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AFP

Welcome, Joe!

Biden won admiration for his 6 visits to Kyiv as vice president. The contrast with Trump's disregard for Ukraine and deference to Vladimir Putin is stark.



U.S. President-elect Joe Biden delivers remarks at The Queen in Wilmington, Delaware, on Nov. 9, 2020.

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How Biden can help Ukraine — and America



Opinion

Sergii Leshchenko
mail.pravda@gmail.com

I can finally breathe a sigh of relief as the Donald Trump era is coming to the end. Its policy, where truth is mixed with fiction, seriously affected my life.

I was one of the advisers to Volodymyr Zelensky during his winning presidential campaign in 2019. I began supporting him in December 2018.

During the campaign, we discussed his ambitious anti-corruption program with then-U.S. Special Envoy for Ukraine Kurt Volker, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs David Gale, Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Linkevičius and then-Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland.

But a few days before Zelensky's inauguration in May 2019, Trump's personal attorney Rudy Giuliani told the world that I was convicted of interfering in the 2016 U.S. election and was a personal enemy of the American president. It was a lie.

Giuliani referred to the illegal and later annulled ruling of the Kyiv District Administrative Court — which has long had a reputation as the most corrupt in Ukraine. It ruled in December 2018 that I had acted illegally in 2016 when I published information about secret payments of the overthrown Viktor Yanukovich regime, including to their political consultant Paul Manafort. After working for Yanukovich, Manafort surfaced as Trump's campaign manager in 2016.

The notorious court is currently under investigation for corruption. As for Manafort, a federal judge in

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Kostyantyn Chernichkin

A medical worker wearing protective gear sits near the entrance to the infectious disease ward of Kyiv's Olexsandrivska Clinical Hospital on Oct. 12, 2020. Since the start of November, COVID-19 transmission in Ukraine has reached alarming rates, prompting the government to impose a weekend lockdown for non-essential businesses on Nov. 11.

Weekend lockdown starts as coronavirus cases surge

By Artur Kornienko
kornienko@kyivpost.com

The coronavirus pandemic has reached a critical juncture in Ukraine, with the country registering a record number of daily cases this week and more than half of designated hospital beds occupied.

Moreover, several top officials have tested positive for COVID-19, including President Volodymyr Zelensky, who is now isolated in a hospital with mild symptoms of the disease.

To slow the transmission of the coronavirus, the government has imposed a "weekend lockdown," forcing non-essential businesses to close on Saturdays and Sundays.

With his speeches growing more emotional with every public appearance, Health Minister Maksym Stepanov says that the weekend lockdown is the only alternative to a complete lockdown that would shatter the economy.

"We have to break this chain (of infections), so we don't have thousands of people getting sick every day," Stepanov said, pounding his fists on the table, during a video conference when the government adopted the new measures on Nov. 11.

But Ukrainian businesses are not happy with the weekend lockdown. Workers of the restaurant industry protested against it at government headquarters just before it was adopted. Many other entrepreneurs have criticized the measures on social media, saying that the weekend lockdown will kill their businesses.

More severe cases

The spread of the coronavirus in Ukraine has reached new daily records, with 11,057 new cases reported on Nov. 12. These numbers have been steadily growing for months, abating only after the weekends, when less testing is done.

Also on Nov. 12, Ukraine reported 198 deaths, the second highest number since the start of the pandemic. At the same time, the number of recoveries has decreased from a daily average of 6,489 recoveries last week to 5,207 this week.

"The virus has become more aggressive. That is, the number of critically severely ill patients is increasing," Stepanov said during his Nov. 11 briefing. "This is happening across the country."

According to Stepanov, hospital beds are filling up at "exponential" rates in Ukraine. As of Nov. 11, 28,514 out of 52,000 designated beds, or 54%, are occupied, he said.

The 52,000 designated beds for COVID-19 patients are about one-third of all available hospital beds in the country. While the number of patients requiring oxygen has been increasing, fewer than 20,000 of these beds are connected to oxygen equipment.

The government has ordered regional authorities to set up makeshift hospitals in Kyiv, Kramatorsk and Odesa. Media have reported that the Palace of Sports, the Expo center and Feofaniya hospital are being considered for the future temporary COVID-19 hospitals in Kyiv.

Stepanov also said that hospitals already experience shortages of medical personnel. He said that the ministry is deploying interns and doctors with different specializations to treat COVID-19 patients. He warned that Ukraine could reach a point when doctors will have to decide which patients have higher

chances of survival and should be prioritized.

Officials test positive

The surge of new coronavirus cases has coincided with top officials testing positive for COVID-19 this week.

President Volodymyr Zelensky announced that he tested positive for COVID-19 on Nov. 9. A few minutes later, his chief of staff Andriy Yermak announced that he too had the coronavirus.

More officials tested positive the same day: Finance Minister Serhiy Marchenko and Defense Minister Andriy Taran. Taran later received a negative test on Nov. 12. On Nov. 11, Parliament Speaker Dmytro Razumkov announced that he had tested positive too.

So far, all the affected officials seem to be in good condition.

Zelensky said he felt "good" when he tested positive and had only a slight fever of 37.5 degrees Celsius. Yermak also said he felt "normal." Later, the president's spokeswoman Iuliia Mendel reported that both officials have only "mild symptoms of the disease" and are "active."

Still, Zelensky and Yermak have been hospitalized to Kyiv's Feofaniya Clinical Hospital, designated to treat Ukrainian officials. According to Yermak's advisor Mykhailo Podolyak, both officials continue to work from the hospital.

Zelensky holds video conferences in a specially equipped hospital room. Yermak is in a separate, isolated room, but with no equipment

Nation faces tough months ahead in trying to control COVID-19 spread; Zelensky infected

page 2 →

for video conferences. They don't see each other face-to-face and communicate by phone, according to Podolyak.

"The only restriction is isolation, no one is around," Podolyak told the Ukrainska Pravda news website on Nov. 11. "That is, none of the aides are near the president or the chief of staff."

Zelensky first went home after testing positive, but then decided to move to Feofania because there are better conditions for self-isolation and medical care for patients with COVID-19, Mendel said on

Facebook. She added that the president continues to work and even had a call with the German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Nov. 10.

Weekend lockdown

After a week of deliberation, the Ukrainian government on Nov. 11 finally approved a "weekend lockdown," prompting criticism from businesses that rely on Saturdays and Sundays for their biggest sales.

Under the weekend lockdown, non-essential businesses have to stay closed for 48 hours, from 12 a.m. on Saturdays to 12 a.m. on Mondays.

The government said that the weekend lockdown starts this



Press service of Ukrainian president

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is shown on the screen during a Nov. 11 video conference with the renewed Commission on Legal Reform. Later that day, Zelensky was hospitalized in Kyiv after testing positive for the coronavirus. He is among many top officials who tested positive. Others include his chief of staff, Andriy Yermak, and speaker of the Ukrainian parliament Dmytro Razumkov. Ukraine's rising infection rate has prompted a weekend lockdown of most businesses for at least the next three weeks.

Saturday, Nov. 14, and will last until at least Nov. 30, covering three weekends. However, sources in the Health Ministry told the Ukrainska Pravda news website that the measure will last until Dec. 31, the current expiration date for the COVID-19 quarantine.

Most non-essential businesses must be closed during the weekends. These include cafes, restaurants, and bars, which are allowed to function only for take-out orders. Malls and entertainment centers also must be closed, as must gyms, fitness centers and swimming pools.

The most sweeping ban concerns all cultural institutions, which include music venues, theaters and cinemas. One exception is institutions that produce audio-visual content, provided they restrict access to recording locations.

Businesses deemed essential are still allowed to work on the weekends. These are supermarkets, where 60% of the area is reserved for selling groceries, and pharmacies, including veterinary ones. Gas stations are allowed operate as well, but their dining areas must stay closed.

Also allowed are institutions that provide financial services, postal services and repairs.

The weekend lockdown will not affect transport. Air travel and intercity trains will operate as usual. City transport will continue to work on the weekends too.

The government also imposed a uniform nationwide quarantine, dropping its idea of "adaptive quarantine" that assigned different "quarantine zones" to different localities. The new nationwide quarantine measures correspond with those that were used for communities with the "orange level" of COVID-19 threat.

Before the government even ruled on imposing the weekend lockdown, around 300 restaurant industry workers protested the measure. The rally, called "I have a right to work," took place in front of the Cabinet of Ministers building in Kyiv on Nov. 11.

More criticism followed on social media from owners and workers of hospitality and entertainment businesses. Most argue that the government discriminated against businesses, while not shutting down public

transport, where the virus spreads actively. Many say that the government also does not provide enough relief to businesses suffering from the quarantine measures.

"Cinemas get up to 80% of their income on weekends," Dmytro Derkach, co-owner of the Planeta Kino cinema chain, said on Facebook. "We'll work for a week, after which we will have to close all our cinemas and fire 500 employees, leaving these people without jobs and wages."

At the government meeting on Nov. 11, Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said that, by halting the presence of people in entertainment venues and dining establishments, the government aims to reduce the flow of people in public transport as well. He said that the government wants to reduce people's social contacts during the weekends to stop the spread of the disease.

"Because if nothing is done, by Dec. 10 or Dec. 15, the healthcare system will not be able to admit any more patients. There will be no places in hospitals, even in the hallways," Shmyhal said.

Nationwide quarantine measures apply across Ukraine every day; to last until Dec. 31

Banned

- nightclubs, other leisure venues
- hostels and other hospitality businesses, except hotels
- planned hospitalizations, except for pregnant women, newborns, cancer and critical patients

Allowed

- public events limited to 20 people
- team sporting events without spectators
- cafes, restaurants, bars, but not between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.
- cinemas with no more than 50% of seats filled
- museums with no more than one person per 20 square meters
- gyms, fitness centers with no more than one person per 20 square meters
- all transport, but without standing passengers

Weekend lockdown

applies from 12 a.m. on Saturdays to 12 a.m. on Mondays; to last until Nov. 30

Closed

- cafes, restaurants and bars (except for take-out)
- malls and entertainment centers
- cultural institutions (except audio-visual production studios with restricted access to recording locations)
- gyms, fitness centers and swimming pools
- other stores and service businesses, like beauty salons

Open

- supermarkets, where 60% of the area is reserved for selling groceries or medicine
- medical institutions and pharmacies, including veterinary ones
- gas stations, but not dining areas
- businesses providing financial services, postal services and repairs
- all transport, including city, intercity and between regions

EDITORIALS

Act, don't hope

The election of Joseph Biden as the 46th president of the United States is good news for Ukraine, for obvious reasons.

It puts an end to the bromance between Russian dictator Vladimir Putin and Donald J. Trump, the soon-to-depart leader of the free world. It is good riddance to Trump, who tried to extort Ukraine for his own political ambitions, and ended up getting impeached for it. Only a strong bipartisan majority in Congress saved a supportive U.S. foreign policy.

The new occupant of the Oval Office is better informed about Ukraine than arguably any U.S. president before him. During his two terms as vice president, Biden visited Ukraine six times. He was instrumental in pushing ex-President Petro Poroshenko to carry out anti-corruption reforms. We expect he will be the first president since George W. Bush in 2008 to visit Ukraine again.

Understandably, his election resulted in exuberant optimism in Ukraine. Reformers expect that President Biden will continue the work of Vice President Biden, but do it even better, with more authority. Europeans happy to get rid of the divisive Trump can also be expected to react more warmly to Biden's foreign policy initiatives, which undoubtedly will include rebuilding frayed transatlantic ties, a stronger NATO, and a tougher and more unified Western stance against Russia.

Some in Ukraine get specific and dream that Biden will help resolve the deadlocked standoff between the administration of President Volodymyr Zelensky and the Constitutional Court.

While some of these hopes are well-founded, and we certainly share the expectation that Biden's presidency will be good for Ukraine, Biden is not a miracle worker.

Let's get realistic: Ukraine isn't a top priority. Hopefully it is somewhere in the top 10, and it was welcome news that Ukraine came up in reports of his initial phone calls with the leaders of Germany and France.

But Biden is about to take control of a country in crisis, with a suffering economy and divided society, where COVID-19 has infected and killed more people than anywhere else in the world. He has to cope with threats from China and Russia. He has to reclaim American leadership in promoting democracy and preventing global warming. "Throwing out all the corrupt judges in Ukraine" is way down the list.

It is more reasonable to expect Biden to help rekindle Zelensky's anti-corruption drive. The key word is "help." Ukrainians will need to do most of the work and show commitment for real change. The nation must not fall into a state of learned helplessness, unable to resolve problems on its own, and delegate the responsibility to Biden or anyone else.

For a good example of the role the U.S. can play in helping Ukraine, look at the firing of the useless and obstructionist Prosecutor General Viktor Shokin in 2016. Civil society and pro-reform lawmakers campaigned for months to get Shokin out. Biden made the final push, telling Poroshenko that Shokin had to go. It worked.

The Biden administration can help rein in the corrupt old political elites and Russian agents in Ukraine. It can be a great help, but it will be only one component of Ukraine's success. The rest is in Ukrainians' hands.

Eco-apatetic state

It takes guts to be eco-friendly in Ukraine.

At schools, nobody teaches how to sort waste. At home, nobody talks about it. By the front doors of Ukraine's apartment buildings, there are no sorting bins.

Ukraine recycles about 4% of its waste, but with such poor culture in this regard, even such modest results are a wonder. This wonder is the Ukrainian people, who read or saw somewhere that it was the right thing to do and started sorting garbage at home, amassing hoards of waste on their balconies and in larders before bringing it by public transport to sorting centers, which are usually run by volunteers.

An while the European Union countries recycle nearly 40% of their waste, Ukraine won't be able to reach such volumes if only volunteers are involved. The EU states foster the recycling culture centrally, while the Ukrainian government doesn't seem to care at all.

While the West promotes an eco-friendly lifestyle, trying to make it trendy and show how important it is for our planet, most of the waste in Ukraine, a country of 40 million people, ends up in one of 36,000 landfills, most of which are obsolete, illegal and extremely dangerous.

Poorly managed landfills contaminate soil and groundwater, while plastics that could be recycled break down into microplastic and end up dumped into the ocean, floating there for centuries and causing severe injuries and death to creatures that ingest debris or get entangled in waste.

The way to open up the recycling industry is, as nearly always in today's capitalist culture, a financial incentive. In Ukraine, there should be a law that would introduce fees for recycling people's waste and that would be included in utility bills. Once this is done, private and state companies will be ready to vie for the right to recycle waste and earn this fee.

Ukraine needs a law on recycling to introduce the fees. But developing one hasn't been on the list of priorities of the Ukrainian parliament, which has been busy with feuds between parties, the anti-corruption fight and the adoption of obvious, but important laws (like the one on lifting the moratorium on farmland sales). As a result, there's not a single active recycling factory in the country and only about 80 private firms and nonprofits doing the job as best they can. That's just ridiculous.

Without a central vision, those 4,000 sorting bins installed in Ukraine's capital that officials like to boast about look pathetic. Especially taking into account that most of them are a single bin for all recyclables and that people usually throw greasy pizza boxes and dirty milk cartons into them.

And that's the capital. Meanwhile, in the regions, sorting and recycling are just unheard of.



See these features online at kyivpost.com

Ukraine's Friend & Foe Of The Week		
 Friend	Coronavirus relief A vaccine developed by U.S.-based pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech is on the way. According to a Nov. 9 statement, the vaccine is effective in 90% of COVID-19 cases. The news is particularly welcome as a surge of cases takes place globally.	 Foe
		Russia, again The Russian mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe cannot lie effectively. In seeking to slam Ukrainian press freedoms, the mission tweeted an incident involving Russian photojournalist David Frenkel, arrested in St. Petersburg in 2017.

