

● Vsi Svoi D12 (12 Desiatynna St.) +38044 537 7007

● www.facebook.com/vsi.svoi

● Mystetskyi Arsenal (10-12 Lavrska St.) +38044 288 5225

● Art 14 Gallery (14 Mykhailivskyi Ln.) +38044 461 9055

● Creative Women Space (9B Mykhailivskyi Ln.) +38063 158 2008

● Kyiv History Museum (7 Bohdana Khmelnytskoho St.) +38044 520 2825

● Voloshyn Gallery (13 Tereshchenkivska St.) +38044 467 0007

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

● Bursa Gallery (11B Kostiantynivska St.) +38044 537 7007

● MetaCulture (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska

St.) www.facebook.com/MetaCultureKyiv

Movies

● American Library Kyiv (8/5 Voloska St.) +38044 462 5674

● Kyiv Cinema (19 Velyka Vasylykivska St.) +38044 234 7381

● Multiplex Cinema (Atmosphere, 103 Stolychne Hwy.) 0800 505 333

● Multiplex Cinema (Komod, 4A Sheptytskoho St.) 0800 505 333

● Multiplex Cinema (Lavina Mall, 6D Berkovetska 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

● Zhovten Cinema (26 Kostiantynivska St.) +38044 428 5757

● Izone (8 Naberezhno-Luhova St.) +38067 622 8794

● Architect's House (7 Borysa Hrinchenka St.) +38050 386 7410

● Shows

● 32 Jazz Club (32 Vozdvizhenska St.) +38068 411 1972

● Atlas (37-41 Sichovykh Striltsiv St.) +38067 155 2255

● Mezzanine (31 Nyzhnoiurkivska St.) +38063 873 7306

● Culture and Arts Center of Kyiv Polytechnic Institute (37 Peremohy St.) +38044 454 9203

● MK Music Space (57B Bohdana Khmelnytskoho St.) +38095 179 3834

● Bingo (112 Peremohy Ave.) +38067 329 6580

● Palace of Sports (1 Sportyvna Sq.) +38044 246 7405

Theater

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

● ProEnglish Theater (3 Smolenska St.) +38098 256 7331

● Planeta Kino Cinema (34 Stepana Bandery Ave.) 0800 300 600

Kyiv Post Employment Fair starts at 10 a.m. on April 6

BY VYACHESLAV HNATYUK
HNATYUK@KYIVPOST.COM

For those who are looking for a career start or change, the Kyiv Post Employment Fair is bringing together 40 companies and is expected to attract 1,000 people at the Toronto-Kyiv business center on April 6.

The semiannual event is meant to match both newbies and experienced professionals with some of the country's largest and leading employers, such as the National Bank of Ukraine, American Chamber of Commerce, BIIR, DataRobot, EBS, FenixAgro, Jooble, Mars Ukraine, ProCredit Bank, United Nations Development Programme and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

"Knowledge of English is a basic requirement without which nothing else will happen," says Alina Chugunova, human resources manager at Sabis, a global education management organization.

The represented industries range from engineering, logistics, humanitarian aid, and healthcare to tourism, hospitality and food processing. Ukrainian state authorities and international organizations will also be seeking top talent in Ukraine.

This year's Kyiv Post Employment Fair is taking place at a time when Ukraine is losing millions of economically active professionals to neighboring countries. Many Ukrainians prefer to work in the European Union or Russia as they seek higher salaries and better living conditions.

But despite the brain drain, some of the companies that will be present have been participating in the fair for a long time. Danone is one of them.

"This employment fair is attended by people of various professions, ages and qualifications. That is why the fair is of priority importance to us," says Veronika Sheina, an HR manager at Danone's Ukraine



Victoria Serbin, human resources specialist from the United Nations Development Program, speaks during a lecture at the Kyiv Post Employment Fair in the Ukrainian House in Kyiv on Sept. 22, 2018. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

branch. Her company has participated in the fair two times already for two reasons – to search for talent and to promote the company. Currently Danone is looking for students willing to participate in a nine-month management internship program called Surf Danone. The French company also has vacancies for experienced professionals.

Four participating organizations

will run seminars for attendees during the event which will focus on such topics as building a career within an engineering company, teaching science, working for international organizations, and finding fulfillment at a job. The special guest of the event will be Svitlana Zalizhchuk, a pro-European member of Ukraine's parliament, the Verkhovna Rada.

Although most of the compa-

nies that will be represented offer jobs in Ukraine, some have vacancies abroad. For example, National Westminster Bank, also known as NatWest, is looking for analysts and controllers to be employed in its Warsaw office.

Sabis is looking for science and art teachers to be working in the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain. Prospective teachers need to speak advanced English if they want to teach sciences or intermediate level English if they want to teach ballet or sports, explains Chugunova.

"We already have teachers from Ukraine but not so many. That is why we participate in (such) career events," she says.

Also, there will be several recruiting companies participating, which will advertise jobs for their clients from various industries.

At least one of the recruiters will be recruiting for recruiters. During the fair, Kateryna Rybchuk of Ward Howell intends to "tell young people about the interesting industry (of executive search) and to popularize the profession." Besides, Rybchuk

will be on the lookout for headhunting interns and full-time employees. "We normally offer employment to the active, curious, and interested."

While searching for talent, Ward Howell will not limit itself to particular professions or a pre-defined list of universities. However, fluency in English is a must. And "if (a candidate) is not ready to discover new industries, spheres, roles as well as read, learn, analyze big volumes of information and make certain conclusions, most probably we will part our ways," Rybchuk concludes. ■

Kyiv Post Employment Fair

When: April 6, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Where: Toronto-Kyiv business center (100 Velyka Vasylykivska St.)
What: Around 40 leading companies, hundreds of job seekers, expert speakers.
Check schedule and details at www.employment.kyivpost.com
Admission: Free, needs registration at goo.gl/VRx2PM



Women pick up advertising booklets at the Kyiv Post Employment Fair in the Ukrainian House in Kyiv on Sept. 22, 2018. (Volodymyr Petrov)

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Member of Parliament

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In presidential race, Poroshenko takes on Kolomoisky as his foe

Kolomoisky from page 2

ing away at the near-monopoly of Ukraine International Airlines. Kolomoisky is one of the company's beneficiaries, although his exact ownership share remains unclear.

