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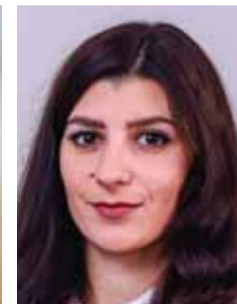
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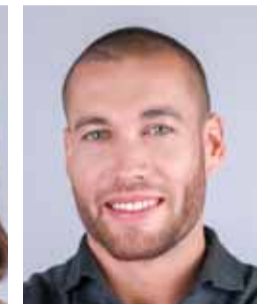
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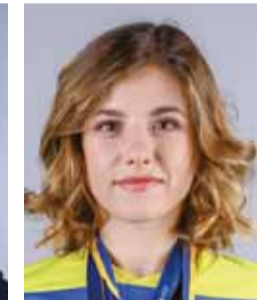
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Mailing address:
Kyiv Post, 68 Zhylianska St.,
Kyiv, Ukraine, 01033

Advertising
tel. +380 44 591-7788
advertising@kyivpost.com

Editorial staff
tel. +380 44 591-3344
news@kyivpost.com

Subscription & Distribution
tel. +380 44 591-3344
subscribe@kyivpost.com

Employment Advertising
tel. +380 44 591-7788
advertising@kyivpost.com

Adnan Kivan
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Brian Bonner

Executive Director/Chief Editor

Olga Rudenko | Alyona Nevmerzhytska
Deputy Chief Editor | Commercial Director

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Website Developer: Roman Kryvenko

Ukraine's frustration grows with OSCE as mediator in peace talks

By Anna Myroniuk
and Bermet Talant
myroniuk@kyivpost.com
bermet@kyivpost.com

Nearly a year after the first face-to-face meeting between the presidents of Ukraine and Russia in Paris, talks over bringing peace to the Donbas have stalled again as a fragile ceasefire holds in the war-torn region.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted the priorities of the countries involved in the Donbas peace process from implementing the agreements reached in Paris. Meanwhile, restrictions meant to combat the spread of the virus have worsened the humanitarian crisis in the Russia-occupied region.

Now talks to end Russia's war have resumed, but another problem has arisen.

A member of Ukraine's delegation to Minsk accused the mediator, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), of acting in favor of Russia, the aggressor in an expansionist war that has dragged on for over six years and killed over 14,000 people.

In an interview on Nov. 18, Serhiy Garmash told the Kyiv Post that the OSCE had started treating the Kremlin-backed authorities of Donetsk and Luhansk as an independent party in internal documents, despite the fact that the Trilateral Contact Group officially consists only of three parties: Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE.

This helps Russia advance its narrative that it has nothing to do with militants in the Donbas — whom it presents as separatists. In fact, the Kremlin finances and controls them, according to Garmash, a Donbas-born journalist and delegation member.

"The OSCE's behavior hinders the conflict resolution and breaches the Minsk Protocols," he said.

OSCE refused to comment on these allegations.

Fourth party in Minsk?

Russia-backed delegates from the Donbas, who claim to represent two unrecognized republics in the region, have been present in the Minsk peace talks since the beginning of 2014. They even signed the Minsk agreements, albeit not as a negotiating party. Rather, they were part of the Russian delegation.

In June, Kyiv appointed four new members to its delegation to Minsk. They are native residents of



Serhiy Garmash, a journalist and a member of Ukraine's delegation to Minsk peace talks over the war-torn Donbas, talks with the Kyiv Post on Nov. 18 in the newspaper's office in Kyiv.

the Donbas who left for Ukraine-controlled territory after Russia invaded in 2014.

Garmash was one of them. Now, representatives of the Donbas participate in both the Ukrainian and Russian delegations.

However, Garmash said, the so-called separatists still enjoy a more privileged status, and the OSCE has started treating them as an independent fourth party.

To support his claims, he showed the Kyiv Post a copy of an internal document compiled by Pierre Morel, a French diplomat and OSCE coordinator of the Minsk peace process' political subgroup.

The document, which Morel presented during the group's meeting on Nov. 11, is a chart comparing two new peace plans: the one Ukraine's delegation prepared and the one suggested by representatives of the occupied Donbas — Russia's proxies.

As the breakaway region is not a negotiating party, its representatives do not have the power to independently submit any documents in the Minsk negotiations, Garmash said.

"There can only be two plans, Ukraine's and Russia's. What they suggested and what the OSCE consequently presented to us for discussion, that so-called peace plan by representatives of (occupied)

Donetsk and Luhansk, is illegitimate," Garmash said.

Garmash believes Morel's document legitimizes the breakaway Donbas and violates the Minsk Protocols.

"Maybe the OSCE is not viewing them as a party to the peace talks, but it allows them to behave like one. The OSCE created all the conditions for them," he said.

About a month ago, Garmash and his colleagues sent a letter of complaint to Morel, but never heard back.

"They're not just ignoring me. They're ignoring 1.5 million internally displaced people from the occupied Donbas whom I represent," Garmash said. "This is what Russia wants, and the OSCE as a moderator is taking Russia's side in this case."

He is not the only one who feels the OSCE is biased.

"This allows Russia to impose its narrative about a civil war (in Ukraine)," said Sergiy Solodkyy, first deputy director of the New Europe Center think tank in Kyiv.

The problem is that, while several agreements set the commitments of each side in the peace process, in reality, the Trilateral Contact Group has virtually no hard and fast rules defining exactly how it should operate, according to Solodkyy, an expert in foreign policy and security.

"The absence of clear rules leads to a situation where Russia can do whatever it wants," he added. "These look like negotiations of goodwill — if there was a will and it was good. But there isn't."

The OSCE does not have much power to rein in Russia, according to Solodkyy.

Ukraine's delegation, in turn, is not doing enough to stop OSCE behavior, Garmash said.

The Ukrainian delegation's spokesman, Oleksiy Arestovych, did not reply to a request for comment.

Russia is happy

Russia feels relatively comfortable with the OSCE serving as a mediator in Minsk, political analysts believe.

It is more uncomfortable for Moscow to meet in the Normandy Format, the highest level of peace negotiations on the Donbas, where the presidents of Ukraine and Russia meet and the leaders of Germany and France serve as mediators.

"If the Ukraine issue is discussed on the international level, this brings the attention of the world's media and experts in regional politics to Russia's responsibility (for the war)," Solodkyy said.

"It's obvious why Russia tries as hard as possible to avoid such an international format," he added.

Both Berlin and Paris are trying to make a reluctant Moscow stick to peacemaking. Russia, however, has a long track record of attempting to halt Normandy Format meetings in a bid to avoid responsibility for its military aggression in the Donbas.

It has been almost a year since the last Normandy Four meeting. Prior to that, the gathering was on standby for three years.

The next meeting was scheduled to be held in April, but has been constantly delayed, first because of the pandemic and then due to the deadlock in negotiations between Ukraine and Russia.

At the previous meeting in Paris on Dec. 9, 2019, Russian President Vladimir Putin insisted that Kyiv should negotiate with the unrecognized, Moscow-controlled authorities in the Donbas directly. His Ukrainian counterpart, Volodymyr Zelensky, refused.

"If you translate the Kremlin's position into regular human language, it means that no negotiations make any sense unless Ukraine agrees to Moscow's terms," Solodkyy said.

"It's a dead-end. Either Ukraine compromises or Russia," he added. ❧

Opponents of Odesa mayor seek his ouster over Russian citizenship

By Oleg Sukhov
sukhov@kyivpost.com

Despite criminal charges and a toxic reputation, Odesa Mayor Hennady Trukhanov appears to have entrenched his power — at least, for now.

On Nov. 15, he was re-elected as mayor with 54.3 percent of the vote. Moreover, three corruption cases against him have already been closed due to controversial rulings by the Constitutional Court.

He has also fallen out with his alleged partner Vladimir Galanternik and has become independent from the influential businessman, according to local activists.

Anti-corruption activists are seeking to prevent Trukhanov from taking office or have him suspended or removed due to his Russian citizenship and corruption cases.

However, Trukhanov's alleged political bargain with President Volodymyr Zelensky's inner circle may keep him in power, they argue.

Trukhanov's press office and the President's Office did not respond to requests for comment.



Mykhailo Kuzakon

Election

In the first round on Oct. 25, Trukhanov and Mykola Skoryk from the pro-Russian Opposition Platform-For Life received 38.4 percent and 19.5 percent, respectively. Trukhanov won with 54.3 percent in the Nov. 15 run-off vote, while Skoryk was the runner-up with 42.1 percent.

Thus Odesa's voters faced a choice between two notorious pro-Russian candidates.

This dire situation is a result of both many Odesan voters' pro-Russian views and a lack of a strong pro-Western candidate, Vitaly Ustymenko, head of civic watchdog AutoMaidan's Odesa branch, told the Kyiv Post.

"Due to the absence of a good

pro-European candidate, people like Trukhanov and Skoryk will keep winning," he said. "There is a total failure to create a good reformist party."