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Recycling & Waste Management

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Health, ecology threatened by poor medical waste disposal

By Natalia Datskevych
datskevych@kyivpost.com

It is terrifying – discarded medical waste, including plastic bags full of used bandages soaked with blood, medical masks, gloves, syringes and nine human legs.

But this is exactly what Serhiy Reznichenko, a homeless man from Bilopillya town in Sumy Oblast, found in 2016 at a local landfill.

Four years later, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the problem of proper disposal of dangerous medical waste in Ukraine seems to have gotten even worse. It's not easy to get rid of these contaminants. Much of it must be burned in special furnaces at temperatures over 1,200 degrees Celsius to kill bacteria and viruses.

In 2019, Ukrainian hospitals generated almost 98,000 tons of medical waste, according to Arzu Akberov, head of the waste control department at the State Ecological Inspection of Ukraine. Only 1% was incinerated and ended up as environmentally safe ash, while the rest was buried somewhere across 6,000 legal landfills and 33,000 illegal ones in the country.

Although there are no statistics on medical waste for this year, experts believe the tonnage will double because of the coronavirus pandemic and massive usage of protective gear by medical staff and Ukraine's residents.

Denys Petriiev, CEO at DSL-2010, the only enterprise in Kyiv that disposes of medical waste, already sees the growing volume. If previously the enterprise burned 7–8 tons of medical waste per week, now the number ranges from 20 to 30 tons.

It's out of control because the laws, financing and recycling culture haven't caught up yet, creating an ecological and epidemiological disaster for the country.



Workers of DSL-2010, the only enterprise in Kyiv that disposes of medical waste, throw used medical masks and gloves into the furnace on May 19, 2020, a few months before the furnace was shut down for repair. Much of the medical waste must be burned in special furnaces at temperatures over 1,200 degrees Celsius to kill bacteria and viruses.

The careless disposal of syringes and blood test tubes can cause life-threatening infections like HIV and hepatitis C and increase today's already rapid spread of COVID-19 across the globe. At the same time, masks and gloves, which contain microplastic and take centuries to decompose, end up dumped into the ocean causing severe injuries and death to

creatures that inject debris or get entangled into waste.

Problem's deep roots

Ukraine has never prioritized the development of a medical waste disposal system. Neither officials nor police nor citizens are paying enough attention, according to Kyrlyo Kosourov, chairman of the board of the Enterprise Association for Hazardous Waste Disposal. "Everybody is turning a blind eye on this problem," Kosourov said.

Under law, each state hospital must have a contract with a company that disposes of medical waste. In reality, it is rarely achieved because of the poor government financing.

To save money, many state hospitals turn to cheap but shady firms that promise proper disposal but just throw the garbage in landfills, according to Ecology Minister Roman Abramovsky. "If that waste ends up in landfills, it's going to be a new danger, and the risk of getting infected will grow," said Abramovsky.

Lviv-based Pulmonary Health Center, for example, where all available 170 beds in the infection department are used for patients with severe pneumonia caused by

COVID-19, is \$4.5 million underpaid in 2020, according to Lubomyr Rak, director of the center. It's not even enough to cover vital medicine, forcing hard choices on managers.

"Better equipment and human lives stand in the first place in such a decision," said Kosourov, ahead of proper disposal of waste. Iryna Hanzha, biosafety expert at the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, said that the ministry cannot control "hospitals just trying to save money."

Besides, medical waste management is expensive. While the disposal of regular waste costs just \$4 per ton, medical waste disposal is a hundred times more expensive – up to \$450 a ton.

Some, however, are doing it the right way.

Swedish company Synevo, one of the largest networks of 220 private laboratories in Ukraine, which generates around 500–600 tons of waste per year and transfers it to waste management companies, is spending up to \$260,000 for such services, according to the company's development director Nikolay Butenko. To dispose of one ton of waste, the firm pays \$430.

Greed against ecology

State hospitals can't directly sign contracts with waste disposal companies because everything has to go through the e-procurement system ProZorro, which often rewards the lowest price in a niche populated by dodgy firms.

"They just load the waste into a truck and may leave it somewhere in the woods," said Hanzha. This spring, a company took the medical waste from Kyiv's Oleksandrivska Clinical Hospital – which treats patients with COVID-19 – and threw it in a landfill near Vyshgorod in Kyiv Oblast.

"Some shady guys come and, pretending they are to dispose of medical waste, take it somewhere and then cover their tracks by using our flawed legislation," said Kosourov. "This is what this market looks like."

Petriiev says that such companies win around 70% of the tenders in Kyiv alone. "Unfortunately, some businessmen in our country don't care about harming the environment," he said.

Government response

Abramovsky, who was appointed



Denys Petriiev, CEO at DSL-2010, speaks with the Kyiv Post on Nov. 2, 2020. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in Ukraine in March, the enterprise started to incinerate more and more medical waste, burning 20-30 tons of medical waste every week, three times more than it used to burn in the past.

Advertisement

BUSINESS ADVISER

TREATING PLASTIC WASTE AS A RESOURCE IS A NEW NORMAL



Yuriy Golianych,
General Manager Household
& Recycling, Biosphere
corporation

How effective is your business in terms of reusing resources?

In Biosphere corporation, we built vertical integration into our main business.

Our Polygreen plant in Fastiv (Kyiv Oblast) is the largest polymer recycling facility in Ukraine. Since 2014, it has been recycling nearly 800 tons of plastic waste every month. There are modern equipment and powerful filters installed in the plant, making recycling completely safe for the environment.

We make recycled polyethylene granules, and up to 100% of them are used in our household business – the production of garbage bags. Every single garbage bag of Biosphere household brands – Freken BOK, Service Pro, Like It – consists of recycled granules (from 50% to 100%),

which closes the recycling loop.

Despite Biosphere itself being the producer of plastic goods, we keep the balance. Polygreen plant recycles two times more plastic than our biggest manufacturing facility in Dnipro produces.

Generally, the process looks good and we are proud to be such an example of sustainability. Still there is an issue: in Ukraine, the quality of waste has huge room for improvement. The waste we collect for recycling in Ukraine is expensive but also is of a poor quality, so we supplement it with imported resources.

For Biosphere, being a Ukrainian company and one of the leaders of hygiene and household manufacturing in Eastern Europe & Central Asia, it is strange to import waste while Ukrainian landfills are full of it.

We consider this puzzle to lack the most important parts: culture and infrastructure.

The culture of waste sorting is still in its early stages. Year after year, we see more consumers supporting “eco-friendly” trends, but most of them are not ready to stand in line at the waste sorting station on the other side of the city every weekend. Moreover, the majority of consumers who consider themselves to be eco-friendly are still not ready to pay more for “green” products. We see a vivid example with our “Go Green” product line, which is completely ECO (100% biodegradable garbage bags), but still makes up only 1% of our garbage bags sales. As the manufacturer, we are paying more attention to this topic, and encouraging consumers to be responsible and conscious should become a new normal for FMCG, retail, HoReCa and other industries.

We know that culture shift is not a one-time action, and should be supported by government with basic viable laws, sets of rules, proper communication and execution control. At the moment, while we have no effective legal framework, I am sure city councils have the potential to influence the situation on the city level. Recycling requires sorting infrastructure as a first step, and here recycling businesses are ready to build winning partnerships with municipalities. We are looking for high-quality waste resources, and municipal waste management companies do have leverage to encourage the population to change their habits – and here we are able to reach the “win-win” scenario.

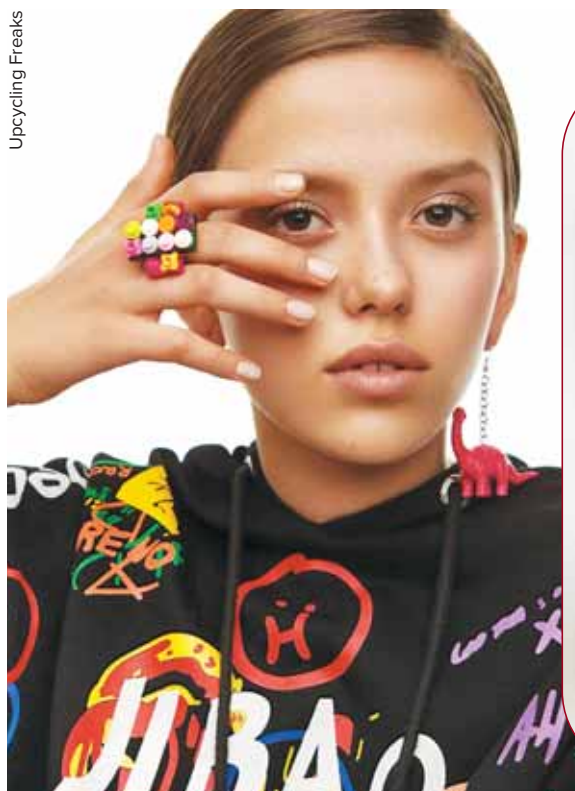
However, the issue of culture is not only about consumers and household waste. The potential of industrial waste sorting is huge enough. The majority of large Ukrainian companies who produce a lot of polyethylene waste do not perceive it as a resource – they do not reuse or recycle it, and do not sell it for recycling either. Up to the moment when industrial sorting and recycling will become obligatory, it still remains each company’s responsibility. All polyethylene waste from our production facilities are being sorted and taken back to Polygreen for recycling, and we have years of expertise in this issue and are ready to share our experience.

It is important to understand: there is no solution to make the current level of plastic consumption “green” or “safe enough.” But this waste should become a resource!

The state policy on waste management should create conditions which make businesses invest money in working with garbage as a resource, and which make excessive consumption of plastic affect the wallet of every Ukrainian. Then our citizens will be motivated to sort waste or else pay for it to be handled by specialized companies, at the same time limiting their consumption.

Recyclers will stop importing garbage from abroad due to the lack of quality-sorted waste in Ukraine, and industrial composting will become an attractive business. The state budget will increase, and Ukrainian land and water will receive less slowly decaying plastic. This looks like a long-term win-win to me.

Upcycling Freaks



Ukrainian brand Upcycling Freaks, founded by Mariya Eimanavicius, turns parts of old plastic toys, like Barbie shoes and LEGO bricks, into jewelry. Eimanavicius claims she runs an eco-friendly business, aiming to reduce waste and protect the environment.

Ukrainian companies turn garbage into business, with aim to save environment

By Daryna Antoniuk
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Ukraine produces nearly 474 million tons of waste every year and almost all of it ends up in landfills – 9,000 hectares of land covered with garbage that pollutes soil and groundwater. In 2019, Ukraine recycled only 4.1% of trash, while the rest was buried in the ground, said Oleksandr Vozny, the chief executive of Ukraine’s Waste Management Center.

Although Ukraine has enough facilities to utilize waste – nearly 80 local enterprises recycle paper, plastic and glass – the country imports recyclables from abroad to fill these factories because Ukrainians do not sort the garbage properly, according to environmental expert Kseniia Renchkovskaya.

To reduce the devastating impact of waste on the environment, local eco-conscious entrepreneurs have taken the lead.

Some of them, like Ukrainian film director Vladymyr Yudashkin, known as Vladi Yudi, are turning garbage into art installations to increase awareness about the environmental pollution.

That’s what Yudashkin did in the middle of Kyiv’s Hryshko Botanical Garden: He set up an animation studio in which all decorations are made of garbage. He meant it as a stark warning of where the world may be headed. “I wanted to show that all material objects sooner or later become trash,” Yudashkin told the Kyiv Post.

Others turn waste into new things such as clothes, wallets, jewelry and handbags through the process better known as upcycling.

“Everything deserves a second chance,” said Mariya Eimanavicius, the founder of Ukrainian brand Upcycling Freaks that turns old plastic toys into creative pieces of jewelry.

Adding value

Compared to recycling, an industrial process when garbage is broken down into particles to create new raw materials, upcycling is more about improving the discarded item and adding value to it.

Eimanavicius, for example, uses parts of old toys, like Barbie shoes, LEGO bricks or Kinder Surprise figures, to make necklaces, rings and earrings. Because the jewelry looked so bizarre, Eimanavicius didn’t think people would wear it, but the demand appears to be high. As of today, she delivers jewelry worldwide – to Canada, the U.S., the U.K., Latvia, Spain, Germany and Russia.

There are many places where Eimanavicius finds discarded trinkets: children’s toy boxes, flea markets, online marketplaces like Olx, Etsy and eBay. Although old toys are cheap, her jewelry is relatively expensive. For example, a LEGO bricks ring costs nearly \$13, while earrings with Barbie shoes are sold for nearly \$8.

“I’m trying to bring the idea of upcycling to the wider public”, she said. “This is not about toy jewelry but about the concept overall.”

Sustainable fashion

Some materials cannot be recycled and are usually dumped into landfills or burned. Outdoor banners and the ubiquitous signs of modern cities, are some of the examples. These banners contain vinyl, one of the most widely-used types of plastic but also one of the most damaging to the environment.

Although vinyl is not recyclable, it can be upcycled. This idea is at the core of Ukrainian company Re:ban that turns used banners into stylish purses, backpacks, pencil cases, and make-up bags.

Daryna Antonenko founded Re:ban to give banners a second life. Many Ukrainian companies use banners for promotion during events and need a sustainable way to dispose of them. With Antonenko’s help, they turn banners into items. A handbag made of banners, for example, costs \$12.

Because the cost of the products is so low, the company wants to expand abroad where it can compete with expensive foreign handmade products.

According to Antonenko, Re:ban is a social business: It employs retired people, refugees and people with disabilities. It also holds lectures about ecology and upcycling because this is a new trend that hasn’t yet reached wide support in Ukraine, Antonenko said.

Another Ukrainian business, Potrib, has found an alternative to

Making money from garbage? These eco-conscious businesses succeeded

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mass-produced — thus non-ecological — backpacks and makes them from fabric remnants, which it takes from Ukrainian clothing and furniture companies.

The company wants to reduce textile waste, according to its founder Ilona Shevchuk. Globally, the textile industry produces an estimated 92 million tons of garbage a year, which is worth nearly \$500 billion. It also consumes vast amounts of water, reducing the resource for poor countries and thus contributing to disease and agricultural scarcity and starvation.

Lviv-based Potrib uses textile leftovers to create colorful backpacks that are as convenient and fancy as their less ethical alternatives. One such backpack costs nearly \$48, but the price depends on competition on the market, Shevchuk told the Kyiv Post.

The fashion industry generates 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions, and this number is expected to grow as the average person buys 60% more items of clothing every year, according to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

The so-called fast-fashion, when companies produce more but at



A kid plays at animation studio Plastikwood in Kyiv on Oct. 31, 2020. Ukrainian film director Vladimyr Yudashkin, known as Vladi Yudi, has created installations out of garbage to shoot a film and increase awareness of Ukrainians about the environmental crisis.

a smaller price, harms the environment. Today the production of clothes emits more greenhouse gas emissions than international ship-

ping and aviation combined. Colorful prints and fabric release toxic chemicals that pollute clean water more than agriculture does.

Some Ukrainian brands try to reduce the impact. Ukrainian designer Yasia Khomenko, for example, creates colorful clothes

from curtains, upholstery and vintage garments.

According to Khomenko, her brand, Rcr Khomenko, was inspired by second-hand clothes and children's fairy tales. Khomenko re-designs plaid blankets into sweatshirts and creates upcycled shirts with exclusive folk prints.

Another Ukrainian brand, Tokonikomu, uses old denim fabric produced by popular brands, like Levi's, Wrangler and Lee, and turns it into new jeans, jackets and skirts.

Eco-friendly businesses like this seem to have their momentum. They drive changes, discover new technologies and can later be used to produce clothes on the industrial scale, said Renchkovskaya.

For now, Ukraine's legislature has norms regarding the management of the waste, but there are no laws on how to recycle or upcycle it, which puts the task of resolving the issue on the shoulders of local entrepreneurs and activists. In order to really ramp up upcycling and reduce the amount of recyclable waste ending up in landfills, Renchkovskaya believes Ukraine needs a combined effort that can be achieved by fostering cooperation among the government, community and business.