The arrival of low-costers was achieved under the political leadership of Infrastructure Minister Volodymyr Omelyan and his predecessor, Andriy Pyvovarsky. Initially, Ukraine International Airlines resisted its less-expensive competitors, but has increasingly adapted to increased competition, says Andriy Guck, a partner at Kyiv's Ante law firm and an expert on airlines.

It's personal

But if business issues shattered Kolomoisky's relationship with Poroshenko, there is also a personal aspect to their confrontation.

Shortly after Kolomoisky was sacked as Dnipro governor, Poroshenko replaced his ally, Odesa Oblast Governor Ihor Palytsia, with former Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili. The oligarch and the former president would publicly exchange a series of insults over the matter.

In October 2015, Gennady Korban,

a Kolomoisky ally and leader of the opposition Ukrop Party, was arrested on a series of serious charges running the gamut from embezzlement to organized crime.

Korban blamed Pavlo Demchyna, a top security official close to Poroshenko's political and business partner Ihor Kononenko, for his arrest. Kolomoisky has also blamed Kononenko for the takeovers of Ukrnafta and Ukrtransnafta.

Unsurprisingly, Kolomoisky has spoken negatively of Poroshenko. In a December 2015 interview with Politico Europe, the oligarch said that the only difference between Poroshenko and his ousted predecessor Yanukovich was "a good education, good English, and lack of a criminal record." He also described Poroshenko as a "slave to absolute power."

In a 2018 interview with Sonya Koshkina, the editor of Ukraine's Levyi Bereg news site, Kolomoisky said that Poroshenko's reelection "can't be possible."

"I don't want to judge his personal qualities but I would describe his presidency with two words: Total amorality," he said. "He tries to take advantage of any event to turn it in favor of his political career. When his rating began to decline, he suddenly



Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko meets with fellow oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky in Kyiv on March 25, 2015, a day after he was sacked as governor of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. (Mikhail Palinchak)

decided to go after Tomos" — a document granting Ukraine's Orthodox Church canonical independence from Moscow, which the country received in January 2019.

Kolomoisky also alleged that Poroshenko wants to take control of his 1+1 television channel. In a country where media assets allow oligarchs to advance their political goals, that accusation — true or not — makes a certain logical sense.

That television channel has also played a role in turning the conflict personal for Poroshenko. Earlier this month, 1+1 broadcast a program called "50 Shades of Poroshenko," which accused the president of corruption and implied he had killed his own brother. Mykhailo Poroshenko reportedly died in an automobile accident in Moldova in 1997.

Poroshenko called these rumors "a mad salvo of fakes" and claimed they were taken from Russian television.

"Poroshenko is very angry with Kolomoisky," says Fesenko. "I would say a 'holy war' has begun between them."

Much to gain?

Kolomoisky terms the nationalization of PrivatBank "an illegal seizure of property without court order or compensation" organized by Poroshenko and ex-National Bank chief Valeriya Gontareva in cahoots with the International Monetary Fund.

It's an ironic allegation from a man who allegedly built much of his business empire through corporate raiding, the practice of using state corruption, the legal system, and even force to take over companies.

But Kolomoisky could potentially stand to gain from a Zelenskiy presidency — although it's unclear exactly how much.

Kolomoisky and Zelenskiy "are business partners, so in Ukrainian conditions, it can be very beneficial. Plus, I think Kolomoisky pres-

ents himself as an older mentor (to Zelenskiy)" says Yevhen Mahda, director of the Institute of World Policy.

According to Mahda, the big prize is PrivatBank, and that appears to be motivating the oligarch.

"It's clear that until recently, Kolomoisky did not have such political ambitions," he says. "Kolomoisky always just came to an agreement with the winner (of the election)."

Zelenskiy obviously cannot return control over the bank to Kolomoisky with a presidential order. But should the comedian win the presidency and his Servant of the People party take enough seats in parliament, Mahda believes it will be possible. The president chooses the central bank head but requires parliamentary approval.

Currently, Kolomoisky faces the prospect of losing his frozen assets as compensation for the recapitalization of PrivatBank, says Serhiy Fursa, an investment banker at Dragon Capital. He believes that, under Zelenskiy, Kolomoisky could avoid that scenario.

And he could even get PrivatBank back.

"If a local Ukrainian court decides that the nationalization was illegal... and it isn't challenged and comes into force, Kolomoisky's lawyers can take that decision to London and the court will be forced to close the case," Fursa says.

Mahda also suggests that, in that situation, low-cost airlines could potentially be pushed out of the country. While there is so far no evidence a Zelenskiy government would move to reestablish Ukraine International Airlines' dominance, it is — at a minimum — possible.

"Aviation is a highly regulatory market, and it is very sensitive to how it is managed and what rules are imposed," says aviation expert Guck.

If people unsupportive of foreign carriers again take control of the State Aviation Administration and the Infrastructure Ministry, low-costers "will be ready to very quickly close up shop and leave," he says.

However, Fesenko doubts that Kolomoisky would have such an unseemly influence on Zelenskiy. He believes that the candidate is not the oligarch's puppet, and would not necessarily accept any suggestions by Kolomoisky.

"For Zelenskiy, working in the interests of Kolomoisky — especially regarding PrivatBank — would be too dangerous," Fesenko says. "He could destroy his reputation."

Where Fesenko and Mahda agree is on the main avenue through which Kolomoisky could influence Zelenskiy: mutual contacts who could propose appointees to the candidate's largely unformed political team.

But if Fesenko is skeptical of the alleged danger posed by Kolomoisky, Mahda is more concerned about PrivatBank staying out of his control.

That is especially significant given that PrivatBank's new management has had limited success fighting the former owners in court. In November, a London High Court ruled that it did not have jurisdiction in the matter, a decision that brings Kolomoisky a step closer to ending more than a year-long freeze of \$2.5 billion of his and Boholyubov's assets worldwide.

