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No Excuse For Failure

Zelensky's Party Wins Historic Majority In Parliament



- Inside:**
- What's next for Zelensky? (Page 2)
 - Meet candidates for top government posts (Page 3)
 - 10 pro-reform lawmakers out. Who can replace them? (Page 6)
 - Ruslan Riaboshapka on solving big crimes as prosecutor general (Page 7)

President Volodymyr Zelensky (C) and members of his political party, Servant of the People, applaud and cheer as the first exit polls roll in during the parliamentary election on July 21. Servant of the People achieved a single-party majority, unprecedented in modern Ukrainian history. (Volodymyr Petrov)

Inside: Opinion 4 | National 2, 3, 5 – 11
 Lifestyle 8, 9, 12 – 16
 Employment/Real Estate/Classifieds 15

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Hr 25.75 to \$1
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After winning parliament, what's next for Zelensky?

BY BERMET TALANT
BERMET@KYIVPOST.COM

In the span of seven months, President Volodymyr Zelensky has risen from a television comic to the political leader of a large, yet economically lagging, European country at war.

After his landslide victory in the April 21 presidential election, Zelensky scored another big win on July 21 when his party, Servant of the People, took a majority of seats in the new parliament, paving the way for one-party rule.

Voters gave Servant of the People 254 out of 424 seats in the next parliament, handing the political novice Zelensky full power in the legislative and executive branches and a mandate to push for long-overdue reforms.

But Zelensky will have to act fast to deliver on the electoral promises he made to his impatient voters, says sociologist Iryna Bekeshkina from the Democratic Initiatives Foundation.

A recent survey by the foundation showed that, for the first time in four years, the majority of Ukrainians — 60 percent — believed in the success of reforms in Ukraine. Moreover, most Ukrainians place their highest hopes for those changes on the shoulders of Zelensky, the new parliament, and the future government.

"People believe that Zelensky will be the driver of reforms in Ukraine, and they expect quick results from him. People are tired of waiting. They did not elect him to wait for another five years," Bekeshkina told the Kyiv Post.

An overwhelming majority of Ukrainians consider the fight against corruption to be the top priority. Russia's war against Ukraine in the Donbas, low salaries, and the high cost of utilities are named among other pressing issues.

Right people

A great deal of Zelensky's success in improving the economy will come down to the future government he assembles.

The president said he wanted the country's next prime minister to be an economist without a political past, independent and respected both in Ukraine and the West. Already several names have circulated in Kyiv and the expert community: former Economy Minister Aivaras Abromavicius, Andriy Kobolyev, the CEO of state ener-



President Volodymyr Zelensky congratulates Dmytro Razumkov, head of his party Servant of the People, on victory in the parliamentary election on July 21, 2019, at the campaign headquarters in Kyiv. (Volodymyr Petrov)

gy company Naftogaz and Vladyslav Rashkovan, alternate executive director at the International Monetary Fund in Ukraine.

"Any of them would be bulwarks of reform. The West knows these guys very well and trusts them," Timothy Ash, a London-based strategist focused on emerging markets, told the Kyiv Post in an email.

Zelensky has also yet to name his picks for ministers of foreign affairs and defense, roles that are nominated by the president before going to parliament for approval.

"He has not found the right people yet. The right people will be those who pursue Zelensky's objectives and have his trust. He needs servants of the people, loyal and capable," said Balazs Jarabik, a non-resident scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Zelensky's intentions to clean up law enforcement agencies, fix the court system, strip lawmakers of immunity from prosecution and adopt a number of anti-corruption laws have sent a positive signal to civil society.

Transparency and anti-corruption watchdogs expressed willingness to cooperate with the president's office and the new parliament — largely, thanks to respectable reformists like deputy chief of staff Ruslan Ryaboshapka, National Security and Defense Council Secretary Oleksandr Danylyuk and newly-elected lawmaker Anastasia Krasnosilka. Zelensky said he is considering Ryaboshapka for the position of Prosecutor General.

"Zelensky's team has people who want the same things we do. It will be easier to (carry out reforms) having such allies in the administration," said Vitaliy Shabunin, chairman of the board of the Anti-Corruption Action Center, at a conference in Kyiv on July 16.

Western partners and inves-

tors are closely watching whether Zelensky will be able to secure a new IMF aid package and fulfill the commitments he will undertake for it.

Potentially bad choices

So far, Zelensky seems to be heading in the right direction and making good choices, many observers say. But there are also reservations about whether the full power he has been handed could backfire.

Carnegie's Jarabik says that the consolidation of power does not pose a risk to Ukrainian democracy per se.

"De-facto Ukraine is a presidential republic now by the will of the people. The people gave Zelensky a large mandate to do anything he can to improve the government. What can be more democratic?" he said. "The biggest risk is that he fails."

However, there are some potentially bad decisions Zelensky could make.

One of them is the lustration law. Zelensky has recently come up with a proposal to ban top officials who served under his predecessor, Petro Poroshenko, from holding government jobs or seats in parliament. That idea drew harsh criticism from the ambassadors of G7 states as "incompatible with democracy."

Another one is calling for snap local elections before October 2020 to complete the renewal of power on all levels. Although Zelensky has been vague about this plan, civil society watchdogs have spoken out against the idea.

"There are no reasons to call for early local elections. And if Servant of the People decides to amend laws and the Constitution for their political expediency, it will be a warning sign," Olga Aivazovska, head of Ukrainian election watchdog Opora, told the Kyiv Post.

Additionally, concerns over Zelensky's ties to oligarch Ihor

Facts about Ukraine's new parliament

Vote results:

Servant of the People **43.17%**
Opposition Platform — For Life **13.03%**
European Solidarity **8.18%**
Batkivshchyna **8.1%**
Voice **5.83%**

Elected by the lowest turnout of voters in Ukraine's history **49.8%**

Historic one-party majority of **254** lawmakers

342 out of **424** have never been lawmakers before

Average age: **41**

The youngest: Svyatoslav Yurash, 23 (Servant of the People)
The oldest: Yuriy Ioffe, 78 (Opposition Platform — For Life)

336 men (79.8%)

88 women (20.8%)

This is **39** women more than in previous convocation

The **first** black lawmaker — Zhan Beleniuk (Servant of the People)

Three Crimean Tatar lawmakers (Mustafa Dzemilev, Akhtem Chygoz, Rustem Umerov)

Source: Opora, Kyiv Post

Kolomoisky have not disappeared since his election campaign. Zelensky made the oligarch's lawyer his chief of staff and the director of the oligarch's TV channel one of his top lawmakers.

Zelensky has publicly distanced himself from Kolomoisky and said he would not exert any influence on the case of PrivatBank, the largest

more **Parliament** on page **5**

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Watch them: Candidates for top jobs in government

BY OKSANA GRYSSENKO
GRYSSENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

As Ukraine counted ballots following the July 21 parliamentary elections, President Volodymyr Zelensky and his closest advisors were assessing candidates for the country's top jobs.

The recruitment process started about a year ago, when Zelensky still was an actor on the Kvartal 95 comedy show. He hadn't even announced that he was running for president yet.

"They approached experts, civil society people, journalists," said Balazs Jarabik, a nonresident scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, who followed the process. "Many people refused because nobody took them seriously. Now they regret it."

Today, Zelensky is president and he has just won an unprecedented one-party majority in parliament. His Servant of the People party received 254 out of 424 seats in the Verkhovna Rada, with 99 percent of the vote counted. To pass laws or approve nominations, they need only 226 votes. Zelensky also has strong approval ratings across the nation.

But Zelensky's political future and the future of the country largely depends on whom he will appoint to the top positions in government and law enforcement. As he recently admitted in a video he recorded while driving his Tesla car, he can trust to no one but his "tight inner circle" because "everybody lies."

Zelensky will likely give the main positions to people personally loyal to him, experts say. The question, however, is whether he has enough candidates that fit that description.

"There's a small pool to choose from," said Volodymyr Fesenko, head of the Penta political think tank.

Fesenko said Andriy Bohdan, Zelensky's chief of staff, who is shadowing the president during almost all his public events, is largely in charge of the ongoing recruitment.

But Jarabik believes Bohdan is just one member of the selection team, which also includes several people from Kvartal 95.

Most of the names of candidates for top posts will be publicly known in late August or early September, when the new parliament starts working, Dmytro Razumkov, head of Zelensky's party said in a recent interview with the RBK news site.

But some candidates' names are already surfacing.

Prosecutor general

Ruslan Riaboshapka, deputy head of the Zelensky's office responsible for anti-corruption policy and legal reform, has a high chance of becoming the new prosecutor general. On July 23, Zelensky named him as a candidate for the post, calling him a "top-notch specialist."

In an interview with the Kyiv Post on July 23, Riaboshapka confirmed that he had received Zelensky's offer

to take this post back in April and had accepted it.

Riaboshapka, 42, has been well acquainted with Bohdan since 2007. They worked together in the Justice Ministry during the times of President Viktor Yushchenko and later in the government's anti-corruption bureau under President Viktor Yanukovich, the corrupt Russian-backed leader ousted by the 2014 EuroMaidan Revolution.

Another prosecutor general candidate named by some media is Vitaly Kasko, a former deputy prosecutor general. But Kasko told the Kyiv Post that he did not know anything about his possible nomination.

Prime minister

The likely candidates for future prime minister are Oleksiy Honcharuk, another deputy head of Zelensky's office, and Vladyslav Rashkovan, deputy head of Ukraine's office of the International Monetary Fund. This is backed by the sources of Kyiv Post and the Ukrainian media.

They both fit the criteria that Zelensky established on July 21, when he told journalists the new prime minister should be "a new face, an expert in economics."