Trukhanov not only appealed to the pro-Russian electorate but also tried to portray himself as a better choice for the pro-Ukrainian electorate compared with consistently pro-Russian Skoryk.

Oleh Filimonov, a mayoral candidate from Zelensky's Servant of the People, initially claimed that, according to internal polls, he would get into a run-off with Trukhanov. However, eventually he performed much worse, ranking fourth with 10 percent behind Petro Obukhov from Poroshenko's European Solidarity, who got 11.5 percent.

Filimonov's humble result comes amid voters' increasing disappointment with Zelensky and his party and their falling ratings.

"The Servant of the People has failed in the mayoral election in Odesa due to the bad choice of the mayoral candidate and an absolutely incoherent campaign with incoherent and often unknown candidates for the city council," Oleh Mykhailik, an anti-corruption activist and another mayoral candidate, told the Kyiv Post.

Trukhanov's Trust the Deeds party received 26.2 percent in the city council election, while the pro-Russian Opposition Platform-For Life was the runner-up with 23.7 percent. Zelensky's Servant of the People, Poroshenko's European Solidarity and pro-Russian blogger Anatoly Shariy got 12.5 percent, 11.9 percent and 6.8 percent, respectively.

Russian citizenship

Meanwhile, Mykhailo Kuzakon, an anti-corruption activist and another mayoral candidate, has sought to annul Trukhanov's registration as a candidate, arguing that his Russian citizenship blocked him from running in the election and access to state secrets. He has also initiated a criminal case into Trukhanov's efforts to conceal his Russian citizenship and the Security Service of Ukraine's (SBU) failure to react to it.

However, the first-instance court and the appeal court have rejected Kuzakon's lawsuit.

Ukrainian law bans the voluntary acquisition of another citizenship for Ukrainian nationals, and officials are not allowed to have dual citizenship. Under Ukrainian law, officials and candidates for state jobs undergo checks by the SBU over whether they have double citizenship.

Russia's Interior Ministry on Nov. 12 confirmed Trukhanov's Russian citizenship in an official response to Kuzakon.

In 2017 journalists found offi-



Odesa Mayor Hennady Trukhanov attends a city festival on Sept. 2, 2020. He was re-elected as Odesa mayor on Nov. 15, despite corruption charges.

cial information on the database of Russia's Federal Tax Service according to which Trukhanov is a Russian citizen.

Trukhanov's Russian passport was annulled in the same year by a Russian court due to alleged procedural violations. However, subsequently the decision was overturned by a higher court.

Despite the documentary evidence, Trukhanov has denied having ever been a Russian citizen.

Political bargain?

Kuzakon has lambasted the central authorities' reluctance to react to Trukhanov's Russian citizenship.

There is evidence that there is a political bargain between Zelensky's inner circle and Trukhanov, according to Kuzakon, Ustymenko and Mykhailik.

Odesa-based businessmen Borys Kaufman and Oleksandr Hranovsky are acting as intermediaries between Trukhanov and Zelensky's office and are increasing their clout in Odesa, according to a source who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the press. Kuzakon also confirmed that Kaufman and Hranovsky are increasing their influence on

Trukhanov and Odesa.

"The central government is making a big mistake in Odesa," Kuzakon said.

Trukhanov's Trust the Deeds party, Zelensky's Servant of the People and Poroshenko's European Solidarity are highly likely to form a de facto coalition in the city council, local activists said.

Oleksandra Kovalchuk, a newly-elected city councilor from the Servant of the People and a deputy head of the Odesa Art Museum, praised Trukhanov in the run-up to the second round for helping the museum, prompting criticism from civil society.

Cases closed

Odesa-based activists argue that the criminal cases against Trukhanov are stalling due to the central government's reluctance to antagonize him.

"The lack of the political will (to prosecute Trukhanov) is obvious — it can be seen everywhere," Ustymenko said.

In November the High Anti-Corruption Court closed two criminal cases against Trukhanov on charges of lying in his asset declarations due to the Constitutional

Court's Oct. 27 decision to cancel criminal penalties for that.

Since Oct. 27, Zelensky and his majority in the Vekrkhovna Rada have failed to find a solution for the crisis triggered by the Constitutional Court's decision, which also effectively destroyed the asset declaration system.

In 2019 the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine closed an illicit enrichment case against Trukhanov after the Constitutional Court canceled penalties for illicit enrichment.

Last year Odesa's Malinovsky District Court also acquitted Trukhanov in the so-called Krayan case. Trukhanov is accused of organizing a city council vote to buy the old Krayan factory administrative building for Hr 185 million in September 2016, when it had been purchased at the beginning of the year by another firm for only Hr 4 million, suggesting the deal was a scheme to embezzle money from the city.

Currently the Krayan case is undergoing the appeal stage at the High Anti-Corruption Court.

Kuzakon and Ustymenko hope

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EDITORIALS

Biden's hope

If and when Joe Biden returns to Ukraine, next time as U.S. president, he'll find the situation hasn't gotten better in many ways since the Obama administration left office on Jan. 20, 2017. In some areas, things have gotten worse.

He'll find, five years after he told then-Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk in Washington, D.C. that Ukraine needs to start putting corrupt officials and businesspeople in jail, no progress has been made. He'll find, in fact, that the new anti-corruption institutions that the U.S. encouraged haven't done the job. The major reason why is obstruction at every turn. He'll find the courts, prosecutorial service and police largely unchanged – ineffectual and politicized and rife with corruption.

On the war front, Russia's intransigence remains. Talks in the Minsk and Normandy formats to get the Kremlin to end the war against Ukraine are mostly useless. The West to this day still refuses to stand up to Vladimir Putin.

Biden is not likely sad or surprised that Yatsenyuk and ex-President Petro Poroshenko are out of power. In his memoir "Promise Me, Dad," he wrote about his frustrations at trying to get the bickering duo to act in the national interest. "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," Biden wrote. "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."

Neither man, as we know, waged that fight against corruption.

What the Biden administration makes of President Volodymyr Zelensky will be interesting to see. Zelensky has frittered away his landslide mandate in 2019, lost control of his nominally ruling party in parliament and leads a nation harmed by resurgent pro-Russian political forces, a shaky economy and a coronavirus pandemic. He has not figured out a way to stop a Kremlin-friendly and corruptible Constitutional Court from sabotaging the nation's democratic and Western-looking future.

But Biden is assembling a team that is deeply knowledgeable about Ukraine's needs and the Kremlin's maliciousness. Biden knows how to help Ukraine. We hope he keeps tough sanctions on Russia to delay the completion of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline that bypasses Ukraine. The early signs are that the administration will follow in the footsteps of the Donald Trump administration and that opposition to Nord Stream 2 enjoys bipartisan support. The sanctions are working as companies continue to pull out of the project in the face of U.S. actions.

We also expect that Biden will keep robust military aid for Ukraine, including lethal weapons. Biden also knows how to get the Western alliance to act in concert on vital security issues, rather than alienate.

If Biden finds Zelensky is committed to eradicating corruption, the U.S. can help him in many ways – including pushing for tougher sanctions against oligarchs and others obstructing Ukraine's progress. The administration hopefully won't tolerate giving assistance to the same old ineffectual law enforcement institutions. Best of all, Biden will demand results.

But even if Ukraine fritters away its future by not tackling corruption, Biden won't be hoodwinked by Putin. There are many reasons to toughen sanctions against the Kremlin for its outlaw behavior besides its international law violations and war crimes in Ukraine. Those include its ruthless support of chemical bomb-using Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad, its murder of Russian citizens abroad and its repression of domestic critics, including assassinations and attempted assassinations.

Young stars of Ukraine

Imagine 150 people around you. It's a big crowd. 150 people can form more than 13 soccer teams. Or three Kyiv Post newsrooms.

Imagine also that all these people are extremely talented and under 30 years old. Despite their youth, they win sports competitions and literary awards, found companies, lead people and save lives.

Imagine... Wait, there's no need to imagine that. Just take a look at the Kyiv Post's Top 30 Under 30 Awards, which have been the newspaper's feature for five years, highlighting some of the most talented young leaders in Ukraine, 30 at a time. We've seen them all, we've picked them.

Knowing their stories makes us proud and optimistic for the future of Ukraine. Yes, the country has been going through difficult times, and sometimes it seems that the troubles Ukraine is facing will never end – Russia will keep warring in the east, the local economy will keep failing and people will keep voting for pro-Russian politicians.

But when we feel hopeless and caught up in the spin of negative daily news, we flip through a copy of one of our Top 30 Under 30 editions and the day gets brighter, refilling us with optimism for Ukraine.

This year, we celebrate the 5th anniversary of the award that was launched in 2016. Most of the 150 people we have given it to still do what they were recognized for – change this country for the better.

Why didn't they quit? Teachers, veterans, athletes, entrepreneurs, writers, lawyers, journalists, singers and tech specialists – they were chosen not only for their past achievements, but for their motivation, vision and contributions to a better society. That's why.

There are many good singers, but some of them sing to fight bullying. There are many good entrepreneurs, but some run their businesses while helping others or improving Ukraine's image. Many good doctors move to other countries, while some choose to remain underpaid to treat locals. They are driven by bigger goals than money or influence.