MINIMIZE THE AMOUNT OF PLASTICS WE USE

SUPPORT A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

IMPROVE OUR PLASTICS PACKAGING

Mobile applications & websites help reduce and recycle waste

By Daryna Antoniuk
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Going green is not just a fad nowadays – it's a common responsibility. And with all the technology and information available, never before has it been easier to protect the environment by using less and reusing more.

Here is the list of free Ukrainian mobile apps and websites to explore the joys of an eco-friendly lifestyle.

Recycling waste

Ukraine has relatively few special bins to sort and recycle waste compared to most of the European countries, but even those existing colored sorting bins aren't as effective because Ukrainians don't know how to sort the waste properly.

Many put greasy pizza boxes or dirty yogurt cups into these bins, contaminating the rest of the recyclable materials in a bin and damaging the sorting equipment. As a result, everything ends up in the landfill.

To fight the issue, Ukrainian tech company MacPaw has developed mobile app Sortui educating people about the topic and navigating them to recycling locations in their area. The app gives a step-by-step guide-



Locally-made mobile app Sortui gives a step-by-step guideline on how to dispose of recyclable materials in Ukraine properly. Many Ukrainian companies have developed similar mobile apps and websites that help reduce and recycle waste.

line on how to dispose of recyclable materials properly.

The users need to follow three simple steps. First, they choose the type of recyclable material – glass, paper, cardboard, metal, plastic or

other. Then, the app gives advice on how to prepare it for recycling. For example, to clean the material and make sure it is dry. Finally, the user can choose the nearby recycling location to dispose of trash.

The app is available on Google Play and App Store.

Ukrainian tech startup Ecola, in turn, works as a delivery service. It asks users to put clean and dry recyclables into a bag and leave it by the front door of their office or house so that Ecola's volunteers could pick it up.

The company then sells collected waste to local sorting centers that deliver sorted materials to businesses that recycle them.

Ecola's chatbot on messaging app Telegram also explains which types of waste can be recycled and how to clean it.

To test the service, users have to activate EcolaAssistBot on Telegram or join the startup's initiative via its website.

Other Ukrainian mobile apps and online platforms dedicated to recycling include goRecycle that shows places to dispose of electronic waste, Recyclemap and Epochtimes that

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Advertisement

From Global to Local: How Henkel and Its Brands Help Overcome the 'Plastics Challenge'

For people throughout the world, Henkel represents high quality, while the company's brands are a shining example of business leadership based on sustainable development principles. Throughout its journey, the company has proven that large-scale production and flagship brands can make a meaningful contribution to environmental protection, environmental responsibility and genuinely efficient use of the planet's exhaustible resources. Henkel's long-term strategy aims to triple the company's business performance for customers, partners and shareholders, while significantly reducing its environmental impact.

Caring for the environment is now integrated into the business model of global corporations. Earlier, this area was the prerogative of enthusiasts and environmental activists. However, resource shortages, growing waste emissions throughout the production chain and adding value to products have provided unique conditions when leading world-renowned companies have turned into eco-enthusiasts. Among them is Henkel, a global leader in various segments such as Beauty Care, Laundry & Home Care and Adhesive Technologies for household and industrial use.

Henkel is one of the companies that created the principles of doing business in harmony with the environment. In two years, it will be exactly 30 years since the company's first report on strategy and achieving sustainable development goals was released at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Henkel is still a global driver for these tasks, and this year, together with 28 global business leaders, it signed a corporate manifesto to governments to discuss and sign a UN treaty on plastic pollution.

With the world's population and consumption growing, the issues of eco-friendly packaging, its processing and disposal are becoming increasingly significant. In recent years, according to relevant scientific data, oceans and other vital ecosystems have annually suffered from plastic waste that has increased from 8 to 11 million tons. Over the past 50 years, humanity has increased plastics production and consumption by 20 times with only up to 14% being recycled and used for industrial purposes. Therefore, the global Anti-Plastic Agreement will mark the same historic step as the Paris Agreement a few decades ago to reduce CO2 emissions and protect our planet from the greenhouse effect.

The Anti-Plastic Manifesto, which is signed by Henkel and other global business flagships and directed to the UN, proposes to develop global standards and conclude an international agreement to fight plastic waste. It is planned to harmonize the complex regulatory landscape, since many countries have different approaches to regulating the 'plastics issue,' or they simply have none. The same applies to producers: humanity consumes more and more goods, thus producing more and more plastic waste. The global agreement will enable us to implement global, national and corporate standards to combat plastics. There must be national targets and action plans supported by innovative production and plastic waste management.

Companies will develop their closed-loop production and plastic recycling infrastructure.

Any sustainable development issues cannot be solved within one global company, one country, one production, logistics or administrative site in the world of cross-border supply chains and value formation of products. Sustainable development is a consolidated effort of global and national business flagships, governments, every factory, every site and every community. It is the responsibility of each consumer, too. It depends on each of us whether any plastics we use in our homes, kitchens and bathrooms will be recycled. Otherwise, the terrible statistics on plastic pollution will only grow. In addition, consumers should pay attention to the labeling and choose products from producers who pursue policies on the responsible use of plastics.

Moreover, Henkel's ambassadors communicate this information to consumers by conducting lectures for primary and secondary school students. This helps foster a responsible attitude and children can inform their relatives. The initiative has reached more than 8 million children in 130 countries, including Ukraine.

'Plastic waste is a problem that typifies an outdated linear economy when packaging is mostly turned into waste once the product is used. The whole world is striving to switch to a closed-loop economy. It primarily aims to collect and recycle materials for reuse in production and consumption cycles. This not only saves resources – which is a clear benefit for business – but also reduces the impact on the environment,' Nina Dombrovska, President of Henkel in Ukraine, explained on the link between achieving business efficiency and neutrality within the sustainable development strategy. The company has an ambitious goal: by 2025, Henkel plans to use 100% recyclable or biodegradable materials in the packaging of all products.

Henkel's research centers have already developed and are implementing new technologies and solutions designed to reduce the use of plastic and reduce its ecological footprint. One such innovation is to replace half of plastics in the package with paper. This material is easily recyclable, suitable for use with food and non-food products and safer for the environment thanks to biodegradability. Such packaging is already used in many of the company's products, such as Persil laundry products.

In addition to using eco-friendly technologies and recycled plastics in its own production, Henkel offers these packaging solutions to other companies. This is how companies can work as a team to reduce pollution and recycle more plastics.

To help reuse plastics, Henkel is the first global company to support the social enterprise Plastic Bank. It and its partners are building new recycling locations to enable communities to earn money or receive services by returning the collected plastics for industrial recycling. Henkel is the first company that has been producing packaging for its Social Plastic® products for two years. These are 25,000 bottles for laundry products and household detergents. The Henkel's Beauty Care business unit has also successfully tested the 'social plastic' packaging, and both business units are expanding the use of recycled plastics packaging. When buying any products with such packaging, consumers understand that it helps people and the environment.

Currently, Henkel uses 50% recycled plastics to pack the products under its brands. During 2020, with the help of Plastic Bank's socio-environmental initiative, more than 600 tons of plastics will be returned from the environment to Henkel's industrial processing cycle.

Easy changes in lifestyles can help our planet survive

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shows on the map all the nearby sorting and recycling centers in Ukraine.

Reducing damage

Steps to reduce the devastating impact humans have on the environment can be simple. This includes using one's own mug when ordering a takeaway coffee instead of a disposable one, or opting for a bicycle instead of public transport or a car.

Here are the apps that reward sustainable decisions.

Ukrainian Eco Friendly Cafe helps users find local cafes that offer discounts or free snacks for customers who bring their own coffee mugs.

Businesses all over Ukraine have joined the initiative, including Kyiv's Bali Bowl Cafe, Altruist and one of Wolkonsky bakeries on Lva Tolstoho Street.

With this project, the app developers want to reduce the use of disposable cups and plastic straws that are not recyclable.

The map with eco-friendly cafes is available in English on the company's website.

Popular Ukrainian electro-folk band Onuka launched an initiative to support waste sorting facilities in Ukraine through a music video about a world wrapped in plastic.

Everyone can join the initiative by watching and sharing the video. The money earned from it is automatically transferred to local waste sorting



People sort garbage at a recycling station of nonprofit No Waste Ukraine in Kyiv on Nov. 11, 2020. To help sort waste properly in Ukraine, some local organisations organize lectures and develop mobile apps and websites, educating the public on how to be eco-friendly.

centers. The viewers can also make their own contributions to the project.

Onuka's Ecostrum initiative is explained in English on the band's website.

Mobile app Ecoinspector allows users to stay on guard of the nature, reporting about pollution – a polluted lake, accidental garbage dump or deforestation in a particular area – to officials.

The app users can take a photo of the issue they encountered and add it to the register. The app will

alert Ukraine's state environmental service which will then tackle the problem.

As of Nov. 3, nearly 317 users have joined the initiative, resolving over 240 ecological problems in different parts of Ukraine.

The app is currently available on Google Play.

Ukrainian mobile app EcoHike, developed by tech company Global Logic, asks users to stay conscious and fight pollution even when they travel around Ukraine.

Like Ecoinspector, the app allows to map a polluted area so that volunteers or (just other app users) can clean it.

The company particularly encourages people to use the app while traveling across the Carpathian Mountains or unpopulated areas that usually stay polluted because people rarely reach them and see the garbage.

The app is available on Google Play and App Store.

Advertisement

Driving the responsible packaging movement globally and in Ukraine



Alessandro Zanelli, CEO Nestlé in Ukraine and Moldova

"Every day we touch billions of lives with our products," affirms Alessandro Zanelli, CEO of Nestlé Ukraine and Moldova. "This is a strong sign of trust of our consumers and it gives us a great sense of pride but at the same time carries a huge responsibility."

It is this feeling of responsibility, Zanelli explains, that drove Nestlé to announce its ambitious pledge in the first place. "By 2025, 100% of Nestlé's packaging will be recyclable or reusable and we will reduce use of virgin plastics by one third". Company's sustainability commitment evolved, and Nestlé recently has announced its ambition to achieve zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. These ambitions are very challenging and have massive implication in terms of development of packaging solutions and changes in production lines. Therefore, Nestlé has developed a detailed plan, based on three pillars: develop packaging for the future, help shape a waste-free future, drive new behaviours and understanding.

Nestlé is the world's biggest food and beverages company, employing some 300,000 people around the world with 403 factories working in 84 countries. In Ukraine Nestlé sells about 160 million products, meaning every week we sell an amount of units equivalent to Ukrainian population. To meet its ambitious pledge, the company has to find improved solutions for all of the more than 2,000 brands in its portfolio.

But that, argues Zanelli, is precisely the point. Because of the size of Nestlé, our impact causes ripples across the industry and can influence other players.

Develop packaging for the future

Taking responsibility for Nestlé means, first taking a long and hard look at packaging, the company's Ukraine and Moldova CEO explained.

Packaging is critical for the food industry. It plays a crucial role in protecting the product, preserving its quality and taste for the entire duration of the shelf life, guaranteeing its safety. And an attractive and functional packaging is many times determining the preference and the choice of buying or rejecting a product – and, in a sense it is a devilishly tricky game since "Consumers want something that is attractive, functional, re-closable, durable" Zanelli noted, "but this add additional complexity in making this packaging recyclable".

To address this issue, Nestlé has created the Nestlé Institute of Packaging Sciences, dedicated to the discovery and development of functional, safe and environmentally friendly packaging solutions. This is a step further to achieve the company's commitment to make 100% of its packaging recyclable or reusable by 2025. Zanelli notes some impressive achievements already, including recyclable Pet Care pouches as well as a fully recyclable paper solution for Nesquik, a chocolate drink mix and one of the company's most beloved brands. "We aim to minimize our impact on the natural environment while safely delivering to our consumers healthier and tastier products" – Zanelli continued.

The goal, in a way, is to get back to what nature does best.

"The best packaging is done by nature such as eggshell – thin, protective, wraps and preserves the product and it's fully recyclable" – says Zanelli.

Shining a light, taking responsibility - Help shape a waste-free future

But achieving global goals of Zero Waste and 100% packaging recyclable or reusable makes sense and has impact only if we are building in parallel and local infrastructure and system to manage waste more effectively.

This is particularly important in Ukraine, where the government has dawdled on the issue, frustrating a growing number of citizens and leaving local authorities to literally deal with the mess.

To deliver the most impact, Nestlé has joined forces with other Food and Beverages producers to implement the principles of extended producer responsibility – a policy approach, in which the producer's responsibility for a product is extended to the post-consumption stage, de-facto creating a circular economy concept based on companies being accountable for the waste their activities create, and hence being incentivised to deliver sustainable solutions. This has resulted in the launch of the Sustainability Committee as part of the Business Association ACC where about 16 big multinational companies cooperate on EPR approach and other sustainability issues.

"Only by joining forces we can do the right steps and pursue the

ambition and the results we need to get," Zanelli emphasized. "There is a need for industry to lead, and the EPR model means producers take ownership of the problem." The advantages of an EPR system is multiples: increase collection and recycling rates of products and materials targeted, shift financial responsibility from municipalities to producers, reduce landfilling and develop recycling and recovery channels, incentivize eco-design.

As a result, businesses operating in Ukraine are expected to undertake substantial investments in the country's infrastructure and modernise the sector. As an added benefit, it is expected to limit Ukraine's dependence on import of recyclable materials. Meanwhile, the company is also moving forward with enigmatically named "Project Lighthouse" – a joint project by Nestlé and waste management company Veolia, which implements the extended producer responsibility principles in three towns in Kyiv Oblast (Makariv, Novi Petrivtsi and Stari Petrivtsi).

The goal of the initiative, announced in September 2020, is to build the infrastructure for the collection of recyclables and implement circular economy principles across the whole process – from the moment of a product's creation to the time of recycling. As part of the initiative, Nestlé aims to invest together with partner company Veolia close to 60 million hryvnias over 5 years in cooperation with the local authorities.

Drive new behaviours and understanding

But even more important than immediate results, Zanelli argues, is the learning opportunity. "We want to learn, measure the impact of the activities and create an educational platform," he added. Educational programs are critical because we need to engage consumer in being responsible for proper sorting and separate wasting.

Once data will be analysed and the results will be available, we aim to inspire other local governments, other waste management companies and other industry players. Even when the goal is national, Zanelli noted, "experience shows that you have to go city by city."

That's where the project's name comes in. "When you are far, the Lighthouse gives you the destination but with a relatively feeble light. But as you get closer light is more powerful and things become much clearer," Zanelli explained. He hopes that making this data available will serve the industry and spur it into action – just as with the impetus produced by Nestlé's pledge itself.

BUSINESS ADVISER

Olena Osypchuk: "Our life demands new approaches to corporate environmental responsibility"



Olena Osypchuk,
Wog Communications
Director and curator of the
ECO projects

Olena Osypchuk, Wog Communications Director and curator of ECO projects, speaks about environmental protection projects to be implemented within Treating Nature with Kindness, a Wog environmental platform.

Wog is a company that treats environmental protection responsibly. Being the largest fuel supplier in the country, we cannot afford to be environmentally passive in the time when the environmental issues are raising genuine concerns among the people all across the globe. The pollution of land and oceans with plastic waste, glass and other resistant materials has reached catastrophic proportions. Further deterioration of the situation, however, can be avoided through sustainable consumption of the resources. Recycling household waste, production of thermal energy and fertilizers using this waste – all of this has long become a standard in the developed countries in Europe.

Caring for the environment is not just a part of the business strategy for Wog. We believe that the environmental initiatives aimed at the protection of Ukraine's natural resources are our personal responsibility. That is why the company has complied with the European environmental standards for many years, and worked to reduce the level of harmful emissions. We have now launched Treating Nature with Kindness, an environmental platform, within the framework of which we are implementing a number of environmental projects aimed, among other things, at promoting eco-activism among our customers.