Fesenko said that Honcharuk, 35, was brought to the presidential office by Bohdan and is believed to be his person. Both Bohdan and Honcharuk traveled with Zelensky in his recent tour of Ukraine's regions.

In his interview with RBK, Razumkov called Honcharuk "professional," but neither confirmed nor denied that he could become the new prime minister.

Rashkovan, 41, worked at the National Bank of Ukraine in 2014–2016 and is responsible for reforming the banking sector. Timothy Ash, a London-based political commentator, calls him an "innovative, multidimensional strategic thinker." Rashkovan is believed to be closer to rockstar politician Svyatoslav Vakarchuk, Ash and Fesenko said.

Although it is not necessary for Zelensky, his party may form a coalition with Vakarchuk's Voice party. According to Fesenko, that "would be positively received by Ukrainian society and the West."

Though Bohdan was also mentioned in the media as a potential head of the new government, Fesenko says this is less likely.

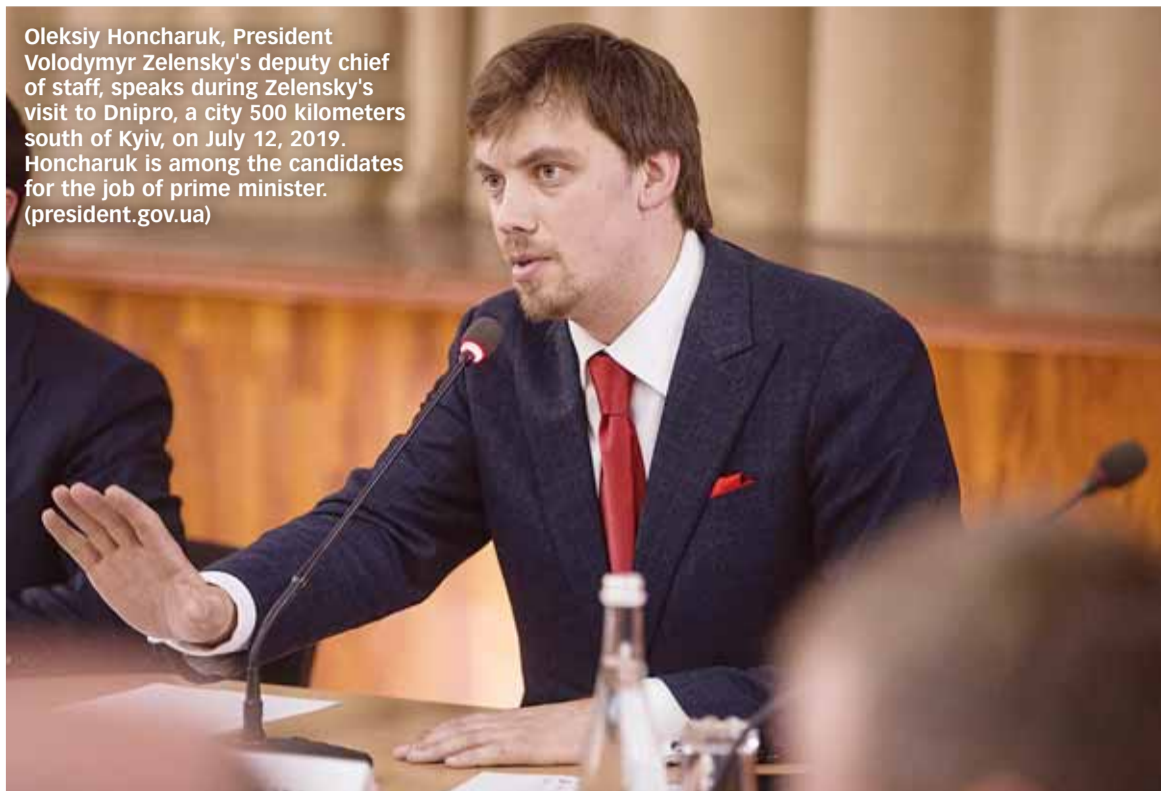
"In this case, he would lose his exclusive influence on Zelensky. And this could be a problem for him," Fesenko said.

Interior minister

In the times of Zelensky's predecessor, ex-President Petro Poroshenko, Arsen Avakov, the country's top cop, was sometimes dubbed the second most powerful official in Ukraine.

During the presidential campaign in spring, Avakov publicly distanced himself from Poroshenko and the police uncovered and stopped a number of the election violations

Oleksiy Honcharuk, President Volodymyr Zelensky's deputy chief of staff, speaks during Zelensky's visit to Dnipro, a city 500 kilometers south of Kyiv, on July 12, 2019. Honcharuk is among the candidates for the job of prime minister. (president.gov.ua)



alleged to have been in Poroshenko's favor. Zelensky never publicly criticized Avakov, although he hasn't been holding back criticism against many other top officials.

This behavior — along with Zelensky's recent remarks that some Poroshenko-era ministers might keep their jobs — brought speculation that Avakov could stay in his post. A series of media reports from outlets owned by oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky, Zelensky's former business partner, added to this rumor.

But the experts say it's unlikely. When Zelensky announced the snap parliamentary elections on May 20, Avakov's People's Front faction in the Verkhovna Rada challenged his move. Avakov took his party's side in that dispute.

For this reason, his relations with Zelensky's team are not perfect. Moreover, Avakov remains too influential.

"Neither Zelensky, nor Bohdan wants to keep Avakov as a center of influence in the political system," Fesenko said.

"I would be surprised if he (Avakov) keeps his post," Jarabik added.

Defense, foreign affairs

The foreign and defense ministers are two of the most important positions for a country at war that is actively trying to integrate with the European Union and NATO.

For now, both these posts are still held by Poroshenko's ministers. Zelensky wanted to fire Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin in mid-July, but failed. The parliament refused to vote for his dismissal. With the new and friendly parliament, it won't be an issue for Zelensky.

Vadym Prystaiko, 49, whom Zelensky wanted to nominate instead of Klimkin, will likely head the foreign affairs ministry. Still, the testing ground for him will be Zelensky's upcoming visit to the United States.

"If this visit takes place in August, Prystaiko will become the minister," Fesenko said.

Defense Minister Stepan Poltorak also unlikely to stay at his post. Both Fesenko and Jarabik say Poltorak is seen in Zelensky's office as a person loyal to Poroshenko.

But who will replace him remains a major question. Zelensky offered the post to Former Defense Minister Anatoliy Grytsenko back in April, but he refused it. "I doubt he will get this offer again," Fesenko said.

Finance and energy

On July 24, Andriy Gerus, Zelensky's representative in the Cabinet of Ministers, said that Finance Minister Oksana Markarova could keep her position in the new government.

"She's a professional minister," he said.

Gerus, 37, a prominent energy expert, has also been named by several sources as a potential energy minister.

Asked by the Kyiv Post if he may end up in the next government, Gerus said: "Let's not run ahead of events. We'll see."

Fesenko said Oleh Dubyna, the former chairman of state-owned natural gas company Naftogaz, is another

potential candidate for the energy minister. "Not many people know this, but he knows Zelensky and is close to his team," Fesenko said.

In 1999–2001, when Zelensky and his Kvartal 95 were developing their comedy show in Kryviy Rih, Dubyna headed the largest local factory, Kryvorizhstal, which later became ArcelorMittal Kryviy Rih.

Dubyna, 60, became well-known for helping resolve the gas crisis with Russia in the winter of 2008–2009 together with ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko — something that has proven controversial to this day.

But he hardly fits the criteria of "new faces" that Zelensky actively promotes. ■

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will focus on

Ukraine's
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Editorials

Show time

It's hard to imagine what President Volodymyr Zelensky is feeling right now.

He entered politics on New Year's Eve, announcing he would run for president. Six months later, Ukraine is firmly in his hands.

Shortly after winning the presidency, his party now dominates the parliament. For the first time in Ukraine's history, a party got so many seats — 254 of them, to be precise — that it does not need to form a coalition.

That means full control, with no compromises needed. Zelensky can pass laws, appoint the government and heads of law enforcement agencies — and he can do so briskly, without months of negotiations and under-the-table deals. He has received an unprecedented opportunity to change the country — an even better chance than the one his predecessor Petro Poroshenko blew so shamefully in 2014.

Will Zelensky do the same?

Given how much power Zelensky now has, it is still frightening how little we know about the man. He was on TV screens for 20 years, but he came onto the scene as a politician very recently. We don't know his motives or much about his principles. We know only what he tells us — and in politics, that means we know little.

No one has seen the real President Zelensky yet. Up until now, Zelensky was not governing — he was campaigning. All of his words and actions were aimed at winning the elections, presidential and then parliamentary.

Now that he's not confined by the boundaries of a campaign, one of two things must happen: either he goes on an ambitious journey to end corruption and bring about rule of law, or he slides into the poor practices of his predecessors and becomes another disappointment.

We count on Zelensky's ambition to help him make the right choices. After all, he said he wanted to go down in history as an honest president. It is fully up to him if he does.

The biggest show of Zelensky's life was not winning the election. That was a spectacular audition. His show starts now.

Justice overdue

When journalist Pavel Sheremet was murdered with a car bomb in Kyiv on July 20, 2016, it seemed that the crime was too shocking to go unsolved.

But three years into the investigation, there isn't so much as a suspect. There are only two plausible explanations for this failure. Law enforcement officials are incompetent or the people behind the murder can influence the investigation.

Thus, when President Volodymyr Zelensky called for law enforcement officials to report to him on the investigation's progress shortly after the third anniversary of the murder, it looked promising at first.

After three years of top officials dragging their feet, it seemed that the new president might make them move faster. As an outsider with no political history, Zelensky is expected to have an incentive to push for justice.