The motivation that these young leaders have is improving Ukraine. And Ukraine should nourish the young generations. As long as talented people stay and work here, there will always be hope for the country's democratic and prosperous future.

NEWS ITEM:
A judge of the High Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine has refused to forcefully bring judges of the Kyiv District Administrative Court suspected of corruption to court hearings in their cases after they ignored summonses. The anti-corruption court judge reportedly said the reason was that, when the suspects were handed summonses, they were wearing medical masks and couldn't legally be identified.



NEWS ITEM:
Andriy Sadovyi has won re-election as mayor of Lviv, according to exit polling. Sadovyi took 62.8% of the vote in the runoff against former Lviv Oblast Governor Oleh Synutka, who ran on the ticket of the European Solidarity party of former President Petro Poroshenko. During Synutka's campaign, he promised to find a place for the city's waste outside city limits after the Lviv trash crisis in 2016, when the city was covered in waste, with other cities declining to accept garbage from Lviv.

NEWS ITEM:
Belarusian Orthodox Church Archbishop Svyatoslav has accused self-proclaimed President Alexander Lukashenko of "bloody massacres of the peaceful population." Svyatoslav called Lukashenko "a dictator, murderer and tormentor of the Belarusian people." By order of the "devil-possessed" ruler of Belarus, "our children are killing and (they are) mocking our brothers and sisters," Svyatoslav said in a Nov. 23 statement.



NEWS ITEM:
In one of Ukraine's chemistry textbooks for ninth-graders, the authors suggested treating cancer with soda. After the textbook faced public criticism, the Ministry of Education stated that it does not see anything shocking in the advice to fight cancer with soda, claiming that such information in textbooks helps students learn how to "critically evaluate information obtained from various sources, including on chemistry." The textbook also contains information about the benefits of alcohol for treating the flu.

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Ukraine's Friend & Foe Of The Week



Friend
Tony Blinken
The probable next U.S. secretary of state has a rich understanding of Russia and Ukraine, and his hardline stance against the Kremlin gives Kyiv reason to hope for better days ahead than under Vladimir Putin-loving Donald J. Trump.



Foe
Pierre Morel
The French diplomat with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe legitimizes Russian-backed militants, allowing them standing in the fruitless Minsk peace talks. They should be represented by their master, Russia.

Feel strongly about an issue? Agree or disagree with editorial positions in this newspaper?
The Kyiv Post welcomes letters to the editors and opinion pieces, usually 800 to 1,000 words in length. Please email all correspondence to chief editor Brian Bonner, at bonner@kyivpost.com. All correspondence must include an email address and contact phone number for verification.

Office of Prosecutor General has achieved a lot this year



Iryna Venediktova

The reform of the prosecutor's office started more than a year ago. It is now called the Office of the Prosecutor General, while oblast branches became Regional Prosecutor's Offices, and local offices are currently in the transformation stage and they soon should become District Prosecutor's Offices. In addition to structural changes, the reform initiated a reset of human resources.

Now, it is time to report the results which we have achieved.

Prosecutorial reform

The prosecutor's office is a unique state institution: on one hand, it is part of the "triangle of justice" defined by the Constitution (with courts and defense attorneys as the other two components), but it is also a law enforcement agency. This is a large mechanism that needs constant improvement.

Why did we need another transformation? We have to admit that our society has a rather low level of trust in the prosecutor's office and this is what prompted us to launch the reform. In addition, there is a need to upgrade internal systems for efficiency and corruption prevention, as well as for professional growth of employees. I voted for it as a lawmaker and continued the reform when I became the prosecutor general.

I took up my duties after the completion of the first stage — vetting of prosecutors of the central office and the creation of the Office of the Prosecutor General. Some cite it as a successful example because as many as 55% of prosecutors were eliminated. But frankly, the institution was demoralized and only later, it managed to resume effective operation.

Since I took charge, we vetted employees of regional prosecutor's offices. We did not aim to weed out a specific percentage of people. But it was important to carefully check the professional level of prosecutors and pass them through a very serious integrity filter. The Reattestation Commissions consist of six members, of which three are prominent reputable members of civil society.

Obviously, it would be incorrect just to deprive the office of work force just to satisfy our radical agenda, considering that we have about two million active criminal proceedings and failing to proceed with case-work would mean failing to comply with Constitution and the interest of Ukrainian society. We are grateful to the civil society, academia and donors for their support and valuable contribution in the reforms process.

We are building an effective institution based on the best international standards, so we need the advice of those from whom we can learn. In addition, besides streamlining processes in the institution, we aimed to develop more effective approaches to work. For example, through the

support of the Council of Europe, in cooperation with PwC, we conducted a functional and organizational analysis of the work of regional and local prosecutor's offices. We identified bottlenecks, which slow down processes and decided to make systemic changes to fix our regulations and practices.

We also created a strategy for development of the Prosecutor's Office in the next three years. For the first time in the history of the Ukrainian prosecutor's office, a strategic session was held, where the document was created by the prosecutors themselves — the people who will live by it. That is important, because unless we have a common vision, we will not be able to get there. At every stage of the strategy development, our partners helped us a lot. The process was moderated by Pravo Justice experts, which promote the rule of law in line with European standards and best practices. An operational action plan for the implementation of our strategy is currently being developed.

The strategy will also help to prepare a more global document, which we have already begun to create together with the international partners. It will be called the Strategy for the Development of Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Institutions. In cooperation with our international partners, we also work on development of modern policy guidelines and standards.

By the end of this year, a new performance evaluation system for prosecutors, will be established, which will be merit-based and fair.

A thorough study of the state of crime is also under way. One of the tools is to survey citizens about the offenses they most often face and the areas of work of the law enforcement system that people consider a priority. Based on this study, we will be able to focus coordination efforts and shape a new prosecution policy.

The last, but by far not the least is our work to select the head of the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office. We aimed to ensure that the selection of fair and transparent. Therefore, in cooperation with our international partners, we developed a high-profile international selection commission, which will conduct independent selection.

Next steps

The final stage of the vetting of local prosecutor's offices — interviews — will start soon. During the first quarter of 2021, we hope to have transformed local prosecutors' offices into district prosecutors' offices. In addition, we attract new professionals to work with us — qualified lawyers from outside the system. Two selection waves have already taken place to fill up vacancies in the Office of the Prosecutor General. In the first round, 65 new prosecutors were recruited, followed by 50 professionals in the second selection



An undated portrait of Iryna Venediktova, who became prosecutor general of Ukraine in March 2020.

Office of Prosecutor General

wave, who successfully passed all selection stages, training and internships and are now recommended for appointment.

We conducted a thorough analysis after the first month of operation of the regional prosecutor's offices. Even in such a short period of time, we noticed a shift. Cases regarding over 3,000 offenses were submitted to court. In the courts, regional prosecutors litigated for recovery of over Hr 68 billion worth of stolen assets.

Fighting corruption

Fighting corruption is our top priority. During the first month, prosecutors of regional prosecutor's offices reported suspicion of committing 121 corruption offenses, and 347 indictments were submitted to court.

For us, the main anti-corruption strategy is, first of all, constant effort to expose bribe-takers in our own ranks, because it is useless to count on a conscientious fight against corruption from those who do not mind dirty money themselves.

This year, 22 of our own were prosecuted. This is almost 40% more than last year. There were bribes of all sorts — from a bribe which consisted of two laptops to a \$100,000 bribe for "solving problems with the law." We do not and will not cover up for our own.

We also expose crimes committed by other law enforcement officers. This time 30% more police officers, 75% more security officers and 200% more border protection officers will have to defend themselves in front of a court, compared to the last year.

The self-cleansing of the system is the basis for the successful work.

As for top officials, it is the task of specialized anti-corruption bodies to investigate them. That is why we have the National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU) and Special Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAPO) to deal with the so-called "big fish." Those specialized agencies will continue receiving our full cooperation and support.

At our level, during nine months of this year, law enforcement officers detected 3,565 corruption offenses, which is over 25% more than last year. For example, munic-

ipal council members of all levels were prosecuted five times more often: 91 times compared to 18 in 2019. Altogether, 459 people were convicted of corruption crimes.

New SAPO chief

The anti-corruption prosecutor is a key figure in the fight against corruption. The future head of the Special Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office should become the locomotive of this process, and he or she should be a person with high moral, professional qualities and extraordinary ability to work. I am very much looking forward to the election of the head of the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office, who will assume leadership over that important institution and proceed prosecution of corruption with new energy and forces.

The commission for holding an open competition for administrative positions in the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office has started its work. It includes four

people appointed by the Council of Prosecutors of Ukraine: Roman Kuybida — prominent Ukrainian lawyer; Nona Tsotsoria — former Judge of the European Court of Human Rights; Drago Kos — former Chairman of GRECO and former Chairman of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption of Slovenia; and Thomas Firestone — American lawyer, who serves at the Baker McKenzie's Global Compliance & Investigations Steering Committee and who, while working as a US Attorney, prosecuted perpetrators in complex transnational organized crime cases; as well as seven persons appointed by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine: Olena Busol, Andriy Gudzhai, Kateryna Koval, Vyacheslav Navrotsky, Bohdan Romaniuk, Yevhen Sobol, Oleksiy Drozd.