All our projects can be divided into three categories: protecting nature from pollution, sustainable consumption of natural resources and promoting eco-responsibility among the population.

Waste sorting

As waste sorting is crucial both for the environment and for the country's economy, we've decided to provide our customers with an opportunity to participate in the environmental projects. As of today, special waste sorting bins for paper, glass and plastic have been installed at 34 Wog gas stations in the capital. Their contents are delivered separately to the corresponding companies for further processing. This is only the first stage of the project, and we plan to expand this practice throughout all gas stations of our chain.

Processing coffee grounds

Waste sorting is not the only way modern society addresses the tasks of preserving the environment. Sustainable consumption of natural resources and replacement of the numerous plastic consumables with eco-friendly ones are equally effective methods of reducing waste.

This year, in partnership with Blue Ocean Solutions (BOS), a Ukrainian environmental company, we have launched a series of research projects on processing the coffee grounds we have left from preparing the favorite drink of Ukrainian drivers. The first one of these products is already being used in the Wog chain – the coffee grounds combined with waste paper are turned into convenient biodegradable cup holders. The next step is the replacement of plastic caps for cups with a more eco-friendly substitute made of coffee grounds. BOS is already working on their production technology. In addition, we supply the coffee grounds that remain after the coffee is made at the gas stations in Lutsk for processing to Pasternak Company, where they are used for making organic fertilizer – vermicompost.

Replacement of plastic straws with quality paper straws manufactured by BOS is yet another step we have taken towards the reduction of plastic waste. Very few coffee shops can boast a paper straw that can retain its properties for up to 1.5 hours in boiling water, but Wog succeeded.

Battery collection and recycling

However, we shouldn't forget that there is also another issue that we face – proper recycling of hazardous waste. Many industrial products cannot be simply thrown into a garbage bin. Ordinary batteries are probably the most problematic waste. A small battery can poison an average of 16 square meters of land around itself, if its surface is damaged as a result of corrosion, which is inevitable at an illegal landfill. Meanwhile, thousands of batteries are dumped at such landfills. Heavy metals in the batteries pollute the soil, penetrate the groundwaters and then rivers, which supply our cities with water, poisoning not only animals, but also people.

The harm from improper disposal of batteries is incomparable to their size, which is why people have been urged for many years to bring them to special collection points. Unfortunately, the only plant in Ukraine processing recycled batteries ceased its operations in this area back in 2018. For this reason, Ukraine simply doesn't have a place where such hazardous waste can be recycled.

Together with Batteries, Give Up!, a public organization, we will start collecting batteries again, guaranteeing their 100% recycling at GreenWEEE, a specialized plant in Romania. Taking into account that there are Wog gas stations even in the most remote parts of the country, even the residents of small towns and villages in Ukraine will be able to dispose of their batteries.

The future of our planet is everybody's concern. At Wog, we believe it is our duty to show that responsible treatment of waste sorting, recycling and correct disposal does not require excessive efforts. We are hoping that our customers and colleagues in the market will also decide to support environmental projects and the sustainable consumption philosophy. Together, we can do so much more!



www.wog.ua



A woman takes off her mask in Kyiv on Oct. 28, 2020. Wearing medical masks in public places is one of the requirements from the Ministry of Health to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus. These masks along with other types of medical waste must be burned in special furnaces at temperatures over 1,200 degrees Celsius to kill bacteria and viruses, but often they end up in landfills.

Poor medical waste management can turn into ecological disaster

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ecology minister in June, announced large-scale inspection of companies disposing of medical waste. The inspection started in November, and the minister thinks that many companies will fail it. "Maybe only half of them will make it," he said.

Abramovsky says that poor financing of his ministry is to blame. Inspectors often can't even rely on money to cover their travel expenses to other Ukrainian cities, let alone purchase modern equipment. "It's not right. Our inspectors need to have an ability

to perform proper work," said Abramovsky.

He hopes that the situation will improve after the parliament passes in a second reading a bill to oblige waste management firms to equip vehicles transporting hazardous and medical waste with tracking devices.

The bill will also introduce pre-inspections of these firms before issuing them licenses and will significantly increase fines for violating the law – in some cases up to 10 times. Currently, the fine for violating any of the hazardous waste management procedures is a paltry \$63.

The law, however, isn't on the parlia-

ment's agenda, and Abramovsky doesn't know when to expect it to be passed.

Positive tendency

Amid alarmingly low numbers on proper disposal of medical waste and scary pictures of landfills, Petriev sees at least one positive trend – more medical workers started to take the problem of waste in hospitals seriously. "It's the positive based on fear of the disease," he said.

Today, much more waste is sorted and disinfected, as medical workers "have a fear, just like we do," said Petriev. 📌



A worker changes heat resistant bricks inside a furnace for the medical waste incineration at the Kyiv's only enterprise that can dispose of hazardous waste, DSL-2010, on Nov. 2 in Kyiv, having used the furnace for several years, the company had to halt it for two months for repair. It plans to put it back into operation by the end of November.

Buried in garbage, Ukraine in dire need of recycling plants

By Liza Semko

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Ukraine's landfills are overflowing and life-threatening.

The country has 6,107 legal landfills and dumps and 26,610 illegal dumps. Most of them can't hold any more waste and don't meet safety standards, posing great harm to the environment and public health.

The Hrybovytske landfill in Lviv Oblast, for instance, was closed only after it took the lives of one ecologist and three firefighters, who were buried under waste as they tried to extinguish a fire.

Meanwhile, a 64-hectare landfill in Kyiv Oblast, the largest one in Ukraine, is dangerously overloaded.

The only way out is safe disposal of waste through recycling. But Ukraine recycles only about 6% of its waste, and without greater state support, it will be mission impossible to ramp up the volume.

Progress would mean building recycling factories. Ukraine, remarkably, has none. As a result, the small amount of recycling done by private firms is all there is to battle the issue.

One example

Most solid waste goes to landfills and dumps, where it decomposes and emits toxic and polluting materials.

Apart from amassing microplastic that takes centuries to break down and can kill animals if they ingest it, landfills and dumps accumulate biogas and leach harmful liquids. Biogas can ignite fires and leachate can poison water supplies.

That's why both need to be collected. While biogas can be collected and used to generate energy, leachate can only be filtered and then discharged back into the environment when it's safe.

Legal landfills are equipped with special systems that protect from

contamination, but the illegal ones aren't. At the same time, most legal landfills were created dozens of years ago and don't meet safety standards anymore.

In Pidhirtsi, for example, a village 28 kilometers south of Kyiv, there is a landfill No. 5. It started to work 34 years ago and, as of today, about 465,000 tons of trash are buried there every year. Ecologists were concerned about its danger back in 2007 when they found out that some poisonous substances leaked from it into the groundwater.

Andrii Hrushchynskyi, the head of Kyivspetstrans, a municipal company which operates this landfill, says that it will be made safer and replaced when another landfill or a recycling plant opens.

"The project of the recovery of the (landfill) includes covering the trash with a special film, forming a layer to collect biogas, installing infrastructure for rainwater and leachate drainage," Hrushchynskyi says.

After the landfill is closed, it will be necessary to keep a drainage system and biogas extraction system working even after the shutdown.

The only safe alternative is to build solid waste recycling factories, which would collect recyclable material, sort it and sell to different companies, thus reducing the amount of waste that ends up in landfills.

Why no factories?

Periodically officials and mayors of Zhytomyr, Chernihiv, Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities promise to build a recycling plant but never deliver. Experts say that the officials fail to fulfill the promises for several reasons: lack of funding, flawed legislation and no will to proceed.

For instance, in 2013, a solid waste recycling plant opened in Rivne Oblast, only to be closed soon after that. The reason was the absence of fees for recycling, which people



A bulldozer drives at the landfill No. 5 in Pidhirtsi, Kyiv Oblast. Founded 34 years ago, the landfill has about 465,000 tons of trash buried in it annually, posing a great risk to the local environment.

should pay in their utility bills, which the plant to live off.

The plant has been inactive for seven years.

"First of all, Ukraine must pass laws that will allow it to build the (recycling) industry. As of now, the law on waste management has only been passed in the first reading," Hrushchynskyi says.

Iha Melen-Zabramna, head of legal unit at nonprofit Environment People Law, agrees that Ukraine needs a new law on waste management, which would include clauses on recycling. And when the law introduces fees for recycling, specialized plants will appear.

Today Ukrainians pay for a waste management service that includes two components: waste collecting and burial. Most European countries, meanwhile, pay for collecting, recycling and disposing. And Kyivans pay for the service only about Hr 36 (\$1.3) per month, which isn't enough to fund recycling.

"When we say that European waste recycling companies have

multibillion dollar turnovers, that's true, but it's because the waste recycling rate is between 60 and 150 euros per ton," Hrushchynskyi says.

Apart from the legislature, Melen-Zabramna says that Ukraine lacks money to fund technology research and human capital to educate the public, primarily local residents who often speak against the construction of a plant near their homes.

Authorities in Lviv, Khmelnytskyi and Kharkiv oblasts have, despite the obstacles, started building recycling plants.

Eugenia Aratovska, founder of nonprofit No Waste Ukraine, however, thinks they are rushing. First, Ukrainians should learn how to sort waste and only then build solid waste recycling plants, she says.

All solid waste, including paper, glass, plastic and metals, is thrown into one container in Ukraine, which would make it difficult for a recycling plant to sort the waste and as a result, reduce the amount of recyclable material a plant can sell in the end, Aratovska says.

Sorting organizations

Despite all obstacles, some volunteers still recycle the waste to reduce the amount of garbage in landfills. One of the organizations sorting the recyclable materials is No Waste Ukraine.

The employees of the station on 25/4 Saperno-Slobidska St. collect glass, paper and plastic. They also help people sort waste and then deliver it to the intermediary companies that, in turn, deliver it to the recycling companies.

According to Aratovska from No Waste Ukraine, there are about 100 recycling companies in the country. For No Waste Ukraine, it is difficult to collect and store a lot of waste at once, so the company cooperates with intermediaries. The recyclable materials go to glass factory Vetropack in Gostomel, plant Polygrin in Fastiv, responsible for polymer recycling and others.

According to the organization's report, in 2019, No Waste Ukraine collected and delivered 214 tons of recyclable materials.

Apart from No Waste Ukraine, municipal enterprise Kyivkomunservis is contributing to the development of the recycling infrastructure in the capital.

The company has installed about 3,000 net bins that are designed for containing various kinds of waste altogether. However, net bins are less sustainable than bell bins, which require people to separate different waste from one another before throwing away, as the separated waste can later be sold. For that reason, Kyivkomunservis has started installing bell bins for glass, paper and plastic across Kyiv. There are now 759 of them, but according to Maksym Liashkevych, the enterprise's head, the aim is to reach 1,000 bins in the foreseeable future. 🌱

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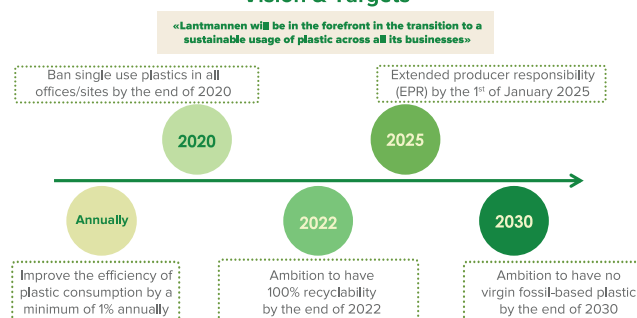
Lantmännen Cerealia – Together we take responsibility from field to fork

Lantmännen is an agricultural cooperative and Northern Europe's leader in agriculture, machinery, bioenergy and food products. Lantmännen is owned by 20,000 farmers and with grain at the heart of our operations, we refine arable land resources to make farming thrive. Here in Ukraine we belong to the food sector of Lantmännen. Everything we do when it comes to responsibility helps minimize risks and build trustable business. The new Lantmännen Plastic Strategy aims to reduce the usage of unnecessary plastics, create circular loops and get rid of single-use plastics.

Lantmännen wants to take a stance regarding responsible plastic consumption. Therefore, a project group was put together to develop a plastic strategy. The ultimate goal of the strategy is that Lantmännen takes responsibility for its plastic consumption, and is in the forefront of the transition to recycled and/or fossil-free plastic sources.

The strategy consists of a plastic vision and five key targets:

Vision & Targets



- The annual target of improving the efficiency of our plastic consumption by 1% could be done by decreasing thickness and size, replacing a package with another material to optimise the plastic consumption and costs per sold unit.
- By removing all single-use plastics, we set an example and we signal that we take the issue seriously by replacing it with sustainable alternatives. Instead of following EU-legislation that requires everybody to stop using single-use plastics by 2021, we have decided to be in the forefront by stopping a year earlier.
- In order to create circular streams in the plastics industry, we must ensure that all packaging and other plastics are recyclable. The recyclability makes sure that the plastics can be used several times, instead getting burned or dumped after being used once.
- By 2025, the EU will require that all producers must take responsibility for their packaging post-consumption, meaning that we must have clear schemes and plans for each and every type of our packaging. The EU has promised to share further details on this regulation in the years to come.
- To become fossil-fuel independent, we need to stop using virgin fossil-based plastics, and instead turn toward recycled or renewable sources to create new plastics.

In Ukraine, Lantmännen Cerealia has already rejected plastic single use cutlery in the offices and production facilities and has changed them to reusable cutlery, such as glass, ceramic and iron where it's applicable. Our aim is not only to exchange single use plastic for another single use material, but to find, where possible, solutions to use reusable materials to reduce any waste. In places where reusable cups were not possible to use, we have exchanged them for paper cups. Another step that we have taken is to transition to decomposable waste



Yevheniia Lepkha
HR & LEAD Manager

Liudmyla Zhupina
Procurement manager

packages in offices and production facilities. But what we have seen so far is a limited number of market options for biodegradable garbage bags. Thus, we are still striving to fully complete this step in our plastic removal strategy. Other steps on our road map to follow our plastic strategy are coming and we will do our best to find better solutions for sustainable business development, says Igor Chervak, country manager of Lantmännen Cerealia UA.

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Highlights of Biden's 6 trips to Ukraine as US vice president

By Brian Bonner
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U.S. President Barack Obama delegated the front-man role for American policy in Ukraine to his vice president, Joseph Biden, who will take office as the American president on Jan. 20, 2020.

Biden made one trip in 2009 during the presidency of Viktor Yushchenko, but the rest came following the EuroMaidan Revolution that ousted the corrupt Viktor Yanukovich as president in 2014.

Given Biden's attachment to Ukraine and recognition of Russia as a global threat, there are expectations that he will make the first presidential visit to the nation since George W. Bush came in 2008.

Some critics saw Obama's outsourcing of Ukraine policy to his vice president and his hands-off posture as disdain for Ukraine's strategic importance to the Western world and his gross underestimation of the threat to world peace posed by Russia – a threat that the United States is slowly starting to recognize after the Kremlin's blatant interference in the Nov. 8, 2016, U.S. election on behalf of presidential candidate Donald J. Trump.

Obama resisted supplying Ukraine with modern defensive weapons to



Volodymyr Petrov

Then-U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden waves as he comes out of a car during his arrival for a meeting with then-President Petro Poroshenko in Kyiv on Jan. 16, 2017.

TOP 10 KYIV POST exclusives online this week

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3. Ukrainian immigrant elected to US House of Representatives
4. Zelensky, chief of staff Yermak test positive for coronavirus (UPDATED)
5. Ukraine's Fate
6. Parliament imposes fines for not wearing a mask
7. Klitschko wins mayoral election in Kyiv, narrowly avoids runoff
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prevail in Russia's war. The Kremlin interference included hacking the Democratic National Committee's emails, the presence of Yanukovich's ex-adviser Paul Manafort as Trump's campaign manager and Trump's opaque relationship with Russia – a relationship that looks shady in light of his constant praise of Vladimir Putin, who has created a kleptocratic dictatorship and who is regarded as a war criminal by many in the world.