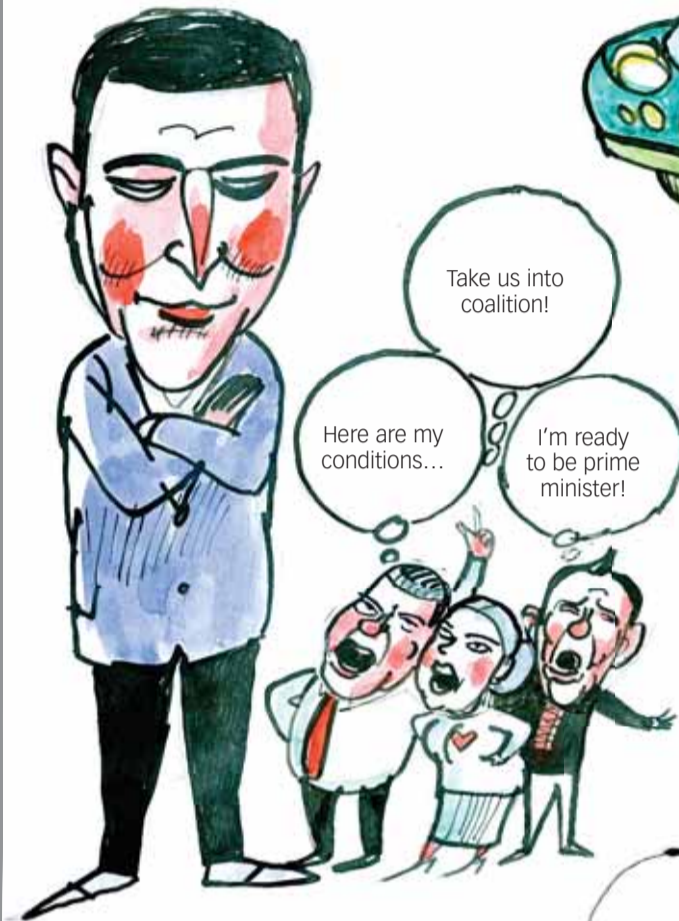
However, it turned out there was nothing new to report. National Police Chief Serhiy Knyazev privately showed Zelensky secret materials on the investigation and the president appeared impressed. He almost praised the investigators for their efforts. After appearing ready to criticize officials for their failings, he was surprisingly supportive of the police's work.

This was disappointing.

The brazen murder of Sheremet and the killing of activist Kateryna Gandziuk are the litmus test for Ukraine's new leadership. It is impossible to build a good version of Ukraine's future while these cases aren't solved.

They were attacks against the core values of democracy. Their perpetrators must be punished if Ukraine intends to build a democratic society.

NEWS ITEM: After winning the election, the Servant of the People party is bringing 254 first-time lawmakers to parliament. Many of them come from fields that are far from legislative work: there is an actor, a comedian, a school teacher, and a wedding photographer, to name just a few.



NEWS ITEM: President Volodymyr Zelensky's party, Servant of the People, triumphed in the July 21 snap election, winning 254 seats in parliament. It means they can rule in the legislature alone and don't need to negotiate with other parties to form a coalition.

NEWS ITEM: Many lawmakers failed to get re-elected in the July 21 snap election, including some of the most notorious and powerful ones. Among them were President Petro Poroshenko party faction's two top members, Ihor Kononenko and Oleksandr Hranovsky, who ran in single-member districts and both lost to the candidates representing President Volodymyr Zelensky's party.



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Reformer & Anti-Reformer Of The Week



Maksym Nefyodov
New State Customs Service chief promises to take on corrupt officials



Yuri Nedashkovsky
Energoatom boss oversees unsafe, unsecure nuclear plants

Ukraine's Friend & Foe Of The Week



Yelena Grigoryeva
Russian activist who supported Ukraine killed in St. Petersburg



Savo Zwiyetinovic
Bosnian intermediary allegedly facilitates Motor Sich trade with Russia

VOX populi:

What do you want the new parliament to do first?

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

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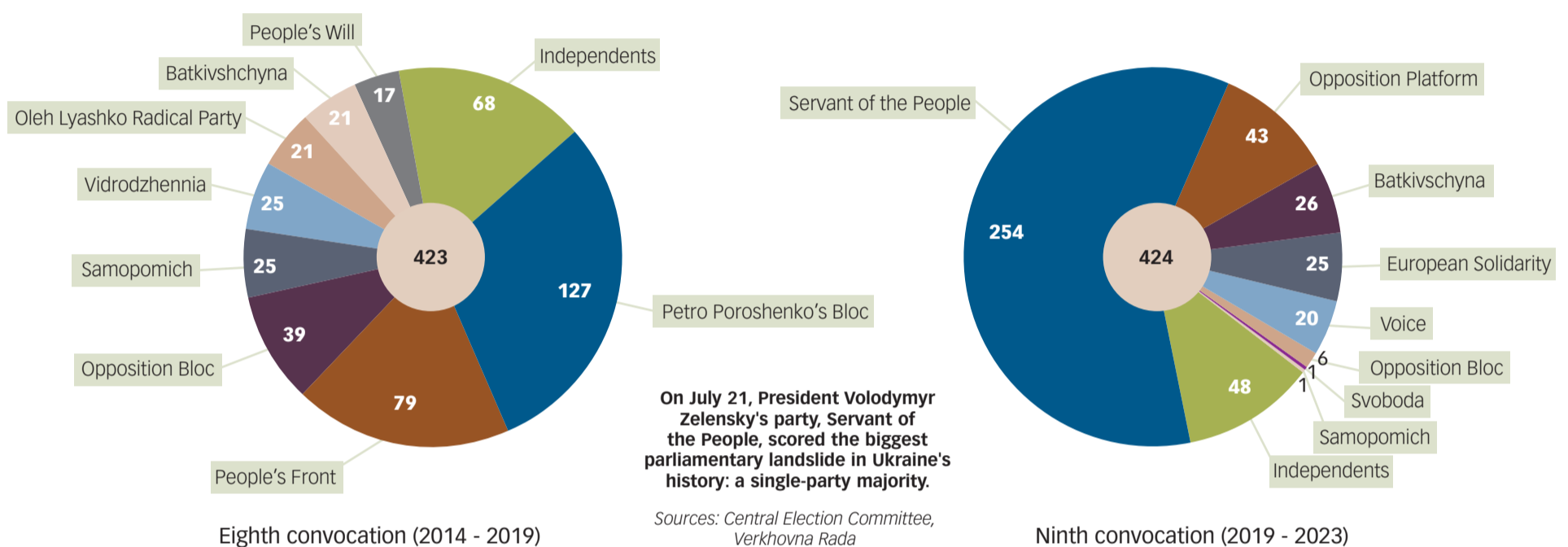
How Ukrainian parliament changed through the years



*Group 239 was one of the three blocs active in the first parliament. Most of its members were members of the Communist Party.

■ The largest faction in parliament

■ Total number of deputies in parliament



On July 21, President Volodymyr Zelensky's party, Servant of the People, scored the biggest parliamentary landslide in Ukraine's history: a single-party majority.

Sources: Central Election Committee, Verkhovna Rada

What Servant of the People can do with landslide victory

Parliament from page 2

lender in Ukraine. It was nationalized in late 2016 from Kolomoisky and his business partner Gennadiy Boholyubov.

Zelensky has pledged to defend the independence of the National Bank of Ukraine, which carried out the nationalization of PrivatBank under the previous administration and is now litigating with Kolomoisky and Boholyubov.

Checks and balances

Zelensky views holding a parliamentary majority as a convenience. It means he will not need to negotiate with anyone, he said in a July 17 video blog.

"It can give us an opportunity to stop the tradition of making arrangements, the tradition of political infighting, selling spots... the politics of compromising. I think we have had enough compromises in 30 years," he said.

It appears that forming a coalition with any of the three parties that made it into parliament — Poroshenko's European Solidarity, Yuriy Boyko and Viktor Medvedchuk's pro-Russian Opposition Platform and Yulia Tymoshenko's Batkivshchyna — would fundamentally contradict the very ideology of Servant of the People:

not to coalesce with old political elites.

However, Zelensky recently invited another celebrity-turned-politician, rock musician Svyatoslav Vakarchuk, to talk about joining forces. Vakarchuk's new party, Voice, is also comprised of political novices, but scored significantly fewer seats.

"I think coalition with Voice will ensure a big majority and support for difficult reforms," says Ash. "I don't think Zelensky can be sure of the loyalty of all (lawmakers) from Servant of the People. The party could well be fractured."

Jarabik says Zelensky offered Voice a coalition only because he did not expect to win an outright majority but agrees with Ash that keeping such a large parliamentary faction cohesive might be a challenge.

Servant of the People, named after the popular television series in which Zelensky played the role of Ukraine's president, was cobbled together in two months before the snap parliamentary election that Zelensky hastily called on the day of his inauguration.

It's a diverse crowd of Zelensky's campaign managers, prominent experts from civil society, and an eclectic mix of people selected through an open call. None of them



Dmytro Razumkov, head of President Volodymyr Zelensky's Servant of the People party, speaks with the media at the party's campaign headquarters in Kyiv on July 21, 2019 during Ukraine's parliamentary election. (Volodymyr Petrov)

have ever been in politics and many of them are practically unknown. But Zelensky's personal brand is so powerful that it allowed many unknown entities to defeat political heavyweights in the country's single-member electoral districts.

But Dmytro Razumkov, leader of the Servant of the People, somewhat idealistically disagrees that the party will be unwieldy.