Mahda suggests that, were Kolomoisky to regain control over PrivatBank, it would be dangerous for Ukraine. It could even be used to blackmail the government.

"Imagine if PrivatBank stayed in Kolomoisky's hands," he says. "One fine day — perhaps in the heat of the (presidential) campaign — it could suddenly announce its bankruptcy. And I think support for the authorities would collapse into the abyss." ■

TOP 10 KYIV POST exclusives online this week

1. With 99% counted, Zelenskiy gets 30%, Poroshenko just under 16% (LIVE UPDATES)
2. Appeals court delays Khreshchatyk Bank's liquidation
3. Exit polls: Zelenskiy takes first place, Poroshenko second, head into runoff
4. Kyiv Post Election Watch: Who is Volodymyr Zelenskiy?
5. Brian Bonner: 5 ways that Poroshenko can still win
6. Allegations of vote fraud emerge in Donetsk Oblast
7. Last polls: Zelenskiy keeps 10-point lead over Poroshenko, Tymoshenko
8. Kremlin house: Ukrainian empire of top Putin ally
9. Ukrainian diaspora overwhelmingly supports Poroshenko
10. America reacts to Ukraine's presidential election



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Enjoy scenic film "Volcano" depicting the adventures of a lost OSCE interpreter in Kherson Oblast. Check screenings with English subtitles in our Entertainment Guide on pages 13-14.



Zelenskiy has been fixture on Ukrainian TV for years



Food Critic

WITH ARTUR KORNIENKO
KORNIENKO@KYIVPOST.COM



Presidential candidate Volodymyr Zelenskiy talks to the press as he celebrates his March 31 first-round victory at his headquarters in Kyiv on March 31, 2019. Zelenskiy's wife, Olena Zelenska, joined him on stage for the celebration. (AFP)

BY TOMA ISTOMINA
ISTOMINA@KYIVPOST.COM

Volodymyr Zelenskiy has been one of the most recognizable figures in Ukraine long before he entered the presidential race on New Year's Eve. Generations of Ukrainians have watched Zelenskiy's comic shows, series, and films for years, as he, along with his production company,

Studio Kwartal 95, rose to astounding success.

In the first round of the election, held on March 31, Zelenskiy, who plays a teacher-turned-president in a series "Servant of the People," had a strong showing. He got 30 percent of the vote among 39 candidates. In the runoff on April 21, he will face President Petro Poroshenko, who had 16 percent.

Zelenskiy's career is a story of a self-made man, whose talent brought him fame, popularity, and wealth. While his professional life has been in the spotlight for years, not much is known about his personal life.

Now that he may become Ukraine's sixth president, many wonder what Zelenskiy is like when he is off the stage or a movie set.

Early years

The comic-turned-politician was born in Kryvyi Rih, a city of 630,000 people located about 400 kilometers southeast of Kyiv in Dnipro Oblast.

Zelenskiy was a regular kid. His father Oleksandr is a cybernetics and computer engineering professor and

more Zelenskiy on page 18

Big taste of Japan right in Kyiv's plentiful ramen shops all over city

From the Japanese working man's food to a hipster obsession — ramen has come a long way.

Originally an import from China, the cheap but filling noodle soup flourished among Japan's working class after World War II. There, an abundance of regional variations were developed, with different bases for the broth and an assortment of toppings as it received its Japanese name.

Since then, ramen has become one of Japan's most popular and culturally significant foods: there are museums in some of the country's most important cities dedicated to the dish.

It was exported worldwide in the form of instant noodles — the just-add-boiling-water kind — but, naturally, they did not become part of the restaurant culture worldwide.

But in the 2000s the ramen noodles were embraced by chefs in New York City, in particular the celebrity chef David Chang. A Korean-American who lived in Japan for a long time, Chang said he had to start making his own ramen because he could not get good ramen in New York.

Chang elevated ramen from its common food status by focusing on the quality of the products and authenticity. This launched a trend known as "artisan ramen" in the United States.

And now the popular Japanese noodle dish has found its way to Kyiv.

Noodle vs. Marketing

Kyiv's first restaurant specializing in ramen launched in 2015 with the goal of introducing artisan ramen to the Ukrainian capital. Noodle vs. Marketing claims its ramen doesn't taste Japanese, but rather has a taste of Kyiv. Its wheat noodles are made mostly with local ingredients.

The restaurant offers four types of ramen flavors: traditional shio, shoyu, miso and a special, spicy ramen. The customer chooses between two kinds of broth: turkey and duck, or vegetables and seaweed. There are also extra meat top-

more Noodle on page 21

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Zelenskiy's path from Kryvyi Rih to top entertainer to top politician

Zelenskiy from page 17

his mother Rymma is an engineer. The comic calls his parents the most important people in his life and says they fostered him to not tolerate lying.

In his school days, the future comic dreamed of becoming a diplomat. However, he eventually turned to law graduating from Kryvyi Rih Economic Institute of the Vadym Hetman Kyiv National Economic University, where his father was a professor. But he didn't pursue a legal career, as during the student years he caught a bug for comedy.

Zelenskiy joined the team "Zaporozhye - Krivoy Rog - Transit" that participated in KVN, a comedy competition that was launched in Soviet Russia in 1961 and is still popular in post-Soviet countries. The KVN abbreviation stands in Russian for "The Club of Funny and Witty." The game has seasons and stages and it brings together teams that perform mostly non-improvisational comedy performances in various formats and on various topics.

Each game has contests and a jury to rate the performances. One game can, for instance, include such contests as "Greeting" when teams introduce themselves to the audience, a theatrical round that is supposed to have a plot and dramaturgy, and an improvisation contest, when the jury asks questions and the teams are expected to come up with funny answers.