The Office of the Prosecutor General provides the Commission with only organizational and tech-

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ON THE MOVE

Advertisement



Mark Burden

Horizon Capital is pleased to announce that Mark Burden FCMA, CGMA, MCIM has joined the firm as Chief Financial Officer as of November 23, 2020.

Mark is a British national with over 25 years of senior financial management experience in Ukraine, both in international and local companies. Prior to joining Horizon Capital, Mark held senior positions as Chief Financial Officer at Ciklum, Volia Cable, UMC/MTS Ukraine, and others.

Mark's role at Horizon Capital includes providing strategic, financial and tax advisory to senior management, investment team and portfolio companies - an integral part of Horizon Capital's value proposition to the companies in which its funds invest. He oversees fund administration at the firm, liaises with investors and key stakeholders, oversees information systems and reporting, and ensure strong controls are adhered to.

Mark is a very keen traveler and aviation photographer, and an avid squash enthusiast, who supports the development of this sport in Ukraine.



Horizon Capital

Innovations in Energy

In partnership with



Ukrainian startup maps electric car chargers and simplifies their use

By Daryna Antoniuk
antoniuk@kyivpost.com

Nazar Shymone-Davyda, founder of the nonprofit Tesla Club Ukraine, was one of the first Ukrainians who invested in an electric car.

He bought his car from U.S. electric vehicle company Tesla Motors. When he drove it 560 kilometers from Lviv to Kyiv on a single charge, he “realized that it was the future.”

That was in 2014. Since then, the number of electric vehicles in the country has grown from a modest 59 to over 23,300 cars, according to automotive business association Ukrautoprom.

But even though Ukraine’s electric car market seems to be gaining momentum, poor roads, few parking spaces and a shortage of electric vehicle chargers limit the pace.

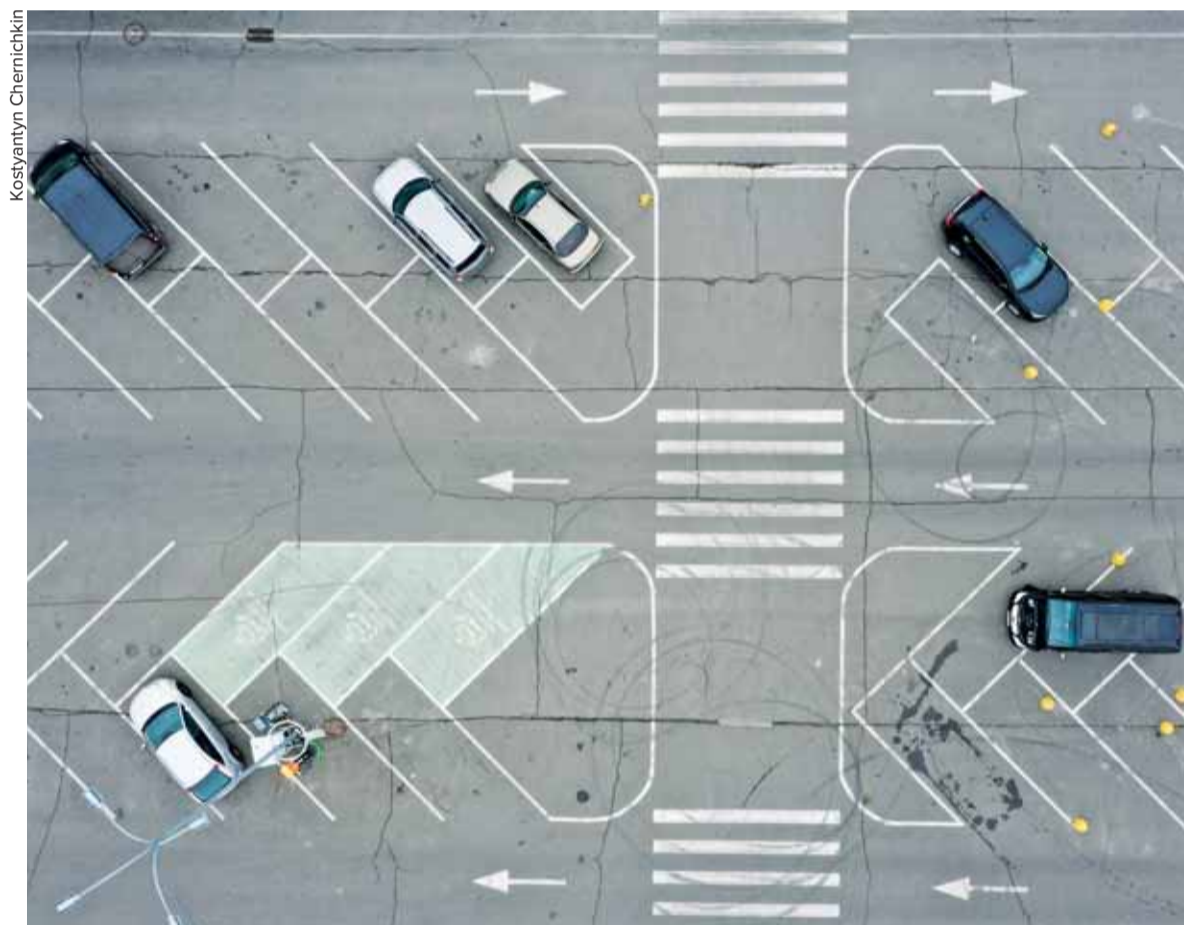
Shymone-Davyda and his business partners – Lyubov and Lena Artemenko – have stepped up to popularize electric transport in Ukraine and fix at least one of these problems. They founded Go To-U, a mobile application that shows drivers a map with charging stations and allows them to book the stations and avoid lines.

The startup has already connected over 65,000 chargers in 47 countries and 70 of them are in Ukraine, where it started. As of today, the startup is valued at \$3 million.

Chargers in Ukraine

Go To-U is a software startup, so it doesn’t manufacture charging stations.

The startup offers its services to businesses like shops, malls, cinemas, hotels and petrol stations and



An aerial view of a parking lot in Kyiv on Nov. 26, 2020. The area marked with green color has several stations to charge electric vehicles. There are 8,530 charging stations for electric cars in Ukraine installed by local companies. Ukrainian startup Go To-U has developed a mobile application that shows drivers a map with charging stations and allows to book the stations to avoid lines.

encourages them to buy electric car chargers to attract more customers. It puts them on its map and, for that, charges businesses a subscription fee of 8–30 euros a month.

Most of the current 8,530 charging stations in Ukraine have been installed by local firms like AutoEnterprise, Electro UA and Ionity. But Shymone-Davyda

believes that many Ukrainian companies use low-quality equipment that can harm the vehicle in the long run. So he advises local businesses to buy certified charging stations from foreign manufacturers like Swiss ABB or Austrian Keba.

One such station with a capacity of 22 kilowatts costs nearly \$1,604 and charges a car battery ten times faster than a regular socket – in 3–4 hours rather than 20 hours.

It is a low-powered station – the most common type in Ukraine. Usually, drivers can use it for free, but sometimes local companies charge \$0.18 for a kilowatt.

In Ukraine, there’s a shortage of the newest quick charging stations, which can charge a car in 20–30 minutes, because they are expensive – one 50-kilowatt station, for example, costs nearly \$40,000, according to Igor Kovalev, head of electric car charging stations company Yasno E-Mobility, a subsidiary of Ukraine’s largest energy firm DTEK.

Kovalev’s Yasno E-Mobility has installed 23 quick charging stations in Ukraine and partnered with Go To-U, so drivers can find them on the map on the app.

For quick charging, drivers pay \$0.32 for a kilowatt and Go To-U

have lunch or go to watch a movie in the cinema nearby.

Ukrainian businesses, including Dima Borisov’s popular restaurants, Planeta Kino cinemas and many hotels and shopping centers across the country, are eager to invest in charging stations, Shymone-Davyda said.

Although businesses cannot profit directly from charging, they rent out the piece of land to install the station and attract new customers all over Ukraine. Via the app, users can even book a table or a hotel room, because Go To-U has integrated popular platforms like Tripadvisor and Booking.com into its app.

According to Shymone-Davyda, it is less expensive to install an electric car charging station near shopping malls or restaurants because they are already connected to the grid and can share their power.

To connect to the national grid on their own, charging station owners must pay nearly \$200 per one kilowatt of a charger’s capacity. For a permit to install a standard 22-kilowatt charger, they will pay \$4,400.

Running from US

Like many Ukrainian startups, Ukraine-founded Go To-U is registered in the United States because it is easier to run business and find investors there.

The startup has won nearly \$18,000 in a competition organized by German automotive company Volkswagen and was invited to participate in a program for startups organized by U.S. accelerator Techstars, where Go To-U was valued at \$3 million.