"If the team is aimed at the result

and has common goals and tasks, it doesn't need to be managed: Just go and do it. Everyone simply has to understand their area of competence and responsibility," he told the Ukrainian news agency Interfax.

Nor does he see any risks in bestowing so much power on one party. He said that Servant of the People wants to give the people tools to control politicians and public

officials: making illegal enrichment a crime again, passing a law on presidential impeachment, stripping lawmakers of immunity and punishing them for skipping parliamentary sessions or voting for their absentee colleagues.

"We want to change how the parliament works. So that it becomes professional and not what we see now," Razumkov said. "We will not influence anti-corruption and law enforcement agencies, as is accepted in Ukrainian politics (today)."

Opora's Aivazovska says risks are inherent in a one-party majority, but it is difficult to predict the fallout now without seeing Servant of the People lawmakers, who are unknown to the expert community, in action.

Ash suggests that the Ukrainian people and western partners will hold Zelensky and his ruling party accountable.

"Two revolutions show (the Ukrainian people) cannot be taken for granted. If he strays too far from democracy, he risks popular revolt. I would add also that the West and G7 ambassadors will hold his hand," Ash told the Kyiv Post.

But perhaps it will come down to vanity.

"I want to go down in history as an honest president," Zelensky said in one of his videos. ■

Who can replace pro-reform lawmakers in parliament?

BY OLEKSIY SOROKIN
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It was a cold shower for Ukraine's establishment politicians. They were decimated during Ukraine's July 21 parliamentary elections. Individuals who had never before served in parliament won 75 percent of the seats in the country's legislature.

This crushing defeat came as the result of public dissatisfaction with parliament's inability to implement reforms, improve the standard of living in the country and demonstrate concrete results in the fight against corruption.

Among the ousted lawmakers were individuals of dubious reputations — lawmakers who have become the focus of journalistic investigations that reveal their lavish lifestyles and uncover corruption schemes.

But the ousted lawmakers also include individuals who proved decisive in pushing for the establishment of Ukraine's High Anti-Corruption Court, reforming the country's law enforcement agencies and serving as whistleblowers against corruption and dysfunction in Ukraine's courts.

Despite their contributions, most of them didn't make it into parliament, losing re-election bids on party lists or in single-member districts. A few even declined to run at all.

We're taking a look at 10 lawmakers who proved to be effective, yet were not reelected, and 10 new lawmakers who could spearhead the drive for reforms in Ukraine's new parliament.

They will be missed

On June 11, the Chesno civic organization published a report concluding that 13 members of the Samopomich faction were among the 25 most honest politicians in parliament.

That was hardly a surprise.



From left: Former Deputy Economy Minister Yulia Klymenko, rock star and party leader Svyatoslav Vakarchuk, and anti-corruption activist Yaroslav Yurchyshyn talk to supporters at the Voice party headquarters, during the parliamentary election on July 21, 2019. (Oleg Petراسиuk)

Samopomich, which received 11 percent of the vote in the 2014 parliamentary elections, was a strong proponent of reform. However, internal turmoil fragmented the party. In the July 21 election, it received less than 1 percent of the vote.

Samopomich members Yehor Sobolev, 42, Olena Sotnyk, 36, and Viktoriya Voytsitska, 44, were among the most active lawmakers pushing for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integra-

tion and supporting the creation of corruption prevention agencies.

Sobolev, the deputy head of the 25-member faction, chaired the parliament's anti-corruption committee until 2017 and was among the co-authors of a series of important laws on creating and maintaining the independence of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine and introducing the online asset declarations for government officials.

He also co-authored the law on de-communization, helping the country to leave behind its Soviet past.

Sobolev left the Samopomich party a couple of months before the election and didn't stand for re-election. Instead, he plans to focus on creating his own political party.

Lawyer-turned-politician Sotnyk was the secretary of the subcommittee in charge of coordinating Ukraine's legislature with its European Union parliament. She also served as the head of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe's legal committee. In Ukraine's parliament, she co-authored the law creating the State Bureau of Investigations, a body tasked with investigating the crimes of top state officials.

Prior to the 2019 parliamentary election, Sotnyk left Samopomich and joined the Strength and Honor party. But it failed to overcome the 5-percent threshold to enter parliament, receiving slightly less than 4 percent of the party list vote.

Sotnyk will now concentrate on her studies: she has become the first Ukrainian woman ever to be selected for the Yale World Fellows Program.

Another member of Samopomich, Voytsitska, was an active proponent of easing doing business in Ukraine. During the most recent election, Voytsitska ran in a rural single-member district in Rivne Oblast. Her candidacy enjoyed the support of the newly-established Voice party, led by rock-star turned politician Svyatoslav Vakarchuk. Nonetheless, Voytsitska was defeated, receiving only 5 percent of the vote.

One of the clearest examples of the internal turmoil that would even-

tually kill Samopomich was the party's decision to expel two of its most productive lawmakers.

In 2015, after a vote for constitutional amendments on decentralization that drew strong public opposition and eventually failed, five lawmakers were thrown out of Samopomich. Among them were Hanna Hopko, 37, and Viktoriya Ptashnyk, 36.

Hopko, who heads the parliament's foreign affairs committee, was a prominent supporter of Ukraine's language law, adopted on April 15, and a vocal public health advocate who focused on decreasing the use of tobacco in the country.

Ptashnyk, a lawyer prior to becoming a lawmaker, co-authored laws on economic liberalization and promoted the independence of the State Anti-Monopoly Committee.

Both Hopko and Ptashnyk supported implementing anti-corruption reforms in Ukraine. Eventually, Hopko decided not to run in the parliamentary election this year, while Ptashnyk ran in a single-member constituency in downtown Kyiv. She also was endorsed by the Voice party, but ultimately lost, receiving less than 10 percent of the vote.

Svitlana Zalizhchuk, 36, Sergii Leshchenko, 38, and Mustafa Nayyem, 38, are also among the most well-known activists who were elected into parliament in 2014. They all swept into the legislature on the then-popular Petro Poroshenko Bloc's party list.

All three were also co-authors and fierce supporters of most reforms

ON THE MOVE

Advertisement

Sayenko Kharenko and Yevgeniy Solodko join forces to create one of the strongest white collar criminal defence practices in Ukraine



Yevgeniy Solodko



Zlata Symonenko

Sayenko Kharenko and Yevgeniy Solodko have completed the process of merging their white collar criminal defence practices, which allowed us to create a practice, which gathered the best white collar criminal defence, anti-corruption compliance, and corporate investigations experts.

Yevgeniy Solodko is one of the leading criminal defence attorneys in Ukraine, being involved in a number of high-profile criminal investigations and trials and having unique experience of defending publicly exposed persons against unjustified charges. Apart from that, Yevgeniy has special expertise in the field of Canon law and law of historical and cultural heritage.

As of 10 July 2019, SK also welcomed to its team Zlata Symonenko, who specializes in dispute resolution, business security and defending clients within criminal proceedings on economic and corruption charges. She also has significant experience in preparing claims to the European Court of Human Rights in criminal cases. In addition to legal practice, she has been involved in working groups drafting the laws of Ukraine on National Police, National Anticorruption Bureau, Financing of political parties and Fighting against political corruption.

Partner Sergey Pogrebnoy comments: "Earlier this month, we welcomed Ario Dehghani, who has extensive experience in international compliance and forensic practice. Yevgeniy Solodko has tremendous experience in the field of local white collar criminal defence. The fact that such highly qualified experts are joining the SK team allows us to build Ukraine's largest criminal law boutique inside of a full-service law firm."

Partner Yevgeniy Solodko adds: "Joining SK will allow us to fully concentrate on our respective areas of experience in criminal defence and provide our clients with services of the highest international standards implemented within SK. Our knowledge and experience will allow the firm to significantly expand the expertise it provides. I am confident that this will be an example of successful and mutually beneficial synergy in the Ukrainian market."

Ruslan Riaboshapka wants to prosecute Ukraine's top crimes

BY BRIAN BONNER
BONNER@KYIVPOST.COM

The same day that Volodymyr Zelensky publicly tapped him as his choice for prosecutor general, on July 23, a weary Ruslan Riaboshapka returned from a meeting with the Ukrainian president to his office in the Stalin-era administration complex.

It was about 6 p.m., and, for the next hour, he gamely answered questions from the Kyiv Post about his plans for establishing what the business community wants most: rule of law.

While Riaboshapka's history with Zelensky is brief, he is already one of the key players in whether the president will be able to make good on his campaign promise to end impunity and start fighting high-level crime and corruption in Ukraine.

"If people see there is no impunity in this country, they will believe that success is possible," he said. "That is one of the priorities."

Riaboshapka met then-presidential candidate Zelensky only in January, when they started devising an anti-corruption strategy. He was offered the prosecutor general's job around the time of the president's landslide election victory on April 21.

Two days after the president's party won a strong majority in the July 21 parliamentary election, Zelensky went public with the announcement that he would nominate Riaboshapka for the post.

Riaboshapka, who currently serves as deputy head of the administration in charge of anti-corruption policy and legal reform, has another important connection to the president.

He and Zelensky's chief of staff, the 42-year-old lawyer Andriy Bohdan, have known each other since 2007, when they worked together in the Justice Ministry during President Viktor Yushchenko's 2005–2010 term. They continued to have a close working relationship in the Cabinet of Ministers under Prime Minister Mykola Azarov during President Viktor Yanukovich's four years in power, which were cut short by the EuroMaidan Revolution in 2014.

"He's very strong and a very good player and he has very good intentions," Riaboshapka said in praising Bohdan.

Plenty to fix

As Zelensky consolidates his power, his administration will have no excuses for failure.