Here are some key Biden remarks about Ukraine:

July 21, 2009–1st visit:

Key quote: "We're working, as you know, Mr. President, to reset our relationship with Russia. But I assure you and all the Ukrainian people that it will not come at Ukraine's expense. To the contrary, I believe it can actually benefit Ukraine. The more substantive relationship we have with Moscow, the more we can defuse the zero-sum thinking about our relations with Russia's neighbors."

April 22, 2014–2nd visit:

Key quote during his speech to the Verkhovna Rada: "You have to fight the cancer of corruption that is endemic in your system right now. It's not just the United States. You need a court system that not only you and your people, but the rest of the world assumes can actually adjudicate fairly disputes among people."

June 7, 2014–3rd visit:

Attends inauguration of President Petro Poroshenko.

Nov. 21, 2014–4th visit

Key quote: "Push forward the reform agenda that has been agreed upon and the Ukrainian people – an agenda that the Ukrainian people have so resoundingly endorsed: stronger democratic institutions; a more accountable government; greater integration with Europe; a more prosperous economy; and resolute efforts to root out the cancer of corruption that has hobbled Ukraine for a long time. It will face no more consequential mission than confronting corruption. President Poroshenko has shown a seriousness of purpose, and the Rada has passed important anti-corruption legislation. Now the real challenge is seeing it through."

Dec. 7–8, 2015–5th visit

Key quote: "I've urged the president to continue to work very strongly with Ukraine's democratic forces. That's what the Ukrainian people expect, and that's what they deserve. And that's how Ukraine is going to continue to move forward. All Ukrainians, officials, business leaders, the business community, everyday citizens – they've got to work together to root out corruption that has held this country back for so long. Oligarchs and non-oligarchs must play by the same rules. They have to pay their taxes, settle their disputes in court – not by bullying judges. That's basic. That's how nations succeed in the 21st century. Corruption siphons away resources from the people. It

Fighting Russia & corruption were key themes of Biden's visits

page 12 →

blunts the economic growth, and it affronts the human dignity. We know that. You know that. The Ukrainian people know that. When Russia seeks to use corruption as a tool of coercion, reform isn't just good governance, it's

self-preservation. It's in the national security interest of the nation."

Jan. 16, 2017—6th visit

Key quote from farewell address to Ukraine's parliament:

"If you continue carrying your progress forward, then not only will you continue to build a more open, more



Then-U.S. Vice President Joe Biden pays his respects to people killed during the EuroMaidan Revolution on Dec. 7, 2015. The revolution ousted Kremlin-backed President Viktor Yanukovich on Feb. 22, 2014. Biden made five visits to Ukraine after the revolution as the point man for then-U.S. President Barack Obama's foreign policy in Ukraine.



Then-U.S. Vice President Joe Biden (L) and then-Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko lay wreaths near at the Holodomor memorial in Kyiv on July 21, 2009.

democratic, more prosperous future that the Ukrainian people deserve, you will keep the international community united behind you in that effort... And if you can continue to make progress, Mr. President, if you keep doing the hard work and making the difficult choices to put Ukraine first, I promise you the American people will stand with you. This next year is going to be a very, very telling year – a very telling year."

Other key remarks about Ukraine from Washington:

April 28, 2015 – Video remarks for delivery to the International Support conference for Ukraine in Kyiv on April 28, 2015

Key quote: *"Use the new laws on the books, the new leadership in place to investigate and prosecute corruption—past and present— at all levels. There's no better way to prove your determination to end business as usual. Pass an antitrust bill, antitrust legislation. Keep working to reform the election laws to ensure that, as decentralization moves forward, local government is really representative and accountable. And above all, keep listening to your*

people – make sure that your work is transparent and that civil society has a voice in this process."

Remarks at the U.S.-Ukraine Business Forum in Washington, D.C. on July 13, 2015

Key quote: *"Above all, Ukraine needs to confront the corruption that has kept this country from taking advantage of the tremendous human capital it possesses. It doesn't seem like 36 calls, it seems like 100 probably to Arseniy and to the President, but that's a topic of almost all of our calls. Corruption siphons away resources. It weakens economic growth. It destroys trust in government. It hollows out militaries. And it's an affront to the dignity of the people of Ukraine."*

And as Ukrainians know in their bones, it's not enough to talk about change; we have to deliver, you have to deliver change. That's why I commend the Prime Minister and President Poroshenko for undertaking real reforms. Ukraine has a strategy and new laws to fight corruption, a new head of independent national anti-corruption bureau. Now, they've got to put people in jail. They've got to actually do it."



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Sergii Leshchenko: Biden should set date for Zelensky meeting now

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the U.S. sentenced him to 7.5 years in prison for his many crimes.

Despite the obvious injustice of Giuliani's slander, it was clear to me that my presence on Zelensky's team could complicate his relations with the American authorities. I had no right to risk that: Ukraine needs the support of the U.S., especially due to Russia's military aggression. So I distanced myself from the new administration, and didn't seek a position in it.

But then Giuliani and his associates tried to get compromising information from Ukraine to hurt Trump's opponent, former U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden, and influence the 2020 U.S. elections. Their efforts backfired, eventually resulting in impeachment proceedings against Trump.

Yet even then, Giuliani kept repeating this lie about my alleged interference in the U.S. election four years ago. That is why the results of the 2020 U.S. presidential election bring moral satisfaction to me.

Russia's interference

At the same time, I am worried because, in today's America, I see problems that were previously typical for Ukraine — political hatred, polarization of society, attempts to undermine election results, the spread of fake news and fake accounts on social media.

All these technologies were brought to Ukraine by agents of Russian influence. This proves that the Kremlin has long spread its influence beyond Russia's neighbors, and across the ocean.

Fifteen years ago, the furthest western country for Russian influence was Montenegro, where Manafort and Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska tried to shape the political landscape. Now the testing ground for Russian methods is the U.S. itself, which for many years has been a model for democratic change in the post-Soviet space. Biden's administration will have to find a way to curb Russia's technology of spreading false narratives.

In Ukraine, Biden's victory provided a reason for optimism for a large group of reformers, civil society leaders, and anti-corruption activists who have been targeted by pro-Russian media claiming that they are trying to reshape Ukraine's electoral map.

Using the technologies of manipulation, buying and launching TV channels, filling air-time with their puppet experts and inventing conspiracy theories, these agents have already penetrated deep into Ukrainian society. Thanks to



Ukrainians in traditional clothes welcome U.S. Vice President Joe Biden after his plane landed at Kyiv Boryspil International Airport on July 20, 2009.

these efforts, Viktor Medvedchuk's pro-Russian Opposition Platform — For Life party performed well during last month's elections in Ukraine and secured their position in local councils.

And even now, after Biden is recognized as the president-elect by all leaders of the democratic world, this infrastructure of political deception, created with Russian money in Ukraine, is promoting the fake narrative that the victory was stolen from Trump.

This is done with the simple goal of delegitimizing the new U.S. administration in the eyes of Ukrainian society, especially since that administration will be more intolerant to corruption and pro-Russian influence in Ukraine and will continue the bipartisan fight to stop Russia's Nord Stream 2 pipeline.

Russian propaganda and its agents in Ukraine are already creating the preconditions for "poisoning"

Zelensky's relations with the new American leader.

It's not hard to predict what message Russian propaganda will be pushing in Ukraine. Twenty years ago, Medvedchuk and his brainwashing machine demonized former U.S. National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski as an evil foreign puppet master. In recent years, they have demonized philanthropist George Soros and his "agents" in Ukraine. Now they will start labeling all pro-Western reformers as "Biden's agents."

Another line of work of pro-Russian forces in Ukraine is growing anti-American politicians for their further integration into the government in order to influence Ukraine's geopolitical vector and try to turn it towards Russia.

Therefore, I have to warn the incoming U.S. administration and the American expert community not to underestimate the risk that pro-Russian forces pose for the pro-Western vision that Ukraine adopted after the EuroMaidan Revolution that toppled Yanukovich on Feb. 22, 2014.

What the US can do

Russian agents in Ukraine rely on the U.S. They use American-created social media, transfer money through American correspondent accounts, send their children to study in the

United States and go there for vacations and medical treatment.

It is time for the U.S. to react.

Recently, YouTube deleted the channel of former Prime Minister of Ukraine Mykola Azarov, who fled to Russia and from there spread false narratives around the world. Medvedchuk was also banned. But his party's TV channels NewsOne, ZIK, and Channel 112 continue to carry out a similar mission on YouTube, as does their political satellite Anatoly Shariy, a pro-Russian video blogger who even created a pro-Russian political party which won seats in local councils — a success entirely based on his YouTube popularity.

If YouTube, a platform that belongs to U.S. company Google, tightened its policies on misinformation and removed the channel of Shariy and similar Russian propaganda accounts, it would have been a great service to Ukraine.

Besides, the U.S. should not limit itself to sanctions against one lawmaker, Andriy Derkach, who was recognized by the U.S. government as a Russian agent trying to influence the 2020 elections. Punishment should be imposed on all of Derkach's allies. He listed them in his fake dossier he called "DemoCorruption." These are former and current lawmakers Oleksandr Dubinsky, Valentyn Nalyvaichenko, Oleh Voloshyn, Andriy Artemenko, former prosecutors Yuriy Lutsenko, Viktor Shokin, Kostyantyn Kulik and others.

I hope that the Biden administration will pay more attention to the viability of anti-corruption reforms in Ukraine. In particular, the United States should become an ally of Ukrainian civil society to preserve anti-corruption achievements, which in recent months have become targets for pro-Russian forces and Ukraine's Constitutional Court, which is destroying the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine, depriving the work of the National Agency for Preventing Corruption of meaning and threatening the Supreme Anti-Corruption Court.

I also fully support the idea of American political scientist Anders Aslund to conduct targeted cam-

paigns to curb Ukrainian oligarchs, who are also media moguls like Medvedchuk, Ihor Kolomoisky and Dmytro Firtash. However, it should not be limited to this list. The U.S. government should also help curb the oligarchic influence of Rinat Akhmetov, who has spent hundreds of millions to whitewash his reputation through PR and lobbyists, but continues to live and run his business in Ukraine by the principles of predatory crony-capitalism.

“

I am worried because, in today's America, I see problems that were previously typical for Ukraine — political hatred, polarization of society, attempts to undermine election results, the spread of fake news and fake accounts on social media.

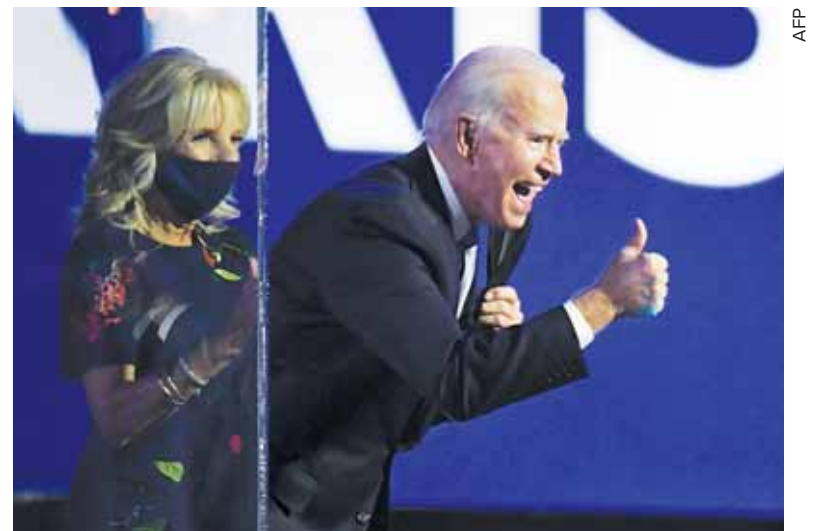
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Sergii Leshchenko

And one last thing: President-elect Biden has never met with Zelensky. But the two have an unusual connection: In 2019, Trump demanded that Zelensky start an investigation into Biden's son, in exchange for U.S. military aid to Ukraine and an invitation to the Oval Office. Zelensky never gave him that, and never got the meeting.

So Biden could start by doing what his predecessor never did — name the date of his meeting with the Ukrainian president in the White House.

Sergii Leshchenko is a Kyiv Post columnist, investigative journalist and former member of the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine's parliament. ☞



U.S. President-elect Joe Biden and his wife Jill Biden, deliver remarks in Wilmington, Delaware, on Nov. 7, 2020, when he was unofficially declared the winner of the U.S. presidential election. He will become the 46th president on Jan. 20, 2021.



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Ukrainian politicians, Biden sees through you



Matthew Kupfer
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In 1998, the groundbreaking African-American novelist Toni Morrison controversially called Bill Clinton “our first black president.”

Morrison meant it metaphorically, suggesting that black Americans could relate to Clinton’s background and treatment by his political opponents. More than a decade later, in 2011, New York magazine called Barack Obama America’s “first Jewish president” for a story on his troubled relations with Israel, but strong ties with the American Jewish community.

Now, the United States has elected a new president: Joseph Biden, Obama’s former vice president. By these standards, he could easily be labeled America’s “first Ukrainian president” for his deep knowledge of Ukraine and experience facing the kind of “black PR” attacks common in the country’s dirtiest political struggles.

As Obama’s point person on the country, Biden forcefully pushed for reforms and action on anti-corrup-

tion – and pro-reform Ukrainians hope he can repeat that performance as president.

But Ukrainian leaders should not be naïve. While Biden’s election is positive news for Ukraine, he will have no illusions about the country and its limited lack of progress. He knows Ukraine too well.

Engaged in Ukraine

Since 1991, there has never been a U.S. leader with more experience in Ukraine.

In eight years as vice president, Biden made six visits to Ukraine, five of them after the 2014 EuroMaidan Revolution, which ousted corrupt President Viktor Yanukovich.

In February 2014, following violent crackdowns on the EuroMaidan protesters, Biden called Yanukovich by phone and told him that it was time for him to “walk away” from power. According to the president-elect’s memoir, the Ukrainian president fled the country the very next day.

After the revolution, Biden was



Then-U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden speaks in the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine’s parliament, in Kyiv on Dec. 8, 2015. As vice president, Biden was the point person on Ukraine for the Barack Obama administration.

equally forceful.

In 2016, he pressured the Ukrainian government to fire Prosecutor General Viktor Shokin, threatening to withhold over \$1 billion in U.S. loan guarantees if the official kept his job. Shokin was

widely believed to be sabotaging corruption cases, and Ukrainian civil society and the country’s Western partners wanted him gone.

Biden got his way, and Shokin got the boot.