“We are a global company,” Shymone-Davyda told the Kyiv Post. He said that, although the local market has the potential to grow, Ukraine doesn’t have enough money to invest in infrastructure and electric vehicles.

The Ukrainian government exempted imports of electric cars from the value-added tax until 2024, making it less expensive for Ukrainians to import these vehicles. As a result, many local businesses started to encourage their employees to switch from petrol to electricity.

“It helps the environment and reduces the maintenance expense,” said Shum.

According to Shymone-Davyda, Ukraine’s electric car market would grow even faster than in Europe and people would buy more cars if the country’s economy was stronger.

“Ukrainians love everything new and modern,” Shymone-Davyda said. ☺

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Technological innovations as a response to times of uncertainty



Oleg Nikonorov,
Regional Gas Company CEO

The ongoing coronavirus epidemic around the world has plunged many businesses into a protracted crisis. This crisis has been exacerbated by uncertainty. It often paralyzes the efforts of the management of the businesses around the globe, bringing the effectiveness of forecasting the situation and strategy development to naught.

As you may know from the history of global crises, these turbulent times can either lead to collapse or open up new opportunities for individual businesses and entire industries. Being optimistic, we consider uncertainty as a challenge. We see in it new opportunities for innovative solutions.

Lockdown and protracted quarantine have become productive times for us. During this time, a number of decisions were made. The most important thing is that we continue to invest in our production projects.

Our RGC Production plant in Lviv witnesses how young, ambitious and talented people can bring their ideas to life. In fact, a corporate educational project materialized into a new robotic production of modern equipment for gas networks.

Over the past year and a half since it has been launched, we can safely say that this project has succeeded. At the moment, RGC Production is running at full capacity, and the world's best manufacturers have become its suppliers. This is the result of being open to the world when you are not afraid of proposing and implementing new ideas.

We at RGC believe that uncertainty is not an obstacle to innovation. Our specialists stand ready to scale the success of the RGC Production case throughout the country. Already at the beginning of 2021, a similar innovative plant should be launched in Dnipro and then in Vinnytsia. Both new automated plants will supply modern gas equipment for the modernization of gas distribution networks throughout Ukraine.

In the gas distribution industry, safety and reliability are as important as measurement accuracy. It narrows down the uncertainty. In terms of precision, watchmakers and diamond cutters usually come to mind. For centuries, they have remained a closed caste of artisans thanks to micron precision and painstaking handwork. There is a quarter in Antwerp where in workshops they have been mastering the secrets of cutting diamonds by hand for generations.

However, sophisticated technologies have reached this caste of the elite and are gradually squeezing out manual labor. Look how in watchmaking, automatic assembly lines have made watches affordable to everyone. Gas metering also requires pinpoint precision. You cannot do without high technologies here.

In Ukraine, up to a million metering devices are regularly verified every year. It takes a long time, is expensive and impractical to do it on the outdated stands. We have long wanted to take the field of metrology from the state of a craft to a completely new and modern level.

To this end, this summer, during the quarantine, we have commenced the RGC Metrological Center in Kharkiv. It is the most modern enterprise in Ukraine for the verification of measuring equipment. It is the only enterprise in the Eastern Europe that operates according to the Smart Factory principles. The technological cycle of verification is taking place without direct human intervention.

The use of digital systems made it possible to accelerate all the main technological processes by a factor of five. All information from automatic stands is recorded in the database. The path of each meter here resembles the transportation of a parcel: soon consumers will be able to track the verification process at all stages, like a courier delivery.

The metrological center uses new technologies in servicing corporate clients. The line for industrial meters verification that operates here is unique for Ukraine. It allows us to verify the metering devices with a diameter of up to 300 mm and a capacity of up to 6,500 cubic meters per hour. At the moment, this is the only line in the country capable of verifying the meters for production companies and the transportation system operator (TSO).

In order to minimize any uncertainty in this area, we began to establish four more similar metrological centers in Ukraine. We expect that they will fully meet the demand of gas distribution companies for this service.

It is worth mentioning that the coronavirus epidemic, which has swept the whole of Europe, overshadows the impending energy transformation on the entire continent. But even under these circumstances, the transformation potential remains and its development opens up great opportunities in the energy sector.

This year in Europe, up to 40% of the energy will be generated from the renewable sources. This is already one of the markers of the technological revolution in the energy sector. The feature of green energy is that its production does not coincide with the consumption curve, which brings the question of energy accumulation. Hydrogen looks like the most realistic alternative.

From a technological point of view, hydrogen transportation also has a number of open questions. You can also observe uncertainty here. However, we are the first among the Ukrainian energy companies that started to investigate the effects of hydrogen on the gas distribution system. Our company has built five special test sites in different regions of Ukraine. All of them are real models of operating networks.

After two or three years of testing on those sites, we expect to present a plan that will allow us to make the current infrastructure hydrogen-ready — ready for the transportation of hydrogen.

The use of hydrogen by consumers is a separate area of our study. We are looking for the answer to the question, what the safe concentration of hydrogen in a mixture with natural gas should be? We are working on these and other practical aspects in partnership with the leading scientific and research institutions of Ukraine.

The next challenge is to improve the operational efficiency of the entire gas distribution system. The gas distribution system existing in Ukraine was built during the Soviet times and was designed to use 120 bcm of gas annually. Today's consumption is 25 bcm. Therefore, the system with such an excess of capacity requires a serious redesign.

To get a full understanding of the situation, we have completed the creation of a digital model of gas distribution systems. It took us almost 7 years to develop it. Now we know exactly how the state of the networks changes, how ineffective they are and why. We clearly know what and how to change in the system and how to do it.

Our system redesign pilot projects with a payback period of up to 10 years show that you can go from small targets to large ones and it makes economic sense. At the same time, we are actively exchanging expertise with our European partners. Our company is a member of the leading European technical associations, which allows us to bring modern safety standards to the industry.

For RGC, the crisis and uncertainty became time for advanced innovations: accelerated digitalization, implementation of smart solutions, projects to improve the stability and security of energy delivery. No matter what the epidemic situation is, be it the natural gas, its blends with hydrogen or pure hydrogen, RGC will ensure reliability, safety and the implementation of new technologies to improve the efficiency of gas distribution.

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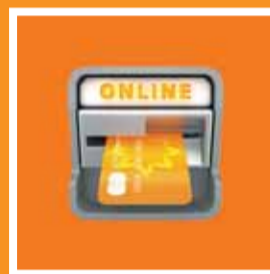
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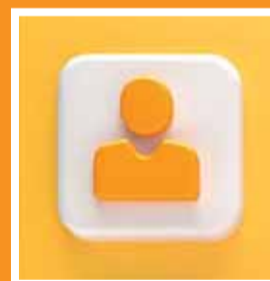
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100 million

appeals to 104.ua contact center

Submitting gas meter readings fast via text messages or our interactive voice response system, getting prompt consultations on gas supply and delivery services



Energy firms ask state to start up hydrogen power generation

By Alexander Query
query@kyivpost.com

Making green electricity from hydrogen seems to be the hottest innovation-related topic among Ukrainian and European Union energy companies at the moment.

In its European Hydrogen Strategy published on July 8, the European Commission names Ukraine a priority partner for the EU to bring to fruition the so-called “European Green Deal,” a massive plan to reach carbon neutrality by 2050 through renewables.

And starting to generate hydrogen electricity is one of the key ways.

Hydrogen has been dubbed the “Holy Grail” of renewable energy, even though it’s expensive to produce and hard to transport. Ukraine has the potential to produce roughly 500 billion cubic meters of hydrogen per year, but the market is severely underdeveloped, experts say.

However, according to Stanislav Kazda, strategic development director of the Regional Gas Company, a service company gathering 20 operators of gas distribution representing 70% of the market, Ukraine doesn’t have a proper hydrogen transportation system, nor any incentives from the government to implement innovations related to the Green Deal and hydrogen.

“Our major problem is the lack of financing and legal frameworks which deter investors,” Kazda told the Kyiv Post on Nov. 17.

Without that, Ukraine could miss its chance to get into the race to produce green hydrogen, losing out to the EU and China, who already have their eyes on the prize.

Outdated grid

Kazda said adapting the market to new hydrogen technologies would require redesigning the Ukrainian gas network, developed in Soviet Ukraine back in the 1970–80s. This will cost money the country doesn’t have.

The current distribution network was designed for an amount of gas four times higher than Ukraine consumes, which was roughly 29 billion cubic meters in 2019, according to a report by state-owned Ukrainian energy company Naftogaz.

“Our pipelines are too big for their current use,” he said.

As a result, 30% of gas regulating systems in the grid are completely useless today, Kazda said, and they could be switched off and decommissioned without any problem.

Transporting hydrogen would be problematic in such a system because its density is lower than natural gas, and it can be tricky to move it around. That makes its transportation more time-consuming and expensive.

Low gas tariffs

Low gas tariffs make it even more difficult to find money to innovate Ukraine’s gas grid.