The English-speaking Riaboshapka seems acutely aware of the responsibilities that will come with the job of leading 15,000 prosecutors who, collectively, have a terrible reputation for bribe-taking and failing to deliver justice.

Under ex-President Petro Poroshenko, who lost in a landslide to Zelensky, Ukraine had four prosecutors general, including non-lawyer and political appointee Yuriy Lutsenko for the last three years. Lutsenko will leave office with a rep-



Ruslan Riaboshapka speaks with the the Kyiv Post on July 23, 2019 in his office in the presidential administration building in Kyiv. (Volodymyr Petrov)

utation for talking big and achieving nothing.

"We just wasted three years," Riaboshapka said of Lutsenko's tenure. "Lutsenko didn't clean the system of prosecutors. He cemented the old-style, Soviet-style prosecutor system."

"If the prosecutor's office works properly, it means that you bring to court well-prepared cases, which wasn't the case under Lutsenko," he said. "Judicial reform was also part of Poroshenko's agenda and he failed to do it. Lutsenko is Poroshenko's close ally, close friend. They had all the resources and power in the country, but they used those resources and power not for the good of Ukraine."

His strategy

Given Zelensky's control over parliament through his Servant of the People party, Riaboshapka's ratification is a foregone conclusion when the new Verkhovna Rada convenes in late August or September. He then wants lawmakers to pass a number of laws to help him transform the judicial system.

"There are urgent amendments needed to be able to dismiss prosecutors who are not working with high standards of integrity," he explained. He also said prosecutors "should be more integrated into the judiciary." He will serve Zelensky as co-chair of the Commission on Legal Reform, which will recommend other legal changes to the criminal justice system and judiciary as well as constitutional amendments.

He also wants to slim the service to 10,000 prosecutors, replace regional prosecutors who are abusing their powers, and set priorities for the prosecution of crimes.

"The idea is not to prosecute small cases but to prosecute big financial crimes and murders," he said.

In terms of "big financial crimes," nothing is bigger than the \$5.6 billion

bank fraud allegedly perpetrated by billionaire oligarchs Ihor Kolomoisky and Gennady Boholyubov when they owned PrivatBank. The bank, the nation's largest financial institution, was taken over by the state in 2016 and recapitalized with taxpayer money. Criminal investigations and a civil lawsuit are under way.

But the public is closely watching the relationship between Zelensky and Kolomoisky, given their business association through the oligarch's 1+1 TV channel, which buys the president's popular comedy shows, and the influence of Kolomoisky's former lawyer Bohdan.

Riaboshapka promises to be truly

independent and said he will refuse instructions from the president or anybody else about whether to prosecute an individual for crimes.

"The president should define the general policy and not instruct on specific cases," he said. "I cannot follow such instructions."

His background

Riaboshapka was born on Oct. 14, 1976, in Liubashivka, an Odesa Oblast city of 11,500 people located 430 kilometers south of Kyiv. He and his wife, Olesia Bartovshchuk, have three sons. His children are citizens of France, according to his public declaration.

He graduated from law school at International Solomon University, a private institution in Kyiv started in 1991 that has since closed.

"It was quite close to the date when the U.S.S.R. was dissolved, so I could not say this education was a modern one," he said. "At the same time, it was a private university. It was possible to engage the best teachers and best professors and I am happy with that."

Since that time, he's gained a lot of international experience. He headed the Ukrainian delegation to GRECO, the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption. He's also worked with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

"I know international standards quite well," he said.

If there's one part of his biography where he sounds a bit defensive, it's the years he worked for Azarov, the former prime minister who is now living in exile abroad after fleeing the EuroMaidan Revolution.

In 2010, Azarov appointed Riaboshapka as head of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption Policy within the Cabinet of Ministers.

"It was the first time in the history of Ukraine that an anti-corruption body was established," he said. "It was a new experience, so why not? If you can somehow change or assist your country, why do you have to refuse?"

The office, however, existed for only six months. He said it was closed in February 2011 after he launched an investigation. "That was one of the reasons the office was

more Riaboshapka on page 10

28 Years of Ukraine's Independence

Special supplement on Ukraine's achievements will be published in Aug. 23 issue

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Paul Kalkbrenner

German techno superstar Paul Kalkbrenner will perform at the helipad atop the Parkovi Congress and Exhibition Center. It's his first time performing in Kyiv. He is best known for the record-breaking single "Sky and Sand," a soundtrack to the "Berlin Calling" movie, in which Kalkbrenner also played the leading role of an electronic musician in Berlin's techno scene in the 2000s. The film became an unlikely hit and a cult classic, making Kalkbrenner an instantly recognizable star among techno lovers. Kalkbrenner is considered a live act, as opposed to a DJ, because onstage he reassembles the tracks that he breaks down into elements. In Kyiv, Kalkbrenner will present his latest techno album.

Paul Kalkbrenner. Parkovi Congress and Exhibition Center (16A Parkova Rd.) Aug. 2. 7 p.m. Hr 950-1,500

Friday, July 26

Live music

Fram (folk and rock band performing Celtic songs). Docker Pub. 9 p.m. Hr 100-125

Jazz Arsenal (Will Jacobs Big Band from Chicago). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 8 p.m. Hr 350-450

Jazz for Adults with Alexey Kogan and NC 17 (Laura Marty, Jazz in Kyiv Band, NC 17 ballet). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 180-850

Orchestral Show Cinematic Symphony: Bach, Mozart, Zimmer and others (conductor Serhii Lykhomanenko, Eclectic Sound Orchestra). Kyiv Planetarium. 7:30 p.m. Hr 200

Red Jazz Teleport 360 (Andrii Soloviov). VDNH. 7 p.m. Hr 250

Tribute AC/DC (rock band RockYou). Docker Pub. 10 p.m. Hr 125-1,400

Clubs

Richie Hawtin (techno). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 580

Dog Days (dance music party). Khvylovi. 10 p.m. Free

Buttechno, Vtgnike, Alex Savage, Jultron (electronic DJ set). River Port. 11 p.m. Hr 300

Khim Club: Textasy, Sansibar and others (electronic music). Otel. 11:55 p.m. Hr 300

Miscellaneous

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

Deeds of Riaska (landscapes by Ukrainian artist Petro Riaska). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Oleg Holosiy. Non-Stop Painting (paintings, graphics, photographs and archival materials by Ukrainian contemporary artist). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80 regular ticket, Hr 40 for school and college students, retirees; Hr 160 family ticket. Free for children under 12

Intermezzo (photographs of Kyiv landscapes by Andrew Kravchenko). America House. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID

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

Evocation and Resemblance. Items of Identity in the New Ukraine (paintings, sculptures, performative artworks by Ola Rondiak and Monique Rollins). Gallery 83. 3 p.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Cross Sea (paintings, sculptures and per-

formances by Luka Basov, Bohdan Bunchak and other artists from Kyiv Academy of Media Arts). Voloshyn Gallery. 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Movies

Italian Best Shorts (comedy, melodrama, drama, adventure in Italian with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 10:55 a.m., 9:45 p.m. Hr 50, 95

Ray (biography, drama, music in English). America House. 6 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Shnit Shorts. Best of Animation (in original languages with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 7:55 p.m. Hr 95

Shnit Shorts. Best of Live Action (in original languages with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 9:25 p.m. Hr 95

Spider-Man: Far From Home (action, drama, sci-fi in English). Multiplex (Atmosphere, Lavina Mall, Prospect, Sky Mall). 5:45 p.m. Hr 100-160

The Matrix (action, sci-fi in English, 4DX). Planeta Kino. 7 p.m. Hr 230

Shows

Dakh Daughters (freak-cabaret band). UBK. 8 p.m. Hr 500

Just Her (dance, electronic). UBK. 10 p.m. Hr 100

Saturday, July 27

Live music

Symphonic Rock Hits (Oleksandr Hosachynskiy Chamber Orchestra). Green Theater. 7 p.m. Hr 200-500

Musical Shine Carpathian Trance (cymbals, drymba and pipes). Kyiv Planetarium. 7:30 p.m. Hr 200

Tribute to the Greatest of Soul and R'n'B. Old Fashioned Bar. 8 p.m. Hr 400

Clubs

Party on the Balcony (dance music by DJs Jezus Man, Ro Rusakov). Vsi Svoi D12. 6 p.m. Free

Zaradyica, Bushiko, Vanilla Quartz (electronic music). Dom. 8 p.m. Free, donations are welcome

Fingers Crossed: Pilarion, Horne and others (electronic music). UBK. 10 p.m. Hr 100

Machine Room and PRCDRL (electronic music). River Port. 10 p.m. Price to be announced

Koloah, Pahatam, Prismic (electronic DJ set). Otel. 11 p.m. Hr 300

Resident Lights: Shakolin, Karina, SE62 (electronic music). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Price to be announced

Miscellaneous

Cross Sea (paintings, sculptures and performances by Luka Basov, Bohdan Bunchak and other artists from Kyiv Academy of Media Arts). Voloshyn Gallery. 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Deeds of Riaska (landscapes by Ukrainian artist Petro Riaska). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

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

Oleg Holosiy. Non-Stop Painting (paintings, graphics, photographs and archival materials by Ukrainian contemporary artist). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80 regular ticket, Hr 40 for school and college students, retirees; Hr 160 family ticket. Free for children under 12

Evocation and Resemblance. Items of Identity in the New Ukraine (paintings, sculptures, performative art by Ola Rondiak and Monique Rollins). Gallery 83. 12 p.m. - 7 p.m. Free

Intermezzo (photographs of Kyiv landscapes by Andrew Kravchenko). America House. 12 p.m. - 9 p.m. Free. Bring ID