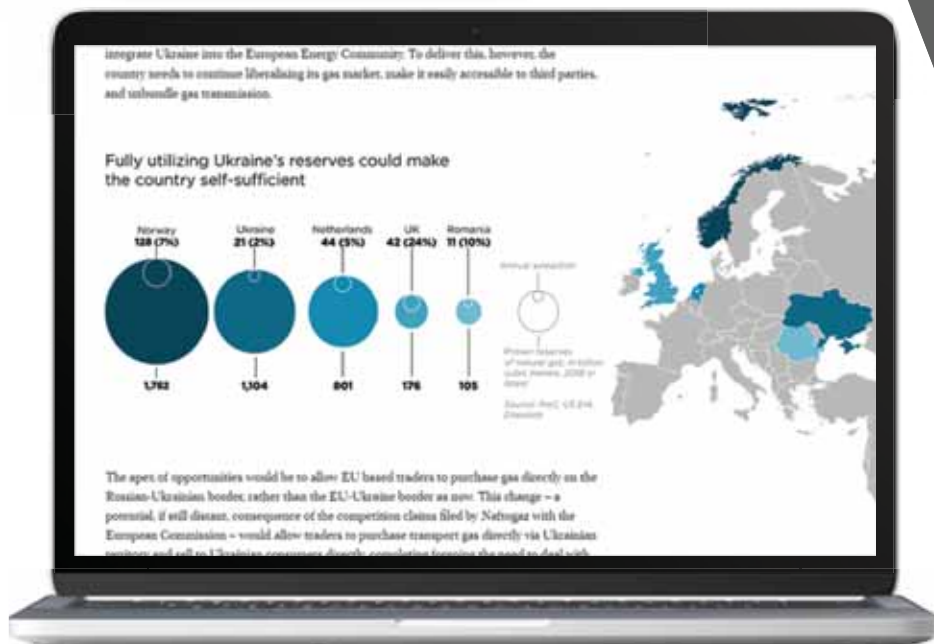
But the vice president’s role in

this saga would later come back to haunt him. In the runup to the 2020 U.S. presidential election, Biden’s opponents in Washington and Kyiv alleged that he had wanted Shokin

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Biden chronicles his frustration with Ukraine in his 2017 book

By Brian Bonner
Bonner@kyivpost.com

Editor's Note: The following story was published on Dec. 22, 2017.

Joseph Biden, the former U.S. vice president who was President Barack Obama's point man on Ukraine, writes of his frustrations with President Petro Poroshenko and Ukraine's endemic corruption in his new memoir.

Biden has been touring the United States to promote the book published on Nov. 14 entitled "Promise Me, Dad: A Year Of Hope, Hardship And Purpose." He is also considered to be a strong Democratic Party candidate for president in 2020.

While much of the book is devoted to son Beau Biden's struggle against brain cancer that claimed his life on May 30, 2015, the former vice president writes extensively about Ukraine's crises during his eight years as vice president from 2009 to 2017.

Biden made six trips to Ukraine while in office. He finished the book in the summer of 2017, after leaving office with Obama on Jan. 20, 2017.

Here are five key excerpts:

Yanukovych leaves

Biden writes that he telephoned then-Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych and told him to leave office because he had lost the trust of the Ukrainian people after Yanukovych's police snipers assassinated dozens of EuroMaidan Revolution demonstrators in late February 2014.

The day after Biden's phone call, Yanukovych fled power and went to Russia, where he lives in exile. He is still wanted in Ukraine on murder and corruption charges.

"I made the last of many urgent calls to Yanukovych in late February of 2014, when his snipers were assassinating Ukrainian citizens by the dozens and we had credible reports that he was contemplating an even more vicious crackdown," Biden writes. "I had been warning him for months to exercise restraint in dealing with his citizens, but on this night, three months into the



Then-Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk and then-U.S. Vice President Joe Biden meet in Kyiv in 2014.

demonstrations, I was telling him it was over; time for him to call off his gunmen and walk away. His only real supporters were his political patrons and his operators in the Kremlin, I reminded him, and he shouldn't expect his Russian friends to rescue him from this disaster. Yanukovych had lost the confidence of the Ukrainian people, I said, and he was going to be judged harshly by history if he kept killing them. The disgraced president fled Ukraine the next day—owing to the courage and determination of the demonstrators—and control of the government ended up temporarily in the hands of a young patriot named Arseniy Yatsenyuk."

'Bickering' duo

Biden comes across in the book as more of a fan of ex-Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, ousted after more than two years as prime minister on April 14, 2016 after bitter feuding with Poroshenko. Biden writes about his admiration for Yatsenyuk, but has less praise for Poroshenko.

In particular, Biden writes about frequently trying to get both of them to put the nation's interests ahead of their own. One such attempt at crisis management came in November 2014, six months after Poroshenko came to power and shortly after Ukraine on Oct. 26, 2014, elected a new parliament.

Biden had just returned home to the U.S. after a Nov. 21–22, 2015, trip to Kyiv in an attempt to get Poroshenko and Yatsenyuk to work together. The two top factions in parliament, led by Poroshenko and Yatsenyuk, were having trouble forming a coalition as Russian President Vladimir Putin pressed ahead with his war against Ukraine, Biden writes.

"Ukraine's newly elected democratic government was in real danger of crumbling under the weight

of Putin's cynical push. Ukraine's new president and its new prime minister, meanwhile, were having ongoing trust issues. President Petro Poroshenko and Prime Minister Yatsenyuk were from competing parties, and the recent elections had been bruising and divisive," Biden writes. "Their constituencies remained more invested in scoring political points than in governing. The Poroshenko and Yatsenyuk factions were wasting energy bickering with one another when they should have been creating institutions and security forces capable of defending against Putin."

Biden writes that he worried that "the bravery and sacrifice of so many Ukrainian people" in toppling Yanukovych in favor of a democratic future in the European Union "would come to nothing."

"I had spent months exchanging phone calls with both Poroshenko and Yatsenyuk, trying to convince them each, separately, to put loyalty to country over loyalty to political party," Biden writes. "I had invested two full days in Kyiv the previous week trying to make Poroshenko and Yatsenyuk see the danger of their stubborn unwillingness to work together. I was still working the problem on my way out of Kyiv on Nov. 22, just four days earlier."

After he returned home, Yatsenyuk called him that Thanksgiving Day weekend to tell Biden that a coalition government had been formed. Biden writes that he felt "pretty good" about the news.

'Hard on Poroshenko'

Biden writes of his frustration with Poroshenko's lackluster fight against corruption since his election in May 2014.

"I had been hard on Poroshenko since his election nine months earlier. I'd made it clear to him that

he could not afford to give the Europeans any excuse for walking away from the sanctions regime against Russia. He had to continue to fight the elements of corruption that were embedded in the political culture of Ukraine's Soviet and post-Soviet governance—both in Yatsenyuk's rival party and in Poroshenko's own," Biden writes.

Biden continued to press authorities to fight corruption throughout his tenure as vice president.

He writes about another episode in summer 2015, when Yatsenyuk came to Washington, D.C., as part of the first U.S.-Ukraine Business Forum on July 13.

During the forum, Biden exhorted Ukraine's leaders to get tough on corruption. "Now you've got to put people in jail," the vice president told Yatsenyuk in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, in one of the speech's many memorable lines.

In the book, Biden writes: "Prime Minister Yatsenyuk was visiting Washington that day, and I needed

to be there to deliver the message that we were standing by the Ukrainian people and their government, but also to make sure he understood that he and Poroshenko needed to speed up anticorruption reforms if they wanted continued assistance."

'Pentant for corruption'

Biden also writes that he was worried about the European Union resolve in supporting Ukraine and standing up to Russia in the war. He, in particular, writes about his disappointment that German Chancellor Angela Merkel, during the Feb. 6–8, 2015, Munich Security Conference, wasn't harder on Putin.

"She was not strong enough for my taste," Biden writes of Merkel's speech. "And I was disappointed when, after her speech, she flatly refused to consider providing any real weaponry to Ukraine's over-matched military."

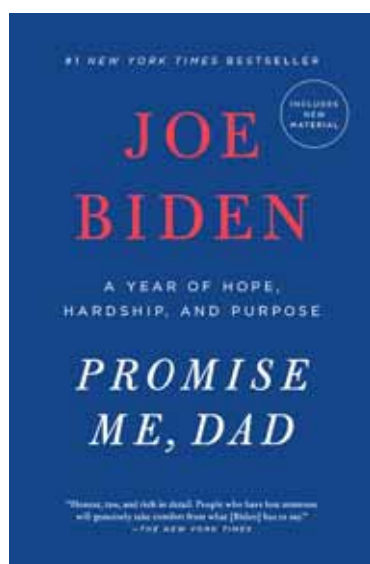
About EU leaders, he writes that "none of them were hot to spend their political capital to save an emerging democracy whose leaders had exhibited a penchant for corruption, self-dealing and self-destructive behavior."

He writes about Obama's refusal to arm Ukraine without criticizing the former president, but making it clear that he sympathizes— if not supports—those who believe that Ukraine deserved stronger help from the West in defending itself, including generous supplies of modern weaponry.

Epilogue: Uncertainty

Biden ends on a note of uncertainty about whether Ukraine's leaders will be able to stop their own corruption and transform the nation into a democratic, law-abiding one demanded by the EuroMaidan Revolution—also known as the Revolution of Dignity.

He ends with an extensive section about his Dec. 8, 2015, speech to the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine's parliament, in which he again called on lawmakers to battle corruption and put the nation's interests first. He also writes near the end of his book: "It might take a generation or more to know if the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine had truly succeeded." ❦



U.S. Vice President Joe Biden authored the book 'Promise Me, Dad' after leaving office in 2017.



Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko (R) welcomes U.S. Vice President Joe Biden upon his arrival for their meeting in Kyiv on Jan. 16, 2017.

Matt Kupfer: Biden cannot save Ukraine alone

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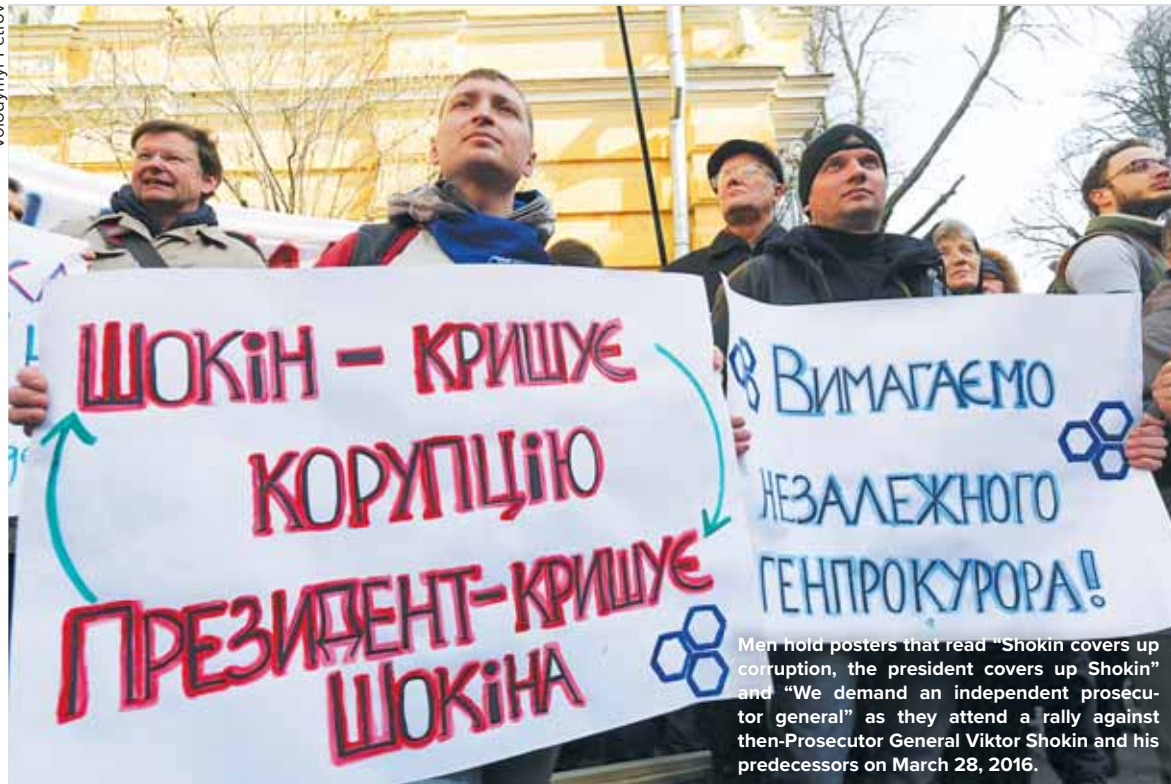
fired to protect his son from corruption investigations. The younger Biden sat on the board of directors of Burisma Holdings, a private energy company owned by former Ukrainian Ecology Minister Mykola Zlochevsky, from 2014–2019.

International media, including the Kyiv Post, repeatedly disproved these claims as patently false. Still, many believed them – including Trump. He tried to suspend nearly \$400 million in defense aid to pressure Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky into opening a politically motivated investigation into Biden. That led to Trump’s impeachment, but not his removal from office.

But anti-Biden conspiracy theories would also shed light on the VP’s powerful relationship with Ukraine. Earlier this year, Ukrainian lawmaker Andriy Derkach – whom U.S. Intelligence deems a “Russian agent” – began releasing what he claimed were audio recordings of phone conversations in which Biden pressured then-Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko to fire Shokin for his own corrupt aims.

The conversations – which seemed real, albeit selectively edited – didn’t offer any evidence of corruption. But they did present an interesting image of Biden: a U.S. vice president deeply engaged in Ukrainian policy issues, pushing for a bad official to be ousted and negotiating with Poroshenko, who, by contrast, seemed subservient and eager to please.

Some pro-reform Ukrainians



Volodymyr Petrov

Men hold posters that read “Shokin covers up corruption, the president covers up Shokin” and “We demand an independent prosecutor general” as they attend a rally against then-Prosecutor General Viktor Shokin and his predecessors on March 28, 2016.

would like to see Biden repeat this powerful performance.

Limits of hope

After four years of Trump, a president who seemed to openly hate Ukraine, Biden’s election is indeed a chance for a fresh start.

But those pro-reform Ukrainians who want to see Biden give other Ukrainian officials the Shokin treatment should take a deep breath and recognize that their hopes are unrealistic.

Biden will take office at a time

when COVID-19 is the dominant issue in the United States. After a year of Washington mismanaging the pandemic under Trump, he will need to direct government efforts to combat the spread of the virus and get the struggling American economy back on its feet. This will likely limit his focus on foreign policy.

Meanwhile, Ukraine is backsliding on reforms. Its Constitutional Court has issued several rulings that threaten to reverse its anti-corruption reforms – Ukraine’s biggest accomplishments since 2014. If they

go, expect International Monetary Fund aid and, potentially, Ukraine’s visa-free regime with the European Union to follow.

Is now the time, as some Ukrainians hope, for Biden to swoop in and save an increasingly needy Ukraine from itself? Dream on.

Ukrainians should remember that Biden isn’t a novice at this game. He knows Ukrainian politics and its wily political operators well. And he has experienced firsthand how difficult it is to reform this country.

Moreover, Ukraine is no longer

just pulling itself to its feet in the wake of EuroMaidan and the Russian invasion. In the past two years, it has held the full cycle of elections – presidential, parliamentary and local. These votes have further cemented Ukraine’s status as an electoral democracy, but yielded mixed results.

We have seen Zelensky offer up enormous promises of reform, but fail to deliver on most of them. We’ve witnessed pro-Russian, oligarch-owned forces unite across party lines to derail and sabotage reforms. They’ve turned the country’s highest, least accountable judicial institution – the Constitutional Court – into a weapon of governmental mass destruction.

Biden’s support for Ukraine’s reform efforts and its battle with Russia in the Donbas will undoubtedly remain strong. But, at this point, Ukraine needs him far more than he needs it.

Ukraine’s leaders must realize that Biden is not the solution to their problems. With America stretched thinner than ever, Biden will be happy to mete out tough love to a recalcitrant Kyiv.

But all hope is not lost. To unlock the full potential of the Biden presidency, Ukraine’s leadership must start solving the country’s problems on its own. Begin with the corrupt courts and continue from there.

If Zelensky wants the Biden administration to actively support the country and spend its already scarce resources on Ukraine, show the U.S. why that’s a good investment.

Matthew Kupfer is news editor of the Kyiv Post.



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Experts say that Biden's victory means 'tough love' for Ukraine

By Anna Myroniuk
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Editor's Note: The Kyiv Post asked political analysts and thinkers in Ukraine, Europe and the United States to assess what Joe Biden's presidency will mean for Ukraine.