Private companies need to find a new financial model to introduce more innovations in the country’s gas system, because the current

Kostyantyn Chernichkin



An employee of state energy company Naftogaz operates gas infrastructure at the Zakhidno-Sosnivske gas field on June 24, 2020. Local gas distributor Regional Gas Company has been testing transportation of a mix of hydrogen and natural gas in closed areas of the gas distribution system in five of Ukraine’s oblasts since February, but needs money to continue. Companies lack government support to start generating electricity from hydrogen.

tariffs can hardly cover maintenance costs of the network, let alone financing new technologies.

According to a report by consulting company CEP Consult published on May 7, gas distribution companies under the umbrella of the Regional Gas Company reportedly lost over \$42 million in January–April 2020, and could pay only 70% of the cost for gas delivery services.

The losses occurred after the government made gas cheaper to reduce the financial burden on Ukrainian households during winter, a move considered controversial by many market players, because Ukraine’s tariffs for gas are already artificially low.

The International Monetary Fund also made bringing gas prices for household consumers up to market levels one of its requirements for continuing tranches of its \$5.5-billion financial aid package for Ukraine.

But such a decision would be unpopular among Ukrainians and so politicians are hesitant about increasing prices for gas, according to Kazda. He himself thinks the situation is tricky.

“It is a big problem to ask Ukrainian consumers to pay for the damage done to the grid (by mismanagement) during the last 20 years,” Kazda said.

But this is a big obstacle when it comes to attracting investors, because there is no way to generate enough money with the current tariff structure, he added.

“How can we pay back these investors when we lose money?” Kazda said.

And while the government does not provide financial support – despite a few declarations from a

handful of Ukrainian top officials calling for a hydrogen grid in Ukraine – it’s only private companies who know how to transform the grid.

Promises

According to Andrij Zinchenko, head of educational projects at Greencubator, a nonprofit dedicated to lobbying green energy, Ukraine looks west when it comes to innovating energy, including with hydrogen power, because the country’s politics heavily depends on EU’s decision.

“Ukraine has to adapt to EU standards,” Zinchenko told Kyiv Post on Oct. 31.

Some of Ukraine’s top officials’ recent statements confirm Zinchenko’s comments.

Representatives of Ukraine and Germany met on July 17 to discuss cooperation on hydrogen energy issues, after which Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said Ukraine would have a role to play in a roadmap between the two countries.

“Ukraine can become a reliable supplier of hydrogen to the EU, in particular to Germany,” he said, calling it a “very promising partnership,” news agency Interfax-Ukraine reported.

He also said that a study would be conducted on the possibility of using the gas transportation system of Ukraine to transport hydrogen.

Ten days later, on July 27, acting Minister of Energy Olha Buslavets said the government would even consider building a hydrogen production plant.

Buslavets went even further during an online event called “Hydrogen Economy in Ukraine: Roadmap” organized by the German-Ukrainian

Chamber of Commerce on Nov. 12, saying that her ministry had “outlined short-term, medium-term, and long-term prospects for hydrogen transportation.”

In the short term, hydrogen will be transported in small quantities in its gaseous form in tanks by trucks. The medium-term concerns liquid organic hydrogen transported by trucks and trains. But in the long-term, she said, gas pipelines could be used for large quantities and export volumes.

She also promised that, as soon as Ukraine generates enough power from hydrogen, it will be selling no less than 10 gigawatts of it to the EU.

Daring to start

None of the officials, however, has set any deadlines for introducing hydrogen power in Ukraine. That’s why some private companies have decided to enter the market without state support.

On July 10, Ukraine’s largest energy group DTEK, owned by Ukrainian oligarch Rinat Akhmetov, joined the Hydrogen Europe association, a lobby representing the interest of the hydrogen industry.

For Zinchenko, this is a widespread phenomenon in Ukraine: Only a cluster of the richest companies has the money to innovate.

There’s also one state company whose management decided to take action and not to wait for a clearer roadmap from the government.

On Nov. 25, state nuclear company Energoatom entered the industry-led European Clean Hydrogen Alliance launched on July 8, an umbrella association bringing together industry leaders, civil society, top officials and the European Investment Bank.

“Energoatom has indisputable potential to become one of the leaders in hydrogen energy, not only in Ukraine, but also in Europe, providing carbon-neutral hydrogen production at nuclear power plants,” Petro Kotin, head of the company, told energy news website Kosatka Media.

It could allow Ukraine to join the so-called “European Hydrogen Backbone,” an ambitious plan gathering 11 European gas infrastructure companies from nine EU member states, including Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Belgium.

The plan, unveiled on July 17, aims to create a dedicated hydrogen pipeline network of almost 23,000 kilometers by 2040, in parallel to the natural gas grid running through Europe.

The network should be able to transport more than 1,130 terawatts per hour of annual hydrogen demand in Europe and cost up to 64 billion euros.

Maps of the envisioned network include several dotted lines to mark import routes from Ukraine, and Regional Gas Company is also part of it.

In fact, it has been already testing transportation of a mix of hydrogen and natural gas in closed areas of the gas distribution system in the Zhytomyr, Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Ivano-Frankivsk and Kharkiv oblasts since February, but needs money to continue.

“This is not rocket science,” according to Kazda, “but we need proper financing to continue.”

Zinchenko echoed this statement over the widespread use of hydrogen, which he perceives as a mirage. “Unless the money is on the table, talk is cheap,” he said. ☺

'Green Metallurgy' to get its first financial incentive

By Igor Kossov
kossov@kyivpost.com

If Ukrainian metallurgists want to do business with Europe, open-hearth furnaces need to become a thing of the past.

Under its Green Deal, the European Union will implement environmental protectionism and charge high tariffs for goods that don't meet ecological standards. Staying competitive in the European market means investing in technology that greatly reduces emissions.

The up-front investment is extremely costly. For example, oligarch Victor Pinchuk's Interpipe Group spent \$1 billion to transform its Dniprosteel plant from using oil and gas-burning furnaces to ones that use electricity. Such a transformation also makes running the plant more expensive. Gas prices are currently very low, while electricity in Ukraine is expensive.

Like it or not, this is something that companies will eventually have to do — or they will find it difficult to compete, said Oleksiy Ryabchyn, adviser to the deputy prime minister for European integration.

"This is a worldwide trend. It will be everywhere," agreed Denys Morozov, the economic and finance director at Interpipe. "All the developed countries will fight (against CO₂), this is inevitable."

Only five enterprises in Ukraine, 6% of the total industry, potentially qualify as "green metallurgy" plants. This is because, besides the looming Green Deal, there have been no incentives for Ukraine's producers to make the switch. Until now.

Electricity discount

In July, as part of its attempt to solve the renewable energy problem, parliament passed Ukraine's first ever incentive for qualifying "green metallurgy plants." The law will exempt them from having to cover the controversially high feed-in tariff to renewable energy producers.

The difference is enormous. In its early projections for 2021, state power line operator Ukrenergo estimated that regular enterprises would have to pay Hr 501 (over \$17) per kilowatt-hour in transmission fees. Exempt enterprises will instead have to pay about Hr 92 (\$3.25).

These will not be the final transmission prices, which are still under development. The energy authorities are still working out alternative ways to pay its mounting debt to green energy producers, like bank loans or selling government bonds.

The energy regulator announced that it approved a general tariff of about Hr 310 (\$11) per kilowatt-hour for 2021. "Green metallurgy" plants may still qualify for a deep discount and may end up paying less than Hr 92.

But the discount is not in place yet because multiple bylaws have to be worked out by the ministries of economy and environmental protection. Neither ministry responded to



A steelworker inspects a flow of molten steel in a blast furnace at the ArcelorMittal Kryvyi Rih steel plant on July 7, 2018. Most Ukrainian metalworks still use older furnace technology from the previous century and will eventually have to upgrade to be in line with developed countries' emission standards or lose economic opportunities.

requests for comment by publication time.

"The criteria for carbon intensity and how it's all measured have to be established in the bylaws" said Ryabchyn.

Ukrenergo head Volodymyr Kurdrtsky told the media that this will lead to a Hr 100 million (\$3.5 million) shortage. He said he considers this discount unfair, as it creates unequal conditions on the market.

A spokeswoman for Ukrenergo said that that this shortfall will be covered by other electricity consumers. That means the less green metallurgy companies have to pay, the more everyone else will have to chip in to make up the difference.

Ryabchyn said that, in this difficult economic period, there will be "a battle over every kopek."

Morozov said that green metalworks account for less than 1% of the total of energy consumers. More importantly, he said it's hardly fair that companies that invested such huge sums into being "green" then have to keep shelling out large sums for other "green" companies.

"Green metallurgy is no different from green energy, it's the same thing," said Morozov. "So why is it that one is stimulated and the other has to pay for it?"

Environmental control

Metallurgy is a very energy intensive process that produces massive amounts of carbon dioxide and a plethora of toxic waste chemicals.

Open hearth furnaces are widespread in Ukraine, where they're called Martin furnaces, named after the French engineer Pierre-Emile Martin, who developed a steelmaking furnace in 1865. These primarily use hydrocarbons as fuel to maintain the extreme temperatures required.