"Zaporozhye - Krivoy Rog - Transit" won the Major League of KVN held in Moscow in 1997. But Zelenskiy mostly played secondary roles there. Soon after that, along with some of the former team members, he created a new team called "95 Kvartal." Unlike in his previous



Presidential candidate and comic Volodymyr Zelenskiy performs during his free comedy show "Vecherniy Kvartal" ("Late Night Kvartal") on the stage of Dnipro Arena stadium in Dnipro on March 26, 2019. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

team, Zelenskiy led "95 Kvartal" and played the main roles. A goofy guy with a famously husky voice impersonating celebrities, dancing and singing, he was the public's favorite.

In one of the sketches, Zelenskiy played a "man born dancing." The comic was dancing for four minutes straight, as he was talking to his

teammate, who played a host interviewing Zelenskiy's character. His dancing moves reflected his answers to the interviewer's questions, or, on the contrary, contradicted them. "What is your nationality?" the host asked Zelenskiy. "Me?" he asks, as he starts doing Jewish traditional dance. He takes a pause, and replies

"Russian." The audience is laughing.

Zelenskiy's team won Ukrainian KVN league in 2001 and collected a couple of other KVN awards. Although the achievements of "95 Kvartal" in the Major League in Moscow were not that impressive (their best result was semi-final), the KVN organization couldn't miss a

chance to keep Zelenskiy's talent and offered him to become an editor for one of the KVN leagues. But the offer was only for him, meaning he would have to disband his team.

"It was a hot button for me. What does it mean to disband friends?" the presidential candidate said in an interview to Ukrainian journalist Dmytro Gordon published on Dec. 25, 2018.

Zelenskiy refused the offer and stuck to his team, and that was the beginning of the Studio Kvartal 95 the way Ukrainians know it today.

Today, almost all key actors on the Kvartal comedy troupe are the same people that performed with Zelenskiy in KVN nearly 20 years ago. Zelenskiy often refers to his team as his family.

Entering TV

Zelenskiy's team came up with a format that was new for Ukraine, a comedy show "Vecherniy Kvartal" ("Late Night Kvartal") that focused on political and social satire. Zelenskiy was the front-man and one of the writers on the show.

Their first show aired in 2005 on one of the most-watched Ukrainian television channels, Inter. Although "Vecherniy Kvartal" was criticized by some for its unsophisticated humor, the mass audience loved it. The mix of hard-edged jokes about top officials and sketches about people's everyday problems, like conflicts between wives and husbands, office parties and hangovers, won

French Spring festival opens in Ukraine

Actors perform the "Mù - Cinématique des Fluides" show during the grand opening of the French Spring festival on Sofiiivska Square in Kyiv on March 30, 2019. The theatrical performance included music, light show, and acrobatics. The French Spring will run until April 7 with movies, music, and exhibitions all over Ukraine. The annual festival celebrates contemporary French and Ukrainian arts. Go to the Institute of France in Ukraine website for more information: <https://institutfrancais-ukraine.com/> (Oleg Petrasuiuk)



more Zelenskiy on page 19

The true love and morning workout routine of possibly the next president

Zelenskiy from page 18

the show huge popularity. Kwartal's shows soon replaced the comedy shows produced in Russia, which at the time aired in Ukraine.

Riding the popularity wave, the one-show project has grown into a production company Studio Kwartal 95 that started producing more TV shows, series, feature movies, and animation.

In 2010, Zelenskiy took the job of the general producer of Inter. At the time, Inter belonged to Valeriy Khoroshkovsky, Ukraine's former deputy prime minister. He worked in the government of President Viktor Yanukovich, who fled the country after the EuroMaidan Revolution in 2014. Inter was loyal to Yanukovich and his allies. Since then, the TV station has been the target of nationalist protesters many times for its allegedly pro-Russian stance.

Zelenskiy's cooperation with Inter as general producer ended in two years. In 2012, the showman resigned providing vague reasons to the public. Much later, in his interview to Gordon in 2018, he said that he couldn't stand working for Inter anymore and hinted that it was connected to the political situation in Ukraine.

Kwartal 95 left Inter with Zelenskiy. The same year they accepted an offer from another TV heavyweight 1+1, owned by Ukrainian oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky, who is now believed to be connected to Zelenskiy's presidential campaign, which the candi-

date denies. For nearly seven years, 1+1 remains home to most of TV projects by Zelenskiy and Kwartal.

Growing

Studio Kwartal 95 continued to grow and produce new products, eventually turning into a humor industry mogul. It has been producing comedy sketch shows, animation series, a late night show.

In 2015, the time came for a new project.

After Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimea and unleashed a war in the country's east in 2014, many Ukrainian teams that participated in KVN competitions at the time were confused: They wanted to continue their comedy careers, but performing in KVN in Russia was no longer acceptable.

Zelenskiy seized the opportunity and launched Liga Smekha (Laughter League), a Ukrainian version of KVN.

Liga Smekha became a platform for up-and-coming comics in Ukraine, as well as attracted teams from the Caucasus and Eastern European countries. Zelenskiy hosts the competition and, like for many of his projects, serves as the face of the show.

The company kept on producing movies and TV series: many of them used to be created in co-production with Russian companies except for their latest products, including the famous "Servant of the People" three-season series and feature film, where Zelenskiy plays a school teacher that becomes the president by accident.



Ukrainian comic-turned-presidential candidate Volodymyr Zelenskiy performs during the quarterfinal of the Major League of KVN humor game in Moscow, Russia, in 2002. Zelenskiy started his comedian career through KVN. (Courtesy)

Some of Zelenskiy's studio's films have been real hits in Ukraine. Their latest comedy "Me. You. He. She" (2018), focused on a married couple which seeks a divorce after 10 years together. The film earned over Hr 70 million and broke the country's box office record for Ukrainian movies. Zelenskiy co-directed the film and played one of the main roles.

Family matters

Although social media is one of the drivers of Zelenskiy's presidential campaign, he doesn't post much about his personal life. Neither does he often speak about it.

His wife, Olena Zelenska, went to the same school he did, but the two didn't speak until after graduation when they met in the street.

"I liked her, then fell in love deeply, irrevocably," Zelenskiy said in the interview to Gordon.