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

Grill Market (food from various Ukrainian craft brands grilled on the terrace, drinks, entertainment). Vsi Svoi D12. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Movies

Italian Best Shorts (comedy, melodrama, drama, adventure in Italian with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 12:55 p.m., 9:45 p.m. Hr 75-105

Pain and Glory (drama in Spanish). Zhovten. 2:50 p.m. Hr 85

Shnit Shorts. Best of Animation (in original languages with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 7:55 p.m. Hr 105

Shnit Shorts. Best of Live Action (in original languages with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 9:25 p.m. Hr 105

Spider-Man: Far From Home (action, adventure, sci-fi in English). Multiplex (Atmosphere, Lavina Mall, Prospect, Sky Mall). 5:45 p.m. Hr 100-160

The Matrix (action, sci-fi in English, 4DX). Planeta Kino. 7 p.m. Hr 240

Shows

Postman (indie-folk music). UBK. 8 p.m. Hr

150

Theater

Othello (theater recording in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Multiplex (Lavina Mall). 3 p.m. Hr 190-240

Sunday, July 28

Live music

Music of the Light: Bach, Mozart and others (Heaven Flute duo). Kyiv Planetarium. 7:30 p.m. Hr 200

Red Jazz Teleport 360 (Andrii Soloviov). VDNH. 7 p.m. Hr 250

Clubs

Vinyl Vibes: Vertuha (electronic music). UBK. 6 p.m. Free

Miscellaneous

Cross Sea (paintings, sculptures and performances by Luka Basov, Bohdan Bunchak and other artists from Kyiv Academy of Media Arts). Voloshyn Gallery. 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Deeds of Riaska (landscapes by Ukrainian artist Petro Riaska). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

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

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

Grill Market (food from various Ukrainian craft brands grilled on the terrace, drinks, entertainment). Vsi Svoi D12. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Movies

Italian Best Shorts (comedy, melodrama, drama, adventure in Italian with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 11:05 a.m., 4:10 p.m., 9:20 p.m. Hr 65, 105

Pain and Glory (drama in Spanish). Zhovten. 2:50 p.m. Hr 85

Shnit Shorts. Best of Animation (in original languages with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 9:30 p.m. Hr 105

Shnit Shorts. Best of Live Action (in original languages with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 7:55 p.m. Hr 105

Spider-Man: Far From Home (action, adventure, sci-fi in English). Multiplex (Atmosphere, Lavina Mall, Prospect, Sky Mall). 5:45 p.m. Hr 100-160

Summer. Dzyga. Love (five short films-nominees for Zolota Dzyga award in Ukrainian

with English subtitles). Zhovten. 11:05 a.m., 2:45 p.m. Hr 65, 85

The Matrix (action, sci-fi in English, 4DX). Planeta Kino. 7 p.m. Hr 240

Theater

Othello (tragedy recording in English with Ukrainian subtitles). Multiplex (Lavina Mall). 3 p.m. Hr 190-240

Shows

Yungblud (alternative rock). Green Theater. 7 p.m. Hr 990-1,390

Monday, July 29

Live music

Jazz Monday (covers of famous jazz hits by Ivonika). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 150-250

Miscellaneous

Deeds of Riaska (landscapes by Ukrainian artist Petro Riaska). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Movies

Italian Best Shorts (comedy, melodrama, drama, adventure in Italian with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 11:05 a.m., 4:10 p.m., 9:20 p.m. Hr 50-90

Shnit Shorts. Best of Animation (in original languages with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 9:30 p.m. Hr 90

Shnit Shorts. Best of Live Action (in original languages with Ukrainian subtitles). Zhovten. 7:55 p.m. Hr 90

Spider-Man: Far From Home (in English). Multiplex (Atmosphere, Lavina Mall, Prospect, Sky Mall). 5:45 p.m. Hr 100-160

Summer. Dzyga. Love (five short films-nominees for Zolota Dzyga award in Ukrainian with English subtitles). Zhovten. 11:05 a.m., 2:45 p.m. Hr 50, 75

The Matrix (action, sci-fi in English, 4DX). Planeta Kino. 7 p.m. Hr 230

Tuesday, July 30

Live music

Legend of Edith (covers of Edith Piaf songs by Natalie Pickkur). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 150-550

Rock'n'Roll on the Beach (Ruki v Bruki band). UBK. 8 p.m. Hr 250-350

Miscellaneous

Deeds of Riaska (landscapes by Ukrainian artist Petro Riaska). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

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

Oleg Holosiy. Non-Stop Painting (paintings, graphics, photographs and archival materials by Ukrainian contemporary artist). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80 regular ticket, Hr 40 for school and college students, retirees; Hr 160 family ticket. Free for children under 12

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



Grill Market

Grill Market is another one in the series of pop-up markets Vsi Svoi that celebrates Ukrainian producers. The guests will have an opportunity to pick fresh food by local farmers and have it grilled for free on the picturesque terrace in a historical part of the city center. The food options include meat, fish, vegetables, cheese, and marshmallows. Apart from that, the organizers promise a wide range of drinks, including wines and beers. They will also throw a party at 6 p.m. on July 27, with DJs Jezus Man and Ro Rusakov playing dance music for the crowd on the terrace.

Grill Market. Vsi Svoi D12 (12 Desiatynna St.) July 27-28. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

By Toma Istomina, Artur Korniienko, Daria Shulzhenko, Anastasia Tymoshenko

Riaboshapka ready to serve as next prosecutor general

Riaboshapka from page 7

abolished," Riaboshapka said. He went on to become the deputy head of the legal department in the government's secretariat.

"We started some investigations at that time," he said. "One of the most popular stories was with the investigation of the state registries, which were used by a former minister of justice and his partners for personal enrichment. He (later) became one of the most known authors of the law on lustration. Some others we initiated with the government of Mykola Azarov. There were (signs) of corruption in Euro 2012," the international football championship co-hosted by Ukraine and Poland.

"I don't see anything wrong there," he said of his service in Azarov's government. "Why should this time in my personal history be considered wrong?"

Riaboshapka took umbrage at the description of Azarov as corrupt. Official estimates put the theft by Yanukovich and his cronies at \$40 billion — about one-third of the current annual economic output — during his rule from 2010–2014. Except for a treason conviction against Yanukovich, no officials from his era have been successfully prosecuted and little money has been returned to Ukraine. Instead, Yanukovich left the country nearly bankrupt.

"There are no criminal convictions



President Volodymyr Zelensky (L) and his deputy chief of staff Ruslan Riaboshapka sit in a meeting in Kyiv on July 18, 2019. (Volodymyr Petrov)

against him," Riaboshapka said in defense of Azarov. "Poroshenko controlled law enforcement but didn't manage to prosecute Azarov."

But "no criminal convictions" applies to almost everyone in Ukraine, given the feeble track record of combating graft by Ukraine's police,

prosecutors and courts.

In fact, the Prosecutor General's Office has charged Azarov with taking a Hr 140 million (\$5.5 million) bribe, embezzling Hr 220 million (\$8.65 million) and abuse of power. In 2014, Western countries imposed sanctions on Azarov.

Azarov denies the accusations and sees the cases as politically motivated.

Good reputation

Leaving aside his Azarov-era service, Riaboshapka has distinguished himself as a corruption fighter through his work with Transparency International and the National Agency for the Prevention of Corruption.

One of his fans is Daria Kaleniuk, the executive director of the Anti-Corruption Action Center in Kyiv.

"Ruslan is committed to do a reboot of the judiciary and prosecution, as well as strengthening anti-corruption institutions. He has a good understanding and knowledge of how to do it," Kaleniuk said. "I'd like him to be prosecutor general. He'd be a good one."

After 15 months, Riaboshapka quit the National Agency for the Prevention of Corruption in 2017 in protest of Poroshenko's control over what was supposed to be an independent anti-corruption institution. Along with the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine, or NABU, it was one of the new agencies established in the post-revolution era and charged with investigating high-level corruption. The Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office, or SAPO, was charged with prosecuting it.

Riaboshapka said in 2017 that the agency had been completely discredited due to its failure to check the electronic asset declaration of a single official since the declaration system was launched in 2016. He called for re-launching the agency and appointing new leadership.

"I left because of Poroshenko," he said. "Poroshenko controlled this agency, which should be independent, and no other members or commissions in this agency were

able to resist this interference and they didn't want to do it. The president wanted to use this agency as his own."

Riaboshapka believes that NABU, headed by Artem Sytnyk, "was and is an independent agency," while SAPO, headed by Nazar Kholodnytsky, is only "so-so" independent. Kholodnytsky has thus far survived numerous calls for his resignation after NABU recordings implicated him in obstructing criminal investigations, charges he denied.

Some have argued that Ukraine should have focused on fixing its distrusted police, prosecutors and courts rather than setting up new corruption-fighting agencies. But Riaboshapka disagrees.

"The anti-corruption infrastructure which is in place is a good idea," he said. "The only issue is sometimes the wrong people in top positions of the anti-corruption bodies."

He favors the creation of a state financial investigation service to investigate large and complex economic crimes. He also backs changes to limit the powers of the Security Service of Ukraine, the 27,000-person law enforcement agency whose economic crimes unit has been criticized for extorting from legitimate businesses. The agency, known as the SBU, should limit its focus to intelligence and counter-terrorism, many — including Riaboshapka — believe.

He also said that the criminal investigation units of the National Police, under Interior Minister Arsen Avakov, needed to be improved, although he said he has no conflict with Avakov.

"This is the next stage of reform of the National Police," he said.

Riaboshapka also acknowledged shortcomings in the courts, which he said is the weakest link of the judicial system. Courts are still largely distrusted in Ukraine and many of the nation's 6,000 judges are seen as doing the bidding of powerful businesspeople or issuing favorable rulings in exchange for bribes.