Joanna Hosa, deputy director of the Wider Europe program at the European Council on Foreign Relations: "Even if Ukraine largely enjoys bipartisan support in the U.S., the Biden administration will certainly be better disposed to Ukraine. His win was welcomed in Ukraine across the political spectrum, with current and former leaders stressing his proven support and knowledge of the country. There will likely be a renewed effort to end the war in Donbas, and the now-vacant position of the U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine Negotiations might be filled. However, if Russia does not want to solve the conflict, it will drag on. For now, there are no signs that Russia is interested in a peaceful Donbas and prosperous Ukraine. Russia expects relations with Biden to be tense. It is nervous about new sanctions coming from Congress, but is ready to learn to live with them if needed while asserting its power in its neighborhood."



Alyona Getmanchuk, director of the New Europe Center in Kyiv: "The Biden administration will be more interested in both reforms in Ukraine and deterring Russian aggression, as Biden has a greater understanding of Ukraine's importance to U.S. interests in the region. However, it should also be understood that Biden will not be able



U.S. President-elect Joe Biden and his wife Jill Biden wave to the crowd on stage after delivering remarks in Wilmington, Delaware on Nov. 7, 2020 after he was declared the winner of the U.S. presidential election.

to invest as much time and political capital in Ukraine as he did as Vice President of the United States. He will spend a lot of time on domestic policy issues. In addition, even the highest level of U.S. administration commitment to reform in Ukraine will have a limited effect in the absence of appropriate political will on the part of the Ukrainian leadership and public pressure on the government on these issues. This will likely be a relationship with the elements of tough love. Strict dialogue on reforms for a more resilient and successful Ukraine in a long-term perspective."



Olexiy Haran, professor of comparative politics at Kyiv Mohyla Academy: "Under Biden, U.S. foreign policy will generally be more predictable – not only in Ukraine, but in the world as a whole, because Biden will take into account the views of partners, adhere to international obligations

and cooperate with international organizations. This is a general approach and Ukraine will not be an exception. And this is good. This is more predictable and more stable. If we talk about Ukraine, the first thing to note is that Biden really knows Ukraine well. Trump had absolutely superficial knowledge. We remember how he said that Ukrainians are awful, corrupt people. Biden is aware of the problems of corruption in Ukraine, but he simultaneously understands what has been done in the reform process,"



Roland Freudenstein, policy director at Wilfried Martens Center for European Studies in Brussels: "No more 'perfect' phone calls from the White House, and Rudy Giuliani will no longer be the President's front man in your country. That's already a big achievement! But seriously, on Russia, there will simply be a coherent line from the White House to Congress, condemning

the Kremlin's aggression and firmly standing by Ukraine. I'm not sure about mediation efforts because I believe the Biden administration will be very interested in Europe taking on more responsibility – so they will leave that to France, Germany and the EU in general. But they may offer more military assistance. The decisive change will be political, though: Ukraine will be supported more strongly simply because it is a democracy that is under authoritarian attack."



Ian Bond, director of foreign policy at the Center for European Reform in London: "You know better than me what role Biden played as the main point of contact between the Obama administration and Poroshenko. He clearly understands Ukraine's strategic importance. I would expect that U.S. support for Ukraine's defense efforts would continue. On the other hand,

given the desire of the Republicans to associate Biden with corruption in Ukraine (via his son Hunter), he may not want to get too involved in Ukrainian affairs as president."



Anders Åslund, senior fellow at the Atlantic Council in Washington: "With Biden backing a strong anti-corruption agenda in Ukraine, the National Anti-Corruption Bureau and the rest of the country's anti-corruption architecture is set to be reinforced. The long-awaited reform of the Security Services of Ukraine (SBU) is likely to finally take place, while judicial reform will be restarted. As a result, Ukraine will hopefully move closer towards genuine rule of law. This will have a significant positive impact on the country's prosperity while paving the way for further Euro-Atlantic integration."

Biden will bring vast knowledge of Ukraine to his presidency

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Daria Kaleniuk, executive director of the Anti-Corruption Action Center in Kyiv:

"I think that, strategically, under Biden the State Department and other U.S. state institutions will start investigating sources of funding of pro-Kremlin and oligarchic forces in Ukraine. In the U.S., there are tools for tracking the movement of these funds and for blocking them. And I think they should do it as personal sanctions, and blocking dirty money must be a priority for the Biden administration in its attempts to counter Russian aggression. Because Russian hybrid aggression, propaganda and military aggression are based on money."

Amanda Paul, senior policy analyst for the Europe in the World program at the European Policy Center in Brussels:



"Many of those he is likely to appoint to work on this region — for example, Michael Carpenter — are also very good friends of Ukraine

and experts on the region. Unlike Trump, Biden is also predictable and reliable. He also has no delusions about Russian President Vladimir Putin. He will appoint a new, probably high-profile ambassador to double down on U.S. engagement with Ukraine. Given that the U.S. has not had a permanent ambassador in Ukraine since May 2019, it is much needed. There can be no doubt that Biden will continue to provide important military support to Ukraine."

Melinda Haring, deputy director of the Atlantic Council's Eurasia Center:

"Biden's victory is an obvious win for Ukraine. The former vice president sees the country's enormous potential and is aware of its many flaws. At a very minimum, he will continue to send military and development assistance, but he'll take a much greater role in pushing the country to reform from the White House. It's a new day for U.S.-Ukrainian relations, but don't expect Biden's victory to magically transform a very damaged relationship. Biden and



his new team will have much repair work to do. Zelenskyy is suspicious of the West, and rightfully so after last year's debacle, and has had little exposure to it. He comes from a completely different world. Plus he's arrogant and not interested in long lectures and detailed checklists from well-meaning bureaucrats. Biden and his team must establish trust and a personal relationship between the two heads of state as soon as possible." ❁



Winners of the Kyiv Post photo contest

The task was simple: Take a photograph of yourself with the Kyiv Post. The top winner among 22 contestants, chosen by the staff, were:

First place (above): Ihor Skrypnyk, a 31-year-old interior designer, has been reading the newspaper for at least two years. He decided to get photographed skateboarding in front of Taras Shevchenko National University with the Kyiv Post in hand "because I was in a good mood that day." His prize was top billing in the print edition. Second place (top right): Iryna Ozymok is the founder of the International Mayors Summit. She has led the local economic development program at the Western NIS Enterprise Fund since since 2015. She's been an avid reader of the Kyiv Post for at least a decade "because it's Ukraine's voice in English."

Third place (bottom right) Megavardhini Dhanasekaran is a medical student at Bogomolets National Medical University. She is from India and has been reading the Kyiv Post for more than a year. Her dress made of newspapers caught the staff's attention. The second-place winner received a certificate for a free dinner at Himalaya Restaurant, while the third place winner won a one-year digital subscription to the Kyiv Post.

Lifestyle

Play | Food | Entertainment | Sports | Culture | Music | Movies | Art | Community Events

Support local businesses amid recently toughened measures through the "weekend lockdown" policy — order takeout from restaurants on weekends and attend film screenings on working days.



'Atlantis' challenge: Movie about a war in progress

Best Friend Forever



Andriy Rymaruk in a still from "Atlantis," directed by Valentyn Vasyanovych in a visual style of beautiful symmetrical widescreen compositions. Rymaruk, a war veteran and volunteer who helps soldiers on the frontline, is the leading actor and one of the many non-professional cast members of the award-winning film.

By Artur Korniienko
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Director Valentyn Vasyanovych hit a roadblock when in 2016, he set out to create a film about Russia's war against Ukraine for the international audience. How do you make a film about a hybrid warfare that would be understood universally?

There is a lot of history and politics behind it, and disinformation on why the war began and what are the sides of the conflict. For many abroad, it's still not clear that Russia invaded Ukraine in 2014 aiding its proxy pro-Russian militants.

Most importantly, it's hard to make a film about a war that is ongoing.

Filmmakers and the international community need time to make sense of the events and come to some agreement about what happened. Some of the world's best war movies, like "Saving Private Ryan" and "Apocalypse Now" came years after the wars. History books and novels usually come first.

That's why Vasyanovych faced difficulties: His original screenplay was overloaded with political context and dependent on genre formulas with clear heroes or antagonists.

But then the director came up with the idea that would make his film an internationally acclaimed artistic achievement and a powerful statement against the war in Ukraine at the same time. He simply decided to look at the war from the imaginable future where all guns would have already been fired.

"I understood that I could construct a world where I can do anything," Vasyanovych told the Kyiv Post. "I was free to assemble stories that have a universal value."

Vasyanovych wrote, directed, shot and co-produced "Atlantis" that has become one of the most awarded Ukrainian films in history. In 2019, it received Ukraine's first best film prize at the Venice Film Festival in the second most important Horizons section. Ten more accolades followed, including at the festivals in Tokyo, Montreal, Les Arcs, Seville and Odesa.

But there is still one more award that could make "Atlantis" and its ideas reach the mass audience worldwide, as Ukraine has selected it as its representative at the 93rd U.S. Academy Awards in 2021, best known as the Oscars.

Signature statics

"Atlantis" is set in 2025, a future in which Ukraine has defeated Russia and returned its territories — the Crimean Peninsula and the eastern region of Donbas. But that's where the good news ends for Ukraine: in the hostilities, Donbas has been economically and ecologically devastated.

The war also took its toll on the people. The main character Sergiy works at a steel mill in Donbas while suffering from a post-traumatic stress disorder. With his only pal, another decommissioned soldier, Sergiy often drives out of town for target practice. But after the friend dies by suicide and the plant gets shut down, Sergiy has to find a new purpose.

The world is changing drastically around Sergiy, while he remains the front and center figure. Vasyanovych's fifth directorial full feature, "Atlantis" most resembles his previous film "Black Level." The 2017 drama follows a middle-aged wedding photographer in a big gloomy city who starts losing everything he cherished while recording other people's happiness.

In "Atlantis," Vasyanovych continues to improve his signature cinema language: His films primarily consist of long stationary shots with beautiful symmetrical widescreen compositions. The viewer mostly sees the characters in full height with the background emphasizing their movements.

"I always saturate these statics with hidden attractions," Vasyanovych says. "And the body language is a powerful tool for conveying the emotional state of the characters."

Vasyanovych first employed this technique as a cinematographer in "The Tribe," the 2014 sensation directed by another Ukrainian filmmaker Myroslav Slaboshpytskyi. Although Vasyanovych's visual style defined the award-winning drama, all the laurels went to Slaboshpytskyi.

But the beginnings of Vasyanovych cinema language lay in his documentary work. The long stationary takes that observe his characters came to him naturally in "Crepuscule," a 2014 documentary about the relationships of an elderly woman and her visually impaired son in rural Ukraine.

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City Life

With Asami Terajima
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Stopping spread of coronavirus in style is task of these Ukrainian mask designers

Fashion designers are treating the new facemask era as a creativity contest to reinvent the art of mask-wearing. And it's no surprise. The recent, potentially life-saving addition to wardrobes is now an omnipresent element of daily lives. It's likely to stay that way for the foreseeable future.

Ukraine, where the mask-wearing policy is a vital element to stopping the spread of COVID-19, is no exception. It's mandatory in public transport, buildings and businesses. Those who fail to comply with the rule can be fined between Hr 170 (\$6) and Hr 225 (\$8).

To meet the growing demand, many Ukrainian brands design masks to not only be functional but also to make fashion statements.

Stylish designer masks are most often made from woven fabric and are less harmful to the environment than the single-use surgical masks mostly made of polyethylene — a plastic that is almost impossible to break down completely. Many of the disposable masks used worldwide are likely to end up in landfills or floating in the sea.

Different kinds of masks generally work the same way. The single-use N95 respirator outperforms most other fabrics, trapping at least 95% of medium-sized airborne droplets that may carry the virus. Though cloth masks have more difficulty filtering out the elusive particles, they have still been proven effective in reducing transmission.

However, factors such as shape and fit also play a key role in determining how well a cloth mask filters out viral particles. An efficient mask fits tightly around the edges, has two layers of washable fabric, a large surface area and gives adequate breathing space around the nostrils and the mouth.

Apart from their functionality, cloth masks from local Ukrainian brands circulating around social media have been gaining traction due to their chic and fashionable style. The Kyiv Post has picked five brands that stand out:

Nagolovy's masquerade

Nagolovy (Onto the heads) is a Kyiv-based masquerade rental for handmade masks and headpieces.

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City Life

Reflective, embroidered and other masks to top any look

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The company mostly targets events and gatherings, a business segment badly hit by the pandemic.

"Parties seem like something from a previous life," says Olya Shyrobokova, the PR manager and co-owner of Nagolovy.

The coronavirus forced Nagolovy, normally busy with crafting fancy accessories for upcoming celebrations, to switch entirely to the new normal of social gatherings — a face-mask showdown.

The founder of the brand, Lesia Patoka, says that she wanted to give people a positive interpretation of the "mask regime."

Nagolovy's mask is sewn from black or white single-layered neoprene fabric and comes in three different sizes for men, women and children. For decoration, the artists carefully laser-cut plastic wings or other patterns that come in black, white, or red.

Nagolovy's masks can be bought for Hr 700 via Instagram at www.instagram.com/nagolovy. The children-sized masks are Hr 400.

Roussin's reflective mask

The Roussin brand, founded by Sofia Rousinovich in 2014, addresses social issues and spreads messages using their clothing as vessels. The four-year resident of the Ukrainian Fashion Week drops two collections every year and each with a different story to tell. Roussin's innovative collections have been gathering the attention of world-famous glossy magazines such as Vogue, Elle, Marie Claire and Cosmopolitan.

"We pay attention to ongoing social problems and find effective ways to solve them," Rousinovich told the Kyiv Post.



Masquerade rental of headpieces and masks Nagolovy makes a variety of masks adorned with plastic elements like wings or bat silhouettes.

An essential element to Roussin's DNA is reflective elements for road safety, used on the brand's apparel and accessories to keep pedestrians safe after dark. The brand's identity inspired the creation of a mask with its entire surface covered with reflective material. The elastic strap

mask ensures that it fits snugly to any wearer.

The glow-in-the-dark mask's inner layer is made of tightly-knitted fabric with an internal pocket, and Rousinovich advises inserting additional medical gauze for better filtration of the virus.



Hoyra Studio, a brand that produces Ukrainian folk apparel and accessories, also sells embroidered masks with either traditional or refined patterns.

"Everyone needs a mask like this to feel safe in the dark," the designer says.

Roussin's reflective mask can be purchased for Hr 400 via the Telegram app through their number +380631820814. The price for other masks starts from Hr 100.

Hoyra Studio

Hoyra Studio, founded in 2008 by designer Iryna Khrystynych, is known for its traditional Ukrainian clothing and accessories. In addition to Ukraine's cultural symbol, the embroidered vyshyvanka shirt, the brand now sells facemasks with similar embroidery.

The double-layered mask is made of linen and cotton and has a special pocket section for replaceable filters. Each mask comes with three nonwoven synthetic filters, but the filters themselves are not sold on their own — customers are advised to purchase them at pharmacies or online shops.

Hoyra Studio offers a multitude of embroidery designs from refined floral patterns to traditional Ukrainian ones, displaying a colorful palette on their website. Customers also have an option to request their own designs for an additional service fee of Hr 100.

The embroidered masks cost from Hr 99 and can be purchased on Hoyra Studio's website at www.hoyra.com.ua.

Juliya Kros zipper mask

Juliya Kros, a women's clothing brand founded by Juliya Perekriostova in 2015, produces monochrome women's apparel using asymmetrical cuts, multiple layers and other Asian motives.

The Ukrainian brand has managed to make a name for itself internationally when its "zipper mask" was listed as one of the world's 20 most creative facemasks during the pandemic by the Forbes magazine.

It all started out with leftover fabrics from Perekriostova's previous collections, which were then brought to life in a series of facemasks that perfectly complemented the brand's monochrome looks. The "Save Around" collection features both simple cotton monochrome masks and avant-garde pieces made from eco-leather, or genuine leather

processed through environmentally friendly means.