Electric arc furnaces are a less carbon-intensive alternative. Hydrogen furnaces, currently in their infancy, will also be viable ways to reduce CO₂ emissions.

However, switching to electric arc furnaces does not necessarily mean that carbon emissions go away — if their energy comes from fossil fuel power plants. By switching away

from gas and oil, "green metallurgy" plants use much more electricity.

While half of Ukraine's energy is nuclear, close to a third still comes from coal. Coal is also being used to balance out the output swings from renewable energy sources, paradoxically making it more prominent as the country tries to move away from it.

CO₂ is not the worst of it. Ukrainian metal centers, especially the Metinvest hotspot of Mariupol, have long been plagued by emissions of metal dust, including zinc, cadmium and mercury, as well as volatile chemicals like dioxins and furans. These build up in the human body, leading to respiratory problems, heart attack, stroke, dementia and other diseases.

Electric furnaces are no exception and still require significant investments in dust and gas mitigation. The AIP Conference Proceedings publication reported that "the electric arc furnace is an important polluting emissions generator, having a strong impact over the environment."

Morozov said that, as far as Interpipe is concerned, Dniprosteel reduced all pollution below European norms and passed all inspections, as it could not have gotten credit from European financial institutions otherwise. He added that the company undergoes independent monitoring of its emissions.

However, monitoring is not actually required by law, said Maksym Borodyn, a Mariupol activist leader who organized mass protests against Metinvest. It's not possible for the Ukrainian government and public to get a real picture of pollution.

"The polluter itself measures its own emissions," said Borodyn. "And it's impossible for the government to confirm. Even though certain objects have measuring devices already installed, there is no law forcing them to disclose it publicly to the tax and environmental authorities."

While the government made some progress under Prime Minister Oleksiy Honcharuk, his replacement with Denys Shmyhal ground everything to a halt, said Borodyn. ☹

BUSINESS ADVISER

Advertisement

Battery Storage Paves Way for a Renewable-Powered Future

Kyiv based boutique management consultancy "BDO Centers LLC" has found out that battery storage systems are swiftly becoming key in addressing the need to efficiently integrate solar and wind renewable energy into energy systems around the world. Over the last decade battery prices fell by 87%, reaching \$156/kWh in 2019, which made EVs and energy storage commercially viable for the first time in the history. As for ongoing investments in battery storage production, these are projected to exceed \$150 billion by 2023. This represents approximately \$20 per person globally.

The leading producers of battery metals in 2019 are as follows:

- The Democratic Republic of the Congo, which produces 70% of the world's cobalt,
- Australia with 54% of the world's lithium, and,
- Indonesia, which produces 30% of the world's nickel.

To meet the projected demand for lithium in 2023, the current supply must be tripled. Today, the leading manufacturers of lithium-ion batteries are located in Asia — LG Chem from Korea, CATL and BYD from China. These, supply approximately 5% of the total global production.

Battery storage transformational potential

At present, batteries are key to hybridization and electrification, creating considerable opportunities in terms of job creation, economic growth, energy security, health, and environmental protection. Batteries have the potential to produce significant economic impact:

- Contribute up to 30% towards required emission reductions in the power and transportation sectors
- Potential contribution of 10 million jobs and \$150 billion in economic value
- Provide access to electricity for 600 million people

Battery energy storage application

Battery technologies are an essential catalyst to unlock growth in sectors such as electronic vehicles, electronic devices, and battery energy storage for renewable energy. The market is projected to reach \$546 billion in 2030, with a CAGR of 21% in 2020-2030. The main driving forces behind the growth in battery demand are the electrification of vehicles and the placement of batteries in the electrical grid. Global battery demand is expected to grow by 25% per year with the electrification of vehicles and the placement of batteries in electrical grids as driving forces.

At this time, China represents the largest market, accounting for 50% of global demand in 2020.

Future look at battery innovations

Rapid improvements in batteries' costs and performance has unleashed the massive potential of an advanced battery technology ecosystem. Batteries are simultaneously becoming longer-lasting, lighter, and safer, leading to rapid increases in value for customers.

Battery innovations:

- Increased energy density
New battery technologies enable batteries to achieve a higher energy density. For instance, Li-ion batteries' density increased by 50% in 2010-2019.
- Decline in production costs
Batteries become cheaper due to improvements in manufacturing equipment and reduction in capital costs. For example, battery packaging costs are projected to be reduced by 10-15%.
- Recycling evolution

Thanks to new production methods, battery manufacturers can now produce batteries employing up to 4% recycled materials.

Scientists continuously develop more space- and weight-efficient batteries at an affordable cost (such as NMC5 and NCA6). Next-generation technologies under development are likely to deliver a step-change in the performance of these key battery characteristics.

Battery metals market overview

At this time capital is being poured into the mining industry. Both Australia and Canada are currently experiencing a surge in IPOs and new funding for exploration companies. The growing electrification of transport and adoption of renewable energy sources is driving rapidly increasing demand for batteries and their input commodities including Lithium, Cobalt, Nickel, Graphite, Manganese, and Aluminium.

A sharp decline in battery metals prices in 2019-2020 was caused by several issues including a slowdown in all vehicle sales (including electric vehicles) and disruptions in global supply chains caused by the pandemic and its impact on economic performance as the world adjusts to life after Covid-19.

Current investment climate

Global investments in battery storage increased 5-fold since 2014 reaching \$4 billion in 2019. This is driven by recent rapid improvements in battery costs and performance, coupled with a growing demand for electric vehicles and increased renewable energy generation.

Key factors that will shape the future of the battery recycling industry:

- Government support

As countries set ambitious goals for clean energy adoption, programs to support battery manufacturing follow.

- Green energy shift

Renewable energy is expected to eclipse natural gas after 2040. New stations require more energy storage, which is expected to reach 942GW by 2040 with \$620 billion in investments.

- Transition to EV

During 2010-2019 the number of battery-powered cars increased 420%, inciting. 29 global automakers to invest another \$300 billion in battery storage by 2030.

BDO Centers LLC is a hybrid shared service center and a boutique management consulting firm in Kyiv, a subsidiary of BDO AG Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaft in Germany, a consulting and auditing company. We develop and scale innovations across the largest and most diversified group of strategy, consulting, digital, audit, tax, and operations professionals in the world. Working as trusted advisors to our clients, we are focused on delivering value. We combine analytics with industry skills and technology in a way that is truly differentiated and delivers business outcomes. We provide top-level service to our clients within the BDO network and worldwide to BDO customers.

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TOP 30 UNDER 30 2020

November 27 at 5 p.m.

The awards ceremony will be live-streamed on www.kyivpost.com

Kyiv Post

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INTERNATIONAL RENAISSANCE FOUNDATION

Profiles of Kyiv Post Top 30 Under 30 winners

The 2020 Kyiv Post Top 30 Under 30 contest winners will get their awards at a ceremony to be live-streamed at 5 pm. Nov. 27 on the Kyiv Post website, Facebook page or YouTube account. A booklet profiling the winners is available from the Kyiv Post at the KADORR building on 68 Zhylianska St. or by telephoning the office at 591-7788. The 5th annual awards were held in partnership with the International Renaissance Foundation.

Iryna Venediktova: Work to protect investors, fight organized crime, recover stolen money

page 5 →

nical support, without interfering in any way with the process. In order to elect an independent and effective anti-corruption prosecutor, it is necessary to ensure the absolute legitimacy of the entire procedure.

We hope that a transparent procedure will be defined soon and the process of submitting documents will follow promptly. Ukraine needs an effective and strong leader of the Special Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office.

Fighting organized crime

Organized crime is a difficult adversary, because here it is important to expose all parts of the illegal chain: the organizers, all the participants, which can be up to a hundred, their roles and connections. We put this process on different rails. First of all, a new mechanism for monitoring organized crime was introduced, and a large coordination meeting of law enforcement officials in the city of Zaporizhia, located 500 kilometers southeast of Kyiv was held regarding this issue.

In less than a year we conducted three such coordination events, where we thoroughly analyzed the most important topics for the entire law enforcement system and identified common tasks to be implemented, in order to be more effective in these areas. We discussed issues, such as combating torture and illegal handling of weapons. In previous years, such events were held at most once a year, although coordination is one of the main functions of the Prosecutor General and the Prosecutor's Office.

More systematic methods of combating organized crime led to better result. This year, three times more criminal groups were exposed than last year. In ten months, 16 such dangerous associations were neutralized, while in 2019 — the number was only five. Altogether, 352 criminal groups were detected — this is also more than a quarter higher than last year.

I would like to emphasize that members of organized criminal groups committed almost 3,500 crimes in total: robberies, kidnappings and threats, murders for the purpose of seizing cars, illegal surveillance and sale of wiretaps, arms and drug trafficking, raiding. Our priority is to destroy these organized schemes, including within state authorities, and we are confidently moving towards this goal.

In total, 30 organized groups with corrupt connections were neutralized, including 14 groups operating in government and administration. Police also uncovered 26 criminal groups, which committed crimes in the public sector.