Convictions soon?

"Regarding a reboot of the whole system, it's an extremely complicated process. I am not sure it's possible," he conceded. "We definitely should have a strategy for how to get results step-by-step. If you have the right people in the top positions in the prosecutor's office, NABU and SAPO and the Ministry of Justice, we will reform the judiciary," Riaboshapka said. "In connection with the political will, the president believes we can get results in the near future."

Will Ukraine have to wait another five years before anybody is convicted of corruption?

"No, why do we have to wait five years?" he asked. "Starting from June and July, SAPO and NABU are delivering results. Starting from September, the Anti-Corruption Court is starting its work. Hopefully we will see the first convictions before the New Year." ■



3 years later, still no justice for Pavel Sheremet

A man holds a poster at a memorial rally for murdered journalist Pavel Sheremet in Kyiv on July 20, 2019. Friends, colleagues, and activists gathered in central Kyiv to commemorate Sheremet on the third anniversary of his murder and to demand justice. Roughly 60 people gathered at the intersection of Kyiv's Bohdana Khmelnytskoho and Ivana Franka streets, where Sheremet's car exploded three years earlier, killing him. Among the attendees were journalists from several Ukrainian publications and the interim head of the U.S. Embassy, Ambassador William Taylor. Many at the memorial ceremony carried signs that read "Who killed Pavel?" Born in Belarus, Sheremet had worked in his homeland, in Russia, and, starting in 2012, in Ukraine. He was a host and regular guest of Ukrainian television and radio political talk shows, where he addressed controversial topics and often criticized people in power both in Ukraine and Russia. Three years after the crime, Sheremet's killing still has not been solved, and investigative journalists have often uncovered more evidence than the official police investigation. (Oleg Petrusiuk)

10 incoming lawmakers to watch in new parliament

Lawmakers from page 6

that received a vote in parliament. Nayyem is better known for his work in reforming Ukraine's patrol police. Leshchenko is known for drawing attention to corruption schemes supported by lawmakers and government officials. And Zalishchuk is noted for her service on the foreign affairs committee promoting Euro-Atlantic integration.

Zalishchuk and Leshchenko are also vocal supporters of equal rights for the LGBTQ community. In 2015, they became the first Ukrainian lawmakers to participate in Kyiv Pride.

Both of them ran in July elections as independent candidates in single-member districts. However, both came in third, failing to win a seat in parliament. Zalishchuk told the Kyiv Post that she has already received multiple job offers to remain in the public sector, while Leshchenko declined to comment. He said he will be open to talking in a couple of weeks.

Nayyem didn't run for re-election. But he said he would like to keep working on reforming Ukraine's law enforcement agencies.

Adding to the list of vocal reform supporters who were not reelected are Oleksiy Ryabchyn, 36, and Nataliya Katsar-Buchkovska, 36. The two young lawmakers actively supported reforms of the energy market.

Katsar-Buchkovska also consistently promoted Ukraine's bid to become an official ally of NATO.

Ryabchyn, who was elected through former Prime Minister's Yulia Tymoshenko's party list, remained with the party, yet was too far down the list to get into parliament this time.

Katsar-Buchkovska, joined Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman's new party, but the party itself failed to receive 5 percent of the vote and didn't make it into parliament.

Next generation

The new parliament also includes lawmakers broadly viewed as reformist.

Several of them are arriving in parliament on the list of the Servant of the People, which received 254 out of 424 seats and now can single-handedly govern the country. While



From left: Sergii Leshchenko, Svitlana Zalishchuk and Mustafa Nayyem participate in a parliament session, on April 4, 2017. (UNIAN)

a lot is expected from the party itself, David Arakhamia, 40, Anastasia Krasnosilka, 35, and Andriy Gerus, 37, are among those expected to push for concrete reforms.

Arakhamia, 40, also known as David Braun, was a successful businessman prior to joining politics. He created a number of IT startups, including Template Monster, a company specializing in web design. In 2014, he co-founded a volunteer organization called the People's Project that helps to raise money for Ukraine's armed forces. He later headed Defense Ministry's procurement department.

Arakhamia is an outspoken supporter of economic liberalization.

Krasnosilka, 35, is expected to bring her experience fighting corruption to the legislature. Prior to joining parliament, Krasnosilka was a member of the Anti-Corruption Action Center, a non-governmental organization tasked with recommending anti-corruption legislation. She was also a member of Ukraine's delegation to the Council of Europe's GRECO initiative, an anti-corruption monitoring body.

Krasnosilka was among the leaders of the successful public campaign for the establishment of Ukraine's High Anti-Corruption Court.

Prior to joining politics, Gerus was a well-known energy expert and critic of Rotterdam+, a coal pricing scheme that required Ukraine to buy coal at an artificially high European price. That benefitted Rinat Akhmetov, owner of DTEK, Ukraine's largest energy company.

In a comment to the Kyiv Post back in June, when Gerus was appointed as the president's representative to the Cabinet of Ministers, he said that he will keep his focus on energy policy.

Another Servant of the People member expected to support reforms is Maryna Bardina, 26. Bardina served as an aide to lawmaker Leshchenko and is an active supporter of equal rights for women.

The Voice party also will have reformers. Although Voice barely made it into parliament, receiving slightly more than 5 percent of the vote for around 20 seats, the party itself features a number of lawmakers to watch.

Yulia Klimenko, 42, second on the party list, served as the vice president of the Kyiv School of Economics and as deputy head of the economy ministry under then-minister Aivaras Abromavičius, who is currently a member of the president's team and heads the Supervisory Board of state-owned defense corporation UkrOboronProm.

Kira Rudyk, 33, is a prominent member of the business community who has now been elected to parliament. Rudyk served as the chief operating officer of Ring, a startup which develops smart home security systems. In February 2018, Ring was sold for \$1 billion to Amazon. Rudyk is credited with convincing Ring to open an office in Ukraine and also with making the sale to Amazon possible.

Other newly elected lawmakers from the Voice party include three well-known anti-corruption activists – Yaroslav Yurchyshyn, 38, Oleksandra Ustinova, 33, and Olha Stefanyshyna, 36.

In 2016-2018, Yurchyshyn headed Ukraine's chapter of Transparency International, an international non-government organization fighting corruption worldwide.

Ustinova is a former member of the Anti-Corruption Action Centre board of directors and research fellow at Stanford University.

In 2011, Stefanyshyna founded a non-profit organization: Patients of Ukraine, which lobbies the interests of people who require medications in Ukraine. Between 2011 and 2018, Stefanyshyna headed the organization, successfully advocating for the government to increase its financing of hepatitis medication, create an online drugs procurement database and create a medical reform roadmap.

The other three parties that made it into parliament largely lack new faces and clear reformers. There is one key exception: Yana Zinkevych, 23, from European Solidarity, led by former President Petro Poroshenko.

After Russia invaded Ukraine's Donbas region in 2014, Zinkevych, then an 18-year-old medical student, created the volunteer medical battalion Hospitalers, which has saved thousands of lives.

In 2015, she suffered a spinal fracture during a car accident, forcing her to undergo multiple surgeries and use a wheelchair ever since.

Given her background in the conflict zone, Zinkevych will likely advocate for the military and the rehabilitation of wounded servicepeople. ■



Maryna Bardina
(Servant of the People)



David Arakhamia
(Servant of the People)



Anastasia Krasnosilka
(Servant of the People)



Andriy Gerus
(Servant of the People)



Yulia Klimenko
(Voice)



Kira Rudyk
(Voice)



Oleksandra Ustinova
(Voice)



Yaroslav Yurchyshyn
(Voice)



Olha Stefanyshyna
(Voice)



Yana Zinkevych
(European Solidarity)



Yehor Sobolev leads the parliament's anticorruption committee, on Nov. 15, 2017, a month before the committee members voted him out. (Volodymyr Petrov)



Meet Ukrainian Hollywood actress Ivanna Sakhno



Ukrainian Hollywood actress Ivanna Sakhno walks the red carpet at the opening ceremony of the 10th Odesa International Film Festival near the Odesa National Academic Opera and Ballet Theater on July 12, 2019. (Oleg Petراسиuk)

BY TOMA ISTOMINA
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ODESA, Ukraine — When Ukrainian Ivanna Sakhno came to Hollywood to pursue her dream of becoming an actress in the English-speaking world, she was only 15. Six years later, her name features on the credit reels of big-budget films with worldwide distribution.

"I remember being in my old childhood bedroom drawing the Hollywood sign in Los Angeles, putting it on the wall and dreaming that maybe one day I will at least make it there," Sakhno told the Kyiv Post in an interview on July 17 in Odesa.

Sakhno, 21, recently starred in the sci-fi monster film "Pacific Rim: Uprising," produced by Oscar-winning

Mexican filmmaker Guillermo del Toro, and in the action comedy "The Spy Who Dumped Me," where she worked alongside another Ukrainian actress, Mila Kunis.

While she lives in the United States, Sakhno occasionally visits her home country.

During one of these visits she attended Ukraine's biggest cinematography event, the Odesa International Film Festival, held this year on July 12–20.

Sakhno was invited to join the jury of the international competition program at the festival held in Odesa, a port city of 1 million people located 500 kilometers south of Kyiv.

Childhood dream

From her very early years in Kyiv,

Sakhno has been surrounded by the world of cinema, growing up in a family parented by the director Halyna Kuvivchak-Sakhno and cinematographer Anatolii Sakhno.

Due to her parents' involvement in the industry, Sakhno had her first role at the age of six. She starred in then-popular Ukrainian sitcom "Lesia + Roma."