The internationally acclaimed mask with a zipper in the center has two layers — an outer layer made of eco-friendly leather and an inner layer made from cotton. According to Perekriostova, the eco-friendly leather is not ideal in terms of comfort, but is a worthy sacrifice for fashion.

Other masks in the collection, not made of eco-leather, have pockets for replaceable filters and are better suited for everyday use.

Juliya Kros zipper mask can be purchased for Hr 220 on the brand's website at www.j-perekriostova.com.ua. The price for other masks starts from Hr 140.

'Bumblebees Gucci'

A new face in Ukrainian fashion, Olga Dryga stepped foot into the fashion industry during a truly challenging and bizarre period. The rookie designer launched her brand, Modno.mask, during the first months of the quarantine in spring selling custom facemasks and headbands. Her main goal was to create a comfortable mask that would instantly improve people's mood.

"When people are in a better mood, their immune system will improve," Dryga jokes in the comment to the Kyiv Post.

One of her most popular designs, "Bumblebees Gucci," is made of cotton and viscose. It comes in two colors: classical black and dark blue denim. However, it is the iconic bee motif from the world-renowned luxury brand Gucci that captures the eye. The large bee centered on the left side of the mask, available in gold or silver, is accompanied by a swarm of smaller bees following a red-line trail associated with Gucci's elegant colorway.

All Dryga's masks come in four sizes. Every client has to measure the length between the bottom of their chin and the bridge of their nose before ordering to pick the perfect fit. The mask has two layers, but it is possible to add a third layer upon request.

Along with Dryga's other masks, "Bumblebees Gucci" can be bought via her Instagram page at www.instagram.com/modno.mask starting from Hr 299. 🐝



The Roussin brand offers a reflective mask that keeps pedestrians safe in the dark and complements an edgy look.



A zipper mask by Juliya Kros was listed among the world's 20 most creative facemasks in the pandemic by the Forbes magazine.

Lola Mamadzhanova

Jaroslav Monchak

Sofia Rousinovich

Juliya Kros/Instagram

How Vasyanovych crafted Ukraine's most awarded film selected for Oscars

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"I'm enchanted when real life, real cinema starts to unfold in your camera when you're filming a documentary," the director says. "Now I'm happy to have an opportunity to construct such scenes in feature films."

Documentary actors

But what makes Vasyanovych's new feature film most similar to documentaries are what he calls "documentary actors." In "Atlantis," the main hero and people he meets were mostly played by non-professional actors, who had an experience similar to that of their characters.

After Sergiy is fired from the steel mill, he finds a job delivering water to people in the polluted Donbas wasteland. That's when he meets sappers, who clear the mines and other devastation left by the war, and volunteers who locate, identify and properly bury war casualties. All these are played by real-life sappers, military volunteers, medics and even a real-life coroner.

Vasyanovych says he prefers such actors because they have a "unique emotional experience imprinted on their faces." Andriy Rymaruk, who plays the main character Sergiy, had combat experience in Donbas and still travels there as a volunteer to bring equipment to Ukrainian soldiers with the Come Back Alive foundation.

"I saw everything in him," Vasyanovych says. "He was able to perfectly convey the pain and confusion of a person traumatized by war."

But working with Vasyanovych isn't easy. After he finds a location, he likes to hold dozens of rehearsals with actors to improve the screenplay and their lines. Only then he starts shooting, which may take as many as 45 long takes until everything is the way he wants.

The crew even joked that while trying to cure the actors of PTSD caused by war, they gave them another PTSD caused by cinema.



Valentyn Vasyanovych, writer, director, cinematographer and co-producer of "Atlantis," speaks with the Kyiv Post on Oct. 26, 2020 in Kyiv. "Atlantis" is one of Ukraine's most-awarded films and a powerful statement against Russia's war in the county.

"It was an unusual rehabilitation: to look into the future after the war and get incredible experience and skills," says Rymaruk, who continues his acting career after "Atlantis" and will play in Vasyanovych's next film.

For Vasyanovych, Ukrainian servicepersons and volunteers are also the most important domestic audience of "Atlantis." Rymaruk says that his friends and colleagues from the military have so far complimented the film for being "truthful and realistic."

The actor believes the film brings value for the local audience because it raises critical questions the society will have to answer at some point: "How will we deal with the consequences of war? And are we ready to work with the people on the temporarily occupied territories?"

By the start of 2018, Vasyanovych thought that he finished filming "Atlantis." It was a cold and dis-

tant movie about men in combat boots and big trucks dealing with their traumas, he says. But the story didn't feel right without one crucial element.

"I understood that the story didn't work without love," Vasyanovych says. "So I had to film five or six more new scenes."

Among the volunteers in the Donbas wasteland, Sergiy meets Katya, a paramedic who helps identify war casualties, played by real-life medic Liudmyla Bileka. By the end of the film, Sergiy and Katya become intimate in a shockingly beautiful or beautifully shocking scene that combines love and death.

"Love overcomes death," Vasyanovych says. "It's a very important message of the film."

Oscars and distribution

This universal message of "Atlantis"

appeals to the international audiences while reminding about Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine and warning about its consequences. And the movie's artistic value can also interest the U.S. film academy that selects the Oscars winners, Vasyanovych says.

"Atlantis" is the second film by Vasyanovych that has been selected to represent Ukraine at the Oscars by the Ukrainian Oscar Committee. "Black Level" was chosen in 2017 but didn't make it to the nominees' list. Vasyanovych says that the chances are much higher this time.

"This time, we have awards at the A-Class film festivals, we have an American distributor and foreign press publications by the likes of Variety and Hollywood Reporter," Vasyanovych says.

The Oscars chances also very much depend on the film's promotion in the U.S., especially among

the academy members. Volodymyr Yatsenko, the film's co-producer in charge of promotion, says that they are negotiating with the Divergent PR company that publicized "Parasite," the 2020 Oscars best picture winner. Yatsenko hopes Ukraine's Council on State Support of Cinematography will help fund such a promotion.

But the coronavirus pandemic brings uncertainty to the distribution of new releases in the U.S. and anywhere else. So far, "Atlantis" had a wide release only in the Netherlands and Ukraine. Distribution rights were also purchased in Norway, Switzerland, Belgium, Canada and the U.S., Yatsenko says.

Ukrainian wide theater release started on Nov. 5. But Yatsenko doesn't expect great ticket sales because of the pandemic and because art-house films like "Atlantis" are not popular among Ukrainians.

"But it's the most important art-house film in the history of independence. So our task here is to make sure that as many Ukrainian viewers as possible can see this film," Yatsenko says.

To do that, the producers will make "Atlantis" available after the theatrical run on Sweet.tv, one of Ukraine's video streaming platforms. For viewers abroad, the film will be available on HBO Eastern Europe.

Meanwhile, Vasyanovych is working on his next film called "Vidblysk" ("Reflection"). And the theme of war in Ukraine will be present there as well. Why? "Because the war isn't over," Vasyanovych says.

"Atlantis" is currently in cinemas across Ukraine, screened with English subtitles at Kyiv's Zhovten cinema (26 Kostiantynivska St.) on Nov. 12-13, Nov. 16-18 for Hr 75-125 and Kino42 (11 Kostiantynivska St.) on Nov. 13, Nov. 16-18 for Hr 120.

This story was produced within the Intensive Course for Film Critics organized by the Contemporary Ukrainian Cinema NGO. The content is independent of the organizers. 🇺🇦

Virtual 3rd Annual Event



Kyiv Post
UKRAINE'S GLOBAL VOICE

Leadership in the 21st Century

NOVEMBER 21, 2020

1 TO 2:30 PM NEW YORK

8 TO 9:30 PM KYIV



Register at <https://rb.gy/lcypcc> or scan the QR code below

<http://UkraineGlobalScholars.org>

Enabling the next generation of leaders

- UGS has helped ~100 young Ukrainians receive ~\$25M in full scholarships at top private high schools and colleges in the US and globally
- We invite you to hear stories of our alumni leading their peers and generating a ripple effect in Ukraine and globally through startups
- Ambassador William Taylor, our keynote speaker, and Adrian Slywotzky, Partner at Oliver Wyman, will share their perspectives on 21st-century leadership

Organized with the support of Boston Friends of UGS: Chrystia and Adrian Slywotzky, Alicia Szendriuch, Tania Vitvitsky, Zina Kondratiuk



William B. Taylor is vice president, Strategic Stability and Security at the US Institute of Peace. Last year, he served as chargé d'affaires at the US embassy in Kyiv. During the Arab Spring, he oversaw US assistance and support to Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Syria. He served as the US ambassador to Ukraine from 2006 to 2009.

Kyiv Post

UKRAINE'S GLOBAL VOICE

The Kyiv Post is looking for a **Video Editor**. We are seeking a talented professional to lead our video unit and create videos for the Kyiv Post's website and social media. The ideal candidate is an experienced videographer with excellent English, strong news judgment, an understanding of video trends and broad competencies across all aspects of the video production process.

Responsibilities:

- creating a content plan for the video unit, defining the visual style of the unit's videos
- creating various types of videos — that often includes looking for stories, shooting, and editing videos
- tracking the progress of the team
- fact-checking videos, editing scripts
- hiring videographers/motion designers if necessary
- collaborating on promotion strategies for the video unit with our marketing specialists and social media manager
- managing communication between the video unit, the newsroom and the Kyiv Post's commercial department
- overseeing the Kyiv Post's video equipment

Requirements:

- A proven track record of successfully creating videos and managing the video production process
- Broad knowledge of every aspect of video journalism: reporting, filming, cutting and editing, publication.
- Excellent English — both spoken and written

Would be a plus:

- Advanced Russian, Ukrainian or both
- Knowledge about Ukraine, its politics and its cultural life

For consideration, please send CV and letter of interest at bonner@kyivpost.com

Kyiv Post

UKRAINE'S GLOBAL VOICE

Lifestyle reporter

The Lifestyle team of the Kyiv Post is looking for a reporter.

We seek a journalist who:

- 1) is fluent in English and Ukrainian or Russian
- 2) knows and loves Kyiv
- 3) has a strong desire to write about places, tastes, events and people of the capital
- 4) is excited to cover culture, art, human rights, entertainment and fashion
- 5) is good at communication and teamwork.
- 6) preferably has a degree in journalism or experience of working in media

For more details, email Lifestyle editor **Toma Istomina** at istomina@kyivpost.com and send a CV, motivational letter, three story ideas and writing samples if available.

Kyiv Post

UKRAINE'S GLOBAL VOICE

The Kyiv Post is looking for a **political reporter** to complement its team of journalists covering Ukraine's political life, government and reforms; the coronavirus pandemic; and Russia's war in the Donbas. It's a full-time job in the newspaper's office in Kyiv.

Responsibilities:

Pitching and writing stories for the Kyiv Post newspaper and website. Breaking exclusive stories. Discovering the underlying trends driving Ukraine's political life and reporting on them. Developing and maintaining a network of contacts in Ukraine's parliament, government and expert community.

Requirements:

Excellent command of written and spoken English. Fluency in Ukrainian and/or Russian languages. Deep understanding of Ukraine's political life; background knowledge in Ukrainian politics. Ability to write journalistic stories in English. Commitment to Western journalism standards and democratic values. Experience in media or English-language writing is preferable.

For consideration, send a CV, three story ideas and a cover letter to deputy chief editor Olga Rudenko at rudenko@kyivpost.com.



Agriteam Canada is one of Canada's leading international development firms, providing management and technical expertise to developing and transitional country partners on projects that promote sustainable growth and meaningful opportunities for people to improve their lives. Agriteam has two offices in Canada and 11 offices around the world, including an office in Ukraine.

In October 2019, Agriteam Canada launched a new five-year project in Ukraine: **Support to Ukraine's Reforms for Governance (SURGe)**. SURGe's Ultimate Outcome is to help the Government of Ukraine (GoU) to deliver governance and economic reforms that better respond to the needs of its citizens.

SURGe Project is looking for the following experts:

For the **Office for Administrative (Public) Services Reform under the Ministry of Digital Transformation:**

- **Team Lead.**

Please, send your applications till **November 27, 2020** to: valeriiias@alineainternational.com.

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

Kyiv Post

UKRAINE'S GLOBAL VOICE

Kyiv Post is looking for a **Digital Marketing Manager** to develop, implement, track, and optimize our digital marketing campaigns across all digital channels with the goal of growing readership and boosting paid online subscriptions. This is a demanding position that requires a person who is motivated to learn the latest trends and adapt the most successful strategies in the news media industry.

Responsibilities

Plan and execute email marketing strategies to convert non-paying readers to subscribers, identify tools to attract new leads, build, sort, and maintain subscriber databases
Test, measure and report performance of email marketing and SEM (Google, etc.) campaigns and assess against KPIs
Prepare monthly, quarterly, and yearly digital report that includes performance results of all digital marketing activities
Manage communication with subscribers via email
Brainstorm new and creative growth strategies

Requirements

Proven record of a successful implementation of email marketing campaigns via online tools like Mailchimp, Sendpulse, and alternatives; ability to set up email marketing campaigns, design, write marketing copy, schedule, A/B test across audience segments
Excellent command of written English (C1 level) and business communication; ability to assist clients via email to troubleshoot technical and subscription issues
Strong knowledge of Google Analytics; ability to set up trackers for traffic sources, subscription purchases, Facebook pixel, and other trackers for marketing purposes and analytics
Data-driven thinking; ability to work with, generate, analyze, structure, and present data via Google Documents, Google Sheets, and Google Presentations
Knowledge of sales funnel requirements for modern digital and media products; ability to build sales funnel logic and adapt across products and marketing channels
Knowledge of SEM tools on such platforms as YouTube, Google, as well as social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, etc.
Basic graphic design skills; able to use tools like Canva and more advanced design software like Photoshop, etc.

Would be a plus

Experience working in tech/media companies before, knowledge of media and/or subscription-based digital products, trends
Experience working in customer support and assisting English-speaking customers
Experience in setting up Google, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook ads
Experience working with payment vendors like Paddle, Way4Pay, Apple Appstore, etc.
Experience working with iOS app marketing instruments, knowledge of mobile app marketing strategies
Experience working with Photoshop

For consideration, please send CV and letter of interest to advertising@kyivpost.com

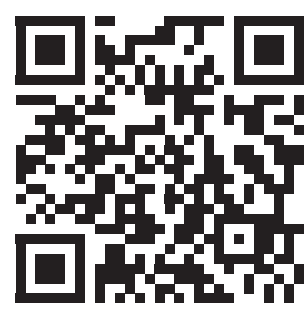
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UKRAINE'S GLOBAL VOICE

TOP 30 UNDER 30

The WINNERS will be announced on November 27

during the livestream on www.kyivpost.com

PARTNER:



INTERNATIONAL RENAISSANCE FOUNDATION

BEVERAGE PARTNER:



More details:
044 591 77 88,
events@kyivpost.com

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UKRAINE'S GLOBAL VOICE

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Kyiv Post Digital

Most of the Kyiv Post's content is online. Here are some samples of the great journalism that readers will find daily at kyivpost.com

UKRAINE

Ambassador Taylor to give keynote speech at Nov. 21 Ukraine Global Scholars event



TECH

US sentences Ukrainian techie to 9 years for stealing \$10 million from Microsoft



LIFESTYLE

DJ Mag lists three Ukrainian acts among world's best DJs



BUSINESS

Government defines Ukraine's economic gaps, announces plan until 2030



Study: Flawed judiciary, widespread corruption hamper foreign investment in Ukraine



VIDEO

Ukraine on the Brink: Stories from Chernobyl



Ukraine on the Brink: Kyiv's Dirty Air



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PARTNER:



BEVERAGE PARTNER:



Coca-Cola HBC
Ukraine