Olena became one of the writers at Kwartal 95 and she still writes jokes for her husband's performances. She also co-owns some of the companies

in her husband's comedy empire.

Zelenskiy and Olena got married after dating for eight years. They now have two children, 14-year-old daughter Oleksandra and six-year-old son Kyrylo.

The candidate says that his family didn't support his decision to shift to politics. They were, in fact, strongly against it. According to Zelenskiy, his busy schedule had always left little time for family and a presidential race only worsened the situation.

"It's my biggest problem," Zelenskiy said in an interview with Ukrainska Pravda news outlet published on Jan. 20. "But I hope I'm doing something good for their (children's) future," he added.

Zelenska said in a joint interview with her husband to television channel ICTV that she didn't put much thought into what she would focus on as the first lady.

"I know that it's a difficult role," she said.

Lifestyle


Zelenskiy says that he starts his day with a morning workout. But he hasn't always been a sports fan. The presidential candidate started a video blog Ze Kubiki (Ze Abs) in 2017 in order to challenge himself to work out regularly.

He says that he occasionally drinks wine and admits he's "addicted" to coffee. He says he doesn't do drugs.

According to Zelenskiy's declaration of income and assets, he has a soft spot for pricey watches. He owns watches made by Breguet, Tag Heuer, Rolex, and Bovet. He also owns a house and several apartments in Ukraine, and a villa in Italy.


The presidential candidate uses a luxurious Range Rover for transportation. However, if he will be elected president, Zelenskiy says that he might give up his car and use a bicycle to commute to the Presidential Administration, just like his character does in "Servant of the People" series. ■

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Plea from animal shelters: Treat your pets responsibly

BY DARIA SHULZHENKO
SHULZHENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

"Imagine — his whole life changed when he found a home."

Polina Uzbek is talking about her best friend, Poe — a mixed-breed dog she got from one of Kyiv's animal shelters three years ago.

Uzbek, now 23, says she has been supporting animal shelters for a long time, as she knows the importance of their work for society, as well as the difficulties animal shelters face today.

In Kyiv, the number of homeless animals is continuing to grow constantly. Over 3,200 stray dogs are roaming the capital's streets, the international online group Animal-id estimated with the help of the Kyiv-based Sirius animal shelter in 2017.

The animal shelters are overcrowded because the government still has no effective strategy for reducing the number of stray animals on the streets of Kyiv, animal welfare activists say.

Aleksandra Mezinova, 49, the founder of Sirius, says that about 90 percent of the stray animals her shelter houses were domestic pets in the past who were abandoned by their owners.

According to Mezinova, such abandonments result from a lack of awareness by the public about how to treat animals responsibly, and little encouragement to adopt pets from shelters.

"We don't do any social advertising, but we need to inform the public," Mezinova told the Kyiv Post.

Mezinova says that Sirius now hosts a total of 2,700 homeless animals, including nearly 2,400 dogs, as well as cats, rabbits, two baby goats and a fox — all rescued by the shelter's volunteers.

"While every month around 18 animals leave the shelter with new owners, about 40–50 more pets come to us instead. This is not normal," Mezinova says.

Animals are not toys

Besides Sirius, Kyiv also has two other large animal shelters, each hosting nearly 1,000 animals, and over 100 small shelters.

Even though the number of shelters is impressive, they are still not enough to absorb the population of stray animals on the streets. Mezinova, who is also the head of the public animal protection commission at Kyiv City Council, says the public is mainly to blame for the problem.

Alisa Korzh, 28, who has volunteered at Sirius for over three years, says that people often see animals as toys, get them without a clear understanding of the animals' needs, and therefore "often get rid of them easily."

Korzh says that even though all of the shelters try to create good conditions for the animals, they still cannot live happily there.

"A shelter is a shock for a domestic dog, and there have been cases of dogs just dying from anguish there," Korzh says.

Korzh also states that there are a lot of myths about shelters, with people believing that the pets there are sick, or aggressive.

"There are actually a lot of purebred dogs in the shelters," Korzh says. "And if you take a dog from a shelter, you give another dog a chance for a new home," she says.

To change society's attitude and to attract more volunteers, Kyiv's animal shelters are now arranging photo shoots of the animals and



A dog looks at the photographer's camera at Lora animal shelter located in Kukhary village of Kyiv Oblast on Sept. 27, 2017. Kyiv's animal shelters save thousands of homeless animals yearly, provide them with treatment and food, and look for people to adopt them. (UNIAN)

posting the pictures on social media, as well as launching educational classes for children at schools, all with one aim — to save animals.

They urge people to stop buying animals in markets, and to ensure they are sterilized. They also want the authorities to tax purchases of pets as "a method of encouraging people to take animals from shelters (instead)," Korzh says.

According to Korzh, people who buy animals are effectively sponsoring the black market for breeding them — some breeders keep dogs in small cages for their whole life so that they give birth to as many puppies as possible.

"These pets are bred in terrible conditions," Korzh says. "When people want to get a pet they initially think of purchasing it, as there is no understanding among the public that pets can be taken for free from shelters," Korzh says.

Yekateryna Kublii, a volunteer at Gaia animal shelter, says that Ukrainians are "chasing brands and labels," and therefore prefer purebred dogs to dogs from the shelters.

"There has to be a shift in mentality," Kublii says.

Conflict

Apart from accusing people of treating animals cruelly and irresponsibly, Kyiv's private shelters also say the government is not doing anything to solve the capital's problem with stray animals.

Mezinova says that even though Kyiv's authorities have a program to reduce the number of stray animals, it is not working effectively.

According to Mezinova, volunteers are in fact doing jobs that should have been done by the city's animal shelter and hospital.

"Volunteers are exhausted because they have to take all of the beaten animals to vets themselves, and they take them to be sterilized, and spend their own money on that," she says.

Mezinova also says that the municipal animal shelter and hospital get enough money from the govern-

ment, but they still don't do enough to actually solve the problem of stray animals.

"Yes, we see reports (from the municipal animal shelter), but on the streets of the city we see a completely different picture," Mezinova says.