But it wasn't her experience on the set that made her fall in love with the art of cinema. When Sakhno was eight, her mother showed her "Amélie," a French romantic comedy. She was blown away and rewatched the film dozens of times.

After "Amélie," Sakhno found herself attracted to the film industry outside of Ukraine.

"I wanted to explore it and also

become part of it," Sakhno says. "I began dreaming of moving into an English-speaking country and learning English and follow my dreams."

As a kid, Sakhno learned about the "law of attraction," a belief that positive thoughts bring positive experiences to people's lives. She drew a Hollywood sign, pinned it to a wall in her bedroom in Kyiv, and started dreaming big.

She says that at the beginning she wasn't even sure if a Ukrainian kid is allowed to visit the United States. Her first goal was to just make it there.

In several years, the 13-year-old Sakhno went to Canada for half a year to study English in a high school

more Actress on page 13

City Life

WITH ANASTASIA TYMOSHENKO
TYMOSHENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

Experience Kyiv in a new way with this street show

"Take your time. Relax!" says the voice in the headphones, and a group of 40 participants dip into a two-hour journey through Kyiv that may change how they see the world.

It's reminiscent of the beginning of a psychological experiment. In fact, this is the foreword to Remote Kyiv, a modern immersive performance where the city streets become the set and the spectators are the actors who give meaning to the show's plotline.

The performance is the project of German documentary theater company Rimini Protokoll and Ukrainian team U!Zahvati, which both create theatrical performances outside the theater.

Rimini Protokoll have been staging Remote X, an immersive performance, since 2013. It started in Berlin and has been staged in nearly 50 cities since then. Now, they brought the show to Kyiv. It premiered on June 23.

"We wanted to gather a group of 40–50 people and give them a collective experience with flashmob elements and small tasks on the way," director Joerg Karrenbauer told the Kyiv Post. "They get a mixture of feelings, being both spectators and actors."

Innovative show

Participants in Remote Kyiv perform unusual tasks such as dancing on the street or trying to catch a glance or smile from an unfamiliar person on the subway. The narrator's synthetic voice tells them to think about personal identity while walking through crowded and noisy streets.

The performance reveals people's addiction to using modern gadgets. According to the director, it makes people think about why they trust the voices of gadgets like Alexa, Siri, or GPS navigators.

"It's a kind of reflection on the relationship between us as human beings and smart devices with their voices talking to us," Karrenbauer said.

Polina Baranychenko, director of the Ukrainian theatrical team U!Zahvati, says that preparations for the performance took nearly three years. They first

more Journey on page 14

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21-year-old Ukrainian stars in American blockbusters

Actress from page 12

in Vancouver. She immersed herself in this new English-speaking environment and loved it.

Right before the end of the Canada journey, there was another milestone for her. She went to a workshop of a Hollywood casting director, who invited Sakhno to move to Los Angeles, offered her help there and, most importantly, encouraged her to follow the acting career path.

So at the age of 15, Sakhno moved to Los Angeles with her mother and went to the Beverly Hills high school. After graduating, she received a scholarship at the Lee Strasberg Theater and Film Institute. The school, which has two campuses in Los Angeles and New York, has many famous alumni, such as U.S. actor Chris Evans and actress Scarlett Johansson.

Breakthrough

Despite the general image of Hollywood as a cruel and extremely demanding world, Sakhno says she was lucky to not have encountered that. She says that she always felt safe and trusted her manager, as well as other people she worked with.

"I think that having the right people that believe in you, that have pure and wonderful intentions is one of the most important parts of any industry," she says.

Her debut feature film in the U. S. was horror movie "The Body Tree," which came out in 2017, followed by another film of the same genre, "Can't Take It Back" released soon after that. But her breakthrough came in 2018 when she starred in "Pacific Rim: Uprising."

In it, Sakhno played a secondary role of cadet Viktoria, who co-pilots one of the massive robots, Jaegers, used to protect humanity from monstrous Kaiju that emerge from the seas.

Sakhno says that preparing for the role was extremely demanding physically — she had to train five days a week. Although it was hard, she says



Ukrainian Hollywood actress Ivanna Sakhno talks to the Kyiv Post on the terrace of the Mozart hotel in Odesa on July 17, 2019. (Oleg Petrasjuk)

that she also got to discover abilities she hasn't known of before.

"You become more and more familiar with your own mechanism the more you work, the more films you get to do," she says.

Apart from that, it was Sakhno's first time working with green screens and CGI, or computer-generated imagery.

"I didn't have the chance to work on such a big high-end project before and the process of making a blockbuster film is so drastically different from making, for example, an indie film," she says.

The movie grossed over \$290 million.

Following the first big success for Sakhno, another U.S. film starring the actress, action comedy "The Spy Who Dumped Me," hit cinemas in 2018.

Working with Kunis and comedy

star Kate McKinnon, Sakhno played a Russian gymnast and assassin Nadejda. She says that the preparation was no less challenging, as she had to take boxing lessons, as well as explore the dark sides of her character.

"It really was a great pleasure to develop her (Nadejda) because she's so in a way otherworldly," she says.

Constant challenge

For a 21-year-old actress from a foreign country, Sakhno has been quite successful. But there are still challenges for her to overcome.

In both "Pacific Rim: Uprising" and "The Spy Who Dumped Me" she played foreigners. For someone out of the United States, mainly because of the accent, it's not easy to get a role of a local and the number of foreign characters is, of course, limited.

In order to master the authentic

pronunciation, Sakhno has studied American English ever since she moved. She even had to cut consum-

ing content in Ukrainian and communication in her native language, even with her parents. Today she keeps studying dialects and accents.

"It's tremendous work and it's a never-ending process of watching films and listening to your own voice recording and understanding the issues with the sound you have to change," she says.

Due to her persistence and hard work, Sakhno has already played roles of Americans two times.

Sakhno emphasizes she in no way is ashamed of her roots and the accent that came with them.

"If I wasn't born in Ukraine I wouldn't be who I am and it's something that identifies me on a very high level," she says. "I cherish my accent that I came with and I cherish that I get to work on it and develop other accents as well."

Sakhno says that she looks forward to starring in all kinds of movies, not necessarily big-budget ones, and hopes to grow with every new film. Hollywood, which once was a far dream, became her everyday reality.

"It feels like home," she says. "And it feels like a never-ending process of discovering myself through the work that I do." ■



Ukrainian Hollywood actress Ivanna Sakhno plays Russian gymnast and assassin Nadejda in the U.S. action comedy "The Spy Who Dumped Me," alongside Ukrainian colleague Mila Kunis and U.S. comedy star Kate McKinnon. (Lionsgate)

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City Life

New immersive performance blurs lines between audience, actors

Journey from page 12

approached Rimini Protokoll with a suggestion to do Remote X in Kyiv in 2016, but initially got a refusal. Only next year they managed to agree on the date, scheduling it for 2019.

Baranychenko says that the route is the "heart" of the project. The performance starts at Zvirynetske Cemetery and moves across the city.

"In this case, the environment is not just the location, but the co-author," says Baranychenko.

But by operating in a living city environment, Remote Kyiv has also run into some challenges.

"I wanted to finish the performance on the roof of Kyiv Conservatory," Baranychenko says. "This place offers a great panoramic view of Independence Square. However, the administration refused to let us do it. It's a pity."

Karrenbauer and Baranychenko ran into a different challenge. During any Remote X performance, there is usually a stop at a Catholic church, where the participants sit down and rest. He couldn't find such a church in Kyiv, so the House of the Architect, a Soviet-era site with a lot of space, became the resting point instead.



The attendees of the immersive performance Remote Kyiv dance in the middle of Kyiv's main Khreshchatyk Street on July 6, 2019. (Press office U!Zahvati)

Positive response

Since it started in June, Remote Kyiv has attracted around 1,500 people.

Organizers say they noticed that a Ukrainian spectator tends to distrust anything new. And they need more

time to immerse in the process.

"Ukrainians are used to perceiving art remotely," says Baranychenko.

After Kyiv, U!Zahvati also plans to stage immersive performances in Odesa, Kharkiv, Lviv and Dnipro.

Alina Glazova, one of the people who participated in the performance, says that Remote Kyiv is a great opportunity to immerse into oneself and ask uncomfortable questions. She thought it could be especially interesting to people from IT and creative industries.

Another participant, Haska Shyyan, took part in Remote Kyiv with her husband and their 6-year-old daughter.

"We did not know what to expect from it," she says. "Visiting unexpected non-tourist sites would be interesting for both Kyivans and guests, who want to feel the rhythm and vibrations of the city." ■

Remote Kyiv will run until September 2019. Ticket costs Hr 500. The schedule is available at www.uzahvati.com. Remote Kyiv is performed in Ukrainian, English and French. Participants should follow a few rules: come 20 minutes early, wear comfortable shoes and do not use mobile phones during the performance.

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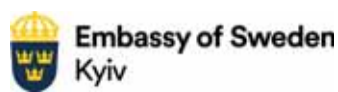
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Ukraine votes for change

1 A woman with her dog votes at a polling station during Ukraine's parliamentary election in Kyiv.

2 Ukrainian rock star and leader of political party Golos (Voice) Svyatoslav Vakarchuk poses after casting his ballot at a polling station in Kyiv.

3 A woman reads programs of the candidates.

4 A local resident checks her paper ballot during a parliamentary election in the village of Velyka Bugayivka in Kyiv Oblast.

5 A girl throws ballot papers during Ukraine's parliamentary election in the village of Pershe Travnnya in Kyiv Oblast. (Volodymyr Petrov, Kostyantyn Chernichkin, Oleg Petrusiuk)



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