Stolen funds to budget

Representing and defending the interests of the state by recovering stolen state assets is a constitutional function of the prosecutor's office. Protecting the interests of the state, especially in times of crisis and

pandemic is our extremely responsible task. Currently, the prosecutor's office is defending the interests of the state in court in the value of over Hr 90 billion. We represent the state in litigation, where hundreds of millions from the budget and hectares of valuable land are at stake.

Although court hearings have been paralyzed by quarantine for several months this year, the prosecutor's office has increased the amount of funds returned to the state, compared to the previous two years. In total, over Hr 30 billion was recovered. The number of cases in which the court has opened proceedings on prosecutors' claims has almost doubled.

In the last two months alone, with the active participation of the Prosecutor General's Office, the Supreme Court upheld court rulings granting prosecutors' claims for the return of four property complexes worth nearly Hr 300 million.

Protecting investors

We have created an investment protection unit. That work stream is one of the main ones for the Prosecutor General's Office. The prosecutor's office is often perceived as a punitive body, but our function is to protect human rights and freedoms, the common interests of society and the state. In this difficult period, it is very important to protect and preserve the business. To this end, we have created a unit with a task to protect investments.

We keep an eye and hold regular meetings with business representatives and constantly communicate with the largest business associations. After more than 30 such meetings, the relevant Department is reviewing 80 cases to exclude alleged pressure, or any possible misconduct.

The most recent example — with the assistance of the Office of the Prosecutor General, the situation with the Mykolayiv Shipyard Okean ended positively. Its assets were unfrozen, and the Supreme Court put an end to the case by recognizing the sale of the plant in 2018 as legal.

Also, the illegal prosecution of a baby food manufacturer has been terminated. We found that in the proceedings against the company, strained legal arguments were used to pressure and seize the company. Our investment protection unit detected and stopped artificial manipulations involving the halt of tax invoices registration and transfer of enterprises to the category of "risky." Now they can continue their legal economic activity.

There is more work to be done to uphold rule of law, protect and support victims and witnesses of crime. As we move forward, we will continue reporting about our work, challenges and opportunities.

Iryna Venediktova is the prosecutor general of Ukraine. She took office in March 2020. She is a former acting head of the State Investigation Bureau and ex-Chair of the Committee on Legal Policy of the Verkhovna Rada.

TOP 10 KYIV POST exclusives online this week

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5. Acting Energy Minister Olha Buslavets fired by Cabinet
6. Brian Bonner: Journalists, we're on our own
7. Zelensky to approve ex-Finance Minister Markarova's nomination for ambassador to US

8. COVID-19 in Ukraine: 12,079 new cases, 138 new deaths, 326,876 active cases
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With infections rising, Ukraine considers tougher measures

By Anastasiia Lapatina
lapatinaa@gmail.com

In mid-November, Ukraine adopted a weekend lockdown, closing down all non-essential businesses on Saturdays and Sundays.

The decision sparked outrage among those working in restaurants, retail and other industries affected by the lockdown.

Moreover, experts see little evidence that the weekend lockdown alone can help slow the rapidly growing rate of COVID-19 infections.

Now the country is considering the idea of a total lockdown, though politicians have been reluctant to take this step despite surging caseloads.

Weekend lockdown

The government adopted a weekend lockdown on Nov. 11, despite the protests of businesses.

The weekend lockdown was “a chance for us to avoid a total lockdown,” according to President Volodymyr Zelensky.

All non-essential businesses — basically everything apart from grocery stores and pharmacies — must now shut down on Saturdays and Sundays. Restaurants, cafes and bars can only do take-out and delivery.

Some cities across Ukraine balked at the new policy. The local governments of Ternopil, Dnipro, Kramatorsk, Cherkasy, Odesa, Sloviansk and Rivne all spoke out against the weekend lockdown, with some refusing to follow Kyiv's orders.

The Lviv City Council went as far as to officially declare Saturdays and Sundays workdays for the service sector to avoid the lockdown.

“This means that we can't implement a ‘weekend lockdown’ because we don't have weekends. People have the right to work,” said Lviv Mayor Andriy Sadovyi.

The business community also harshly criticized the weekend lockdown, as many enterprises in the service sector receive the majority of their revenue on Saturdays and Sundays.

One of the most vocal critics was Dmytro Derkach, co-owner of the cinema chain Planeta Kino. He emphasized that nearly 80% of the cinemas' revenue comes from Saturdays and Sundays. He added that his company received virtually no aid from the government, such as exemptions from paying taxes for a certain period or direct financial payments, during the quarantine.

Now, Planeta Kino will likely have to close down and fire its 500 employees.

The businesses' suffering could be in vain.

Experts point out that there isn't clear proof that a weekend lockdown alone can curb the infections.

“There is no evidence that the spread of the virus is much greater on weekends than on weekdays,” Pavlo Kovtonyuk, head of the Health Economics Center at the Kyiv School of Economics, wrote on Facebook. “There is also no success reported by countries that have already implemented a weekend lockdown.”

People wearing protective masks wait for a trolleybus on Nov. 26, 2020 in downtown Kyiv.



Kovtonyuk thinks that the weekend lockdown is most likely a mistake.

“This is a classic ‘lose-lose’ situation,” he wrote. “Businesses lose. The epidemiological situation worsens. Doctors lose. Patients lose. The only thing the weekend lockdown does is delay an unpleasant decision (to implement a full lockdown) for some time.”

Meanwhile, the president has already declared the new policy a success.

“Weekend quarantine and additional security measures are showing results,” Zelensky said.

But there is not yet enough data to analyze the effectiveness of the weekend lockdown in Ukraine, according to Kovtonyuk.

During the two weekends of lockdown, Nov. 14–15 and Nov. 21–22, the police reported shutting down some 1,500 businesses that broke quarantine rules, including shops and restaurants.

Total lockdown?

Ukraine's government has been pushing back against the idea of a total lockdown for months.

On Oct. 19, Zelensky declared 9,500 daily COVID-19 cases to be the critical number for a lockdown. He later raised the bar to 15,000 daily cases, claiming that the medical system is still able to serve people adequately.

On Nov. 26, Ukraine set its new record — 15,331 daily cases of COVID-19. Still, it didn't prompt the government to immediately announce new measures.

Health Minister Maksym Stepanov pushed further and said that the medical system will be nearing collapse at 25,000 to 30,000 cases a day.

Culture Minister Oleksandr Tkachenko proposed a total lockdown for about two weeks during the winter holidays.

“I'm not trying to steal Christmas,” Tkachenko said. “But we need these restrictions because we have high numbers of infections.”

He stressed that there are always

bigger crowds in the city during the holidays.

On Nov. 26, Interior Minister Arsen Avakov proposed to introduce a full lockdown for three or four weeks and do it as soon as possible, not waiting until the holidays.

Kovtonyuk also thinks a full lockdown should be implemented.

“The weekend lockdown will very likely not produce the expected results,” Kovtonyuk told the Kyiv Post.

He believes the government has to adopt a one-month lockdown as soon as possible. After that month, he proposes to ease restrictions in those oblasts where the infections rates are under control.

Compulsory masks

On Nov. 21, Ukraine implemented fines of Hr 170–255 (\$6–9) for not wearing a mask in public transport and public spaces.

Many countries around the world have made masks compulsory since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Czech Republic became the first country in Europe to do so back in March. Neighboring Slovakia followed suit a week later. In Poland, fines for not wearing a mask were introduced in April.

But even after Ukraine implemented the policy, it's easy to avoid paying the fine.

According to the police, officers first ask a person to put on a mask

if they aren't wearing one. If the person doesn't have a mask, the police officer should offer one to them. Only if the person refuses to wear it can the officer fine them.

In the first two days since masks became compulsory, the police fined 1,395 people around Ukraine for not wearing them.

Over 80% of Ukrainians wear a mask “often”, according to a poll conducted by the Rating Group sociological agency.

Progression of COVID-19

There are currently over 348,000 active cases of COVID-19 in Ukraine. It is less than in Poland, but more than in Germany, where the population is twice the size of Ukraine.

As of Nov. 26, the number of Ukrainians who have succumbed to the virus stands at 11,717.

The Kyiv School of Economics projects three scenarios for how the pandemic will progress in Ukraine — green, yellow, and black.

According to the “green scenario,” the country will reach 17,000 deaths from the virus by the end of 2020. This is the least likely course of events, as it requires complex quarantine restrictions that Ukraine still doesn't have.

The “yellow scenario” supposes 26,000 deaths, but only if the weekend lockdown proves to be a success and reduces the transmission of the virus.

Nearly 33,000 deaths can be expected according to a “black scenario,” which is likely to happen if the weekend lockdown didn't work.

Right now Ukraine is moving in the direction of the “yellow” and “black” scenarios. 🟡



Holodomor remembrance

A man carries a candle on Nov. 23, 2019 during a memorial ceremony near a monument to the victims of the Holodomor, Soviet dictator Josef Stalin's intentional mass starvation of at least four million Ukrainians from