But Nataliia Mazur, the acting director of municipal enterprise Kyiv City Hospital of Community Medicine, which treats ill and injured animals, says a lot is being done by the city to solve the problem with strays. According to her, over the last two months the city has sterilized 1,163 stray animals. Mazur also says they have pictures of dogs they have sterilized and registered.

Mazur states that the municipal enterprises expect to get Hr 22 million (\$815,000) from the city budget for a year to pay for the sterilization, medical treatment and vaccination of stray animals, as well as to support the municipal animal shelter, which hosts nearly 500 animals. The money will also be used to pay shelter and hospital employees' salaries.

"I don't see any enemies or opponents in this situation," Mazur told the Kyiv Post. "I myself and the city animal shelter, we only see allies, because there is enough work for everyone, and this (stray animal problem) is an issue we have to solve together."

Mezinova says that there should be a round-the-clock ambulance and hospital for animals, high fines for cruelty to animals, a registration system for pets, and reasonable prices for their sterilization.

"We have to change the whole system," Mezinova says. ■

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Food Critic

Kyiv noodle shops offer big choice of tasty, authentic Japanese ramen

Noodle from page 17

pings: roasted chicken and braised pork.

Shio is the most basic and the lightest type of ramen. Noodle vs. Marketing serves it with a hard-boiled egg, mushroom puree, fried garlic, scallions, sesame seeds and roasted nori — a seaweed. For shoyu ramen, the restaurant adds soy sauce, sesame oil and mirin — a kind of rice wine sauce.

For miso ramen, Noodle vs. Marketing adds to the shio base some corn and dark miso, a paste produced from fermented soybeans. The spicy ramen is made with corn, chili sauce and the restaurant's own kimchi — seasoned and fermented vegetables.

Ramen bowls come in two sizes, baby and standard, but both are enough to feed an adult. The restaurant is located some way from the city center but can be reached from Arsenalna metro station. It takes cash only. But it's a quest worth embarking on to try Kyiv's most authentic ramen.

Prices: shio — Hr 55/65, shoyu — Hr 65/75, miso — Hr 90/105, spicy — Hr 85/95, toppings — Hr 5-40.

Noodle vs. Marketing. 8/9 Khrestovyi Ln. (entrance from the courtyard). 12 p.m. — 3:50 p.m., 5:30 p.m. — 9 p.m. +38095444 5822.

WhaiThai

Another place away from the city center but also serving up good ramen is WhaiTai. The bistro's greatest strength is its bright and fresh interior design with real and painted vegetation all over the place.

In addition to shoyu, miso and spicy ramen, WhaiTai also offers dashi ramen with Kombu seaweed, and curry-coconut ramen. There are meat or vegetable broths to choose as a base.

The customer selects one topping to be included in the price of ramen: chicken, pork, beef, shrimp or tofu with mushrooms. Other ingredients can be added at extra cost.

WhaiThai also makes its own wheat noodles, and offers wok noodle dishes. The portions come in three sizes: small, medium and large.



A cook pours broth into a bowl of ramen at the Noodle vs. Marketing noodle shop in Kyiv on Feb. 20, 2019. (Oleg Petراسиuk)

Prices: shio, miso, dashi, curry-coconut, spicy — Hr 109/129/169, toppings — Hr 10-69.

WhaiThai. 5 Mechnykova St. 12 p.m. — 11 p.m. +38068976 5050.

Mai Satai

A grill and cocktail bar that specializes in satay — Indonesian-style skewers of seasoned and grilled meat — Mai Satai also has ramen on the menu. Although their ramen is basic, Mai Satai is a place with a fun interior and an atmosphere the owners call "Eastern world madness."

Since ramen is far from the only item on Mai Satai's large menu, it's more generic. There are three kinds

of ramen in the bar, different only by the main meat ingredient. MaiTai offers ramen with pork, fried duck and marinated chicken. There is only one size of portion.

There are also no vegetarian ramen options at Mai Satai and no add-ons on the menu. However, the customer can pay more for extra spicy ramen.

Mai Satai has good offers for lunch sets on weekdays from 12 to 4 p.m. These include ramen, satay, fried vegetables and teas with a great discount.

Prices: chicken ramen — Hr 138, pork ramen — Hr 148, duck ramen — Hr 179, lunch sets (ramen, satay, veggies, tea) — Hr 149.

Mai Satai. 51 Vozdvyzhenksa St. 12 p.m. — 11 p.m. (12 p.m. — 2 a.m. on Fri. and Sat.) +38098676 6443.

Menya Musashi

The biggest variety of ramen by far in Kyiv can be found at the city's eight Menya Musashi restaurants. And it's no wonder: Menya Musashi is a Japanese ramen shop chain that has "originality" as its motto.

Each Menya Musashi restaurant in Kyiv has seven types of ramen: pork, beef, duck, shrimp, seafood and two kinds of chicken. There is also a vegetarian option with vegetables and coconut milk.

Besides the add-ons, at extra cost, the customer can spice up the ramen with squid ink or smoked niboshi, a small fish similar to anchovies.

The restaurants offer three bowl sizes and options for children. On

weekdays from 12 to 3 p.m. Menya Musashi offers a free beverage and a side dish to every large ramen. From 3 to 6 there is a 20 percent discount for all large ramen meals.

Prices: chicken, pork — Hr 68/85/135, beef, duck — Hr 76/95/159, shrimp — 92/115/179, seafood — Hr 103/129/189, toppings — Hr 9-59.

Menya Musashi Khreschatyk. 3 Luteranska St. 10 a.m. — 11 p.m. +38098711 25 25.

Menya Musashi Podil. 19 Kostiantynivska St. 11 a.m. — 11 p.m. +38097711 25 25.

Menya Musashi Lva Tolstoho. 48 Velyka Vasylkivska St. 11 a.m. — 11 p.m. +38068927 25 25. ■



A customer picks up ramen noodles with chopsticks at the WhaiThai bistro in Kyiv on Feb. 20, 2019. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

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Zelenskiy turns his debate challenge into a video show

BY DARIA SHULZHENKO
SHULZHENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

Comedic actor Volodymyr Zelenskiy has picked his battlefield well, turning his presidential election campaign into a slick video competition.

In his latest video, shot and released online on April 4, Zelenskiy is seen strolling confidently in Kyiv's Mariinsky Park and beside the country's parliament, the Verkhovna Rada. To a soundtrack of energetic rock music, the candidate pitches his latest proposal — that an election debate between him and President Petro Poroshenko be moderated by third-place candidate Yulia Tymoshenko.

Zelenskiy started the video battle on April 3 when he released a video challenging Poroshenko to a debate in Kyiv's Olimpiyskiy Stadium, a vast arena in the center of the capital. Zelenskiy's conditions for the debate included both candidates being tested for drug and alcohol addiction.

Poroshenko replied with a video of his own late on April 3: With a backdrop of an out-of-focus shot of the Presidential Administration building, an unsmiling Poroshenko moves heavily into view, and agrees to the debate venue of the stadium, while suggesting that Zelenskiy read

up on the legislation concerning the holding of presidential debates.

Poroshenko first urged Zelenskiy to debate him when exit polls indicated that both of them would qualify for the runoff second round vote, to be held on April 21.

In his initial video response, Zelenskiy said he wanted all the country's television channels to broadcast the debate live, and for journalists from all media to be allowed to attend.

While agreeing to Zelenskiy's conditions, however, Poroshenko chided his rival, saying "a debate is not a show."

"An election campaign is an occasion that defines the future of the country and nation for years ahead. There are no jokes here," Poroshenko said in his video response.

As media speculated about what form of medical tests the candidates might undergo, Poroshenko announced that he would take a blood test at 9:00 a.m. at the drug testing lab at Olimpiyskiy Stadium and invite Zelenskiy to do the same.

But Zelenskiy said he would undergo testing at 8:00 a.m. at the EuroLab medical center in Kyiv.

Other than that, Zelenskiy demanded that Poroshenko publicly declare that he was debating not a puppet



Presidential candidate Volodymyr Zelenskiy walks into Kyiv's Olimpiyskiy Stadium in a video posted on April 3, 2019. In it, Zelenskiy challenges President Petro Poroshenko to a debate in the arena. (Courtesy)

or a clown, as some of Poroshenko's supporters have called him, but a presidential candidate.

In his video response, Poroshenko referred to Zelenskiy using the formal, polite term of address "Volodymyr Oleksandrovych," but added that "we are very different."

"The rules of the debate are stipulated in the law on presidential elections — please read them," Poroshenko said.

Poroshenko also noted that

debates could be broadcast by the public television company to all television channels, reaching many millions of people.

"If it's the stadium — let it be the stadium," Poroshenko said, referring to Olimpiyskiy Stadium as the debate venue. "I'm looking forward to seeing you, Volodymyr Oleksandrovych."

Zurab Alasania, the head of the Suspilne Telebachennya (Public Television), the public broadcast-

er that would organize the debate, wrote on Facebook on April 4, that they had now started negotiations with both sides.

"Can Suspilne (public television) hold the debate — that's not an issue — of course it can. We have the agreement of both candidates, and now Central Election Commission has to agree to everything, and according to the law pay (to arrange the debates) from the state budget," Alasania's post reads.

The Kyiv Post had not received a response to its request for comments from the Central Election Commission when this edition went to print.

Although Ukrainian legislation stipulates that the presidential candidates should debate before the runoff, there is no punishment for refusing to debate.

Prior to that, many presidential candidates, including Zelenskiy and Poroshenko, ignored invitations from Ukrainian public broadcaster UA Pershyi to participate in a series of debates for candidates before the first round of the election.

Neither did Poroshenko or Zelenskiy participate in the March 28 television debates arranged by Ukrainian public broadcaster Suspilne. ■

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Head of the Content Fund's Kyiv office

The Creative Content Support Fund (Content Fund) is recruiting a Head of the Fund's office based in Kyiv to manage the overall activities and operations of the Fund.

Background

The Content Fund is a newly established non-profit foundation registered in Belgium to offer grants for the creation, acquisition and circulation of distinctive, innovative, entertaining and informative TV and Video content in the Russian language – including the development of new ideas, formats, voices, audiences, skills, platforms and talent working in the Eastern Partnership and beyond. It seeks to bring plurality and balance to the Russian-language media space. The Fund has the support of and is backed financially by a number of European governments.

Role & Person Specification

The role of the Head of Kyiv Office is to lead the day to day activities of the Fund, to develop its operations, to manage a small Secretariat, to oversee the distribution of grants and the monitoring and evaluation of media projects, to be responsible for all key budgets of the Fund, and to work with and report regularly to its governing bodies. The working location is Kyiv with some visits to Brussels. Occasional travel across the region of the Eastern Partnership and beyond is envisaged.

The successful candidate will have the following key experience, skills, qualities and attributes:

- 1. Leadership** – An inclusive leadership style. Working with the governing bodies, you will need to set a clear vision for the organisation and its values, which will inspire confidence among donors and independent media platforms. Experience of a leadership role within a medium sized media organisation or a creative NGO is essential.
- 2. Management** – You will be responsible for developing and implementing the financial and operational strategy of the organisation, and accountable to the governing bodies for the Funds budgets and projects. You will need to lead a small Secretariat for the day to day running of the Fund. You will have 5+ years experience in managing media operations, including staff, budgets and projects. You will have experience of grant-making cycle, including contractual, financial and administrative processes, as well as experience and knowledge of donors operating in the region. You will have demonstrable experience in recruiting staff, in working with third party producers or distributors, and in co-operating with stakeholders across disciplines and territories. Experience of working in business development, and/or the public sector or an NGO is desirable.
- 3. Media experience** – The role requires an understanding of the production and distribution of popular and high quality TV and Digital content. You will have a passion for TV and Video production and distribution, and a track record of producing or distributing distinctive and innovative media content. Experience of commissioning, developing, producing or distributing content for TV, VOD or the Web in one of the following genres is desirable: factual, documentary, social reality, lifestyle, entertainment, comedy, drama.
- 4. Local knowledge** – The Fund activities will cover the countries of the Eastern Partnership and other Russian-speaking countries of the region. The role requires a good working knowledge of the media landscape in these regions, including an understanding of the main TV and video distribution channels, their strengths and weaknesses. An understanding of the audiences for Russian language content, and a knowledge of the cultural and regulatory influences on the media in the region is desirable.
- 5. Language Skills** – Fluency in Russian, as well as English, is a prerequisite.
- 6. Personal Qualities** – You will need to be flexible and resilient, able to travel in the region and work long and irregular hours as required. You must be able to work with multiple stakeholders, and understand political and business pressures. This role has a public profile, and the successful candidate will have strong presentation skills, and able to become powerful defender and passionate advocate of plurality in the Russian-language media sphere.

The successful candidate will be offered a competitive remuneration based on the average salary level of international senior staff in NGO/donor supported jobs.

How to apply

Should you meet the required expertise above please submit your CV (Europass format preferred) including a cover letter with the reasons for applying, monthly gross salary expectations in euro and contact information for two referees.

Applications should be sent to the following email address: jobs@contentfund.org with a reference "Head of Kyiv office". Please no phone calls/emails/letters.

The application deadline is **1 May 2019** at 12 midnight Brussels time.

All applications will be kept on file but candidates will only be contacted if shortlisted. The information provided in the applications is subject to EU legislation on protection of personal data and confidentiality of information.

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

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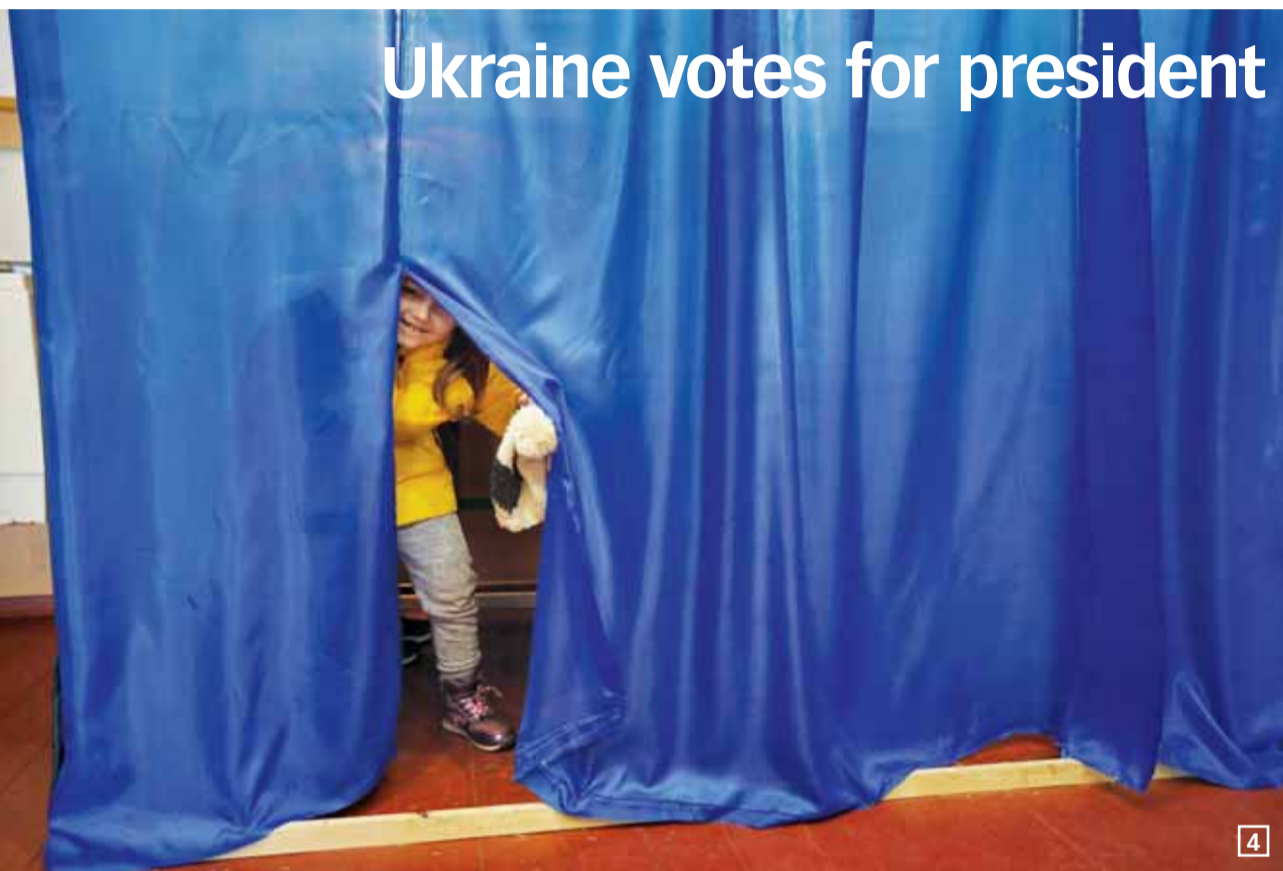
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Ukraine votes for president

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The March 31 first round of the presidential election pitted 39 candidates against each other, and ended with comedic actor Volodymyr Zelenskiy and President Petro Poroshenko securing spots in the April 21 runoff election. Voting throughout the country was calm and orderly, and no serious violations of election rules were recorded, according to election monitors.

- 1** A woman with her dog votes in the presidential election at a polling station in Kyiv.
- 2** A member of an electoral commission prepares ballot at a polling station in Motyzhyn in Kyiv Oblast.
- 3** A woman checks her ballot with a magnifying glass.

- 4** A boy looks out of the voting booth at a polling station in the village of Kolonshchyna in Kyiv Oblast.
- 5** People cast their ballots at a polling station in Kyiv (Kostyantyn Chernichkin, Volodymyr Petrov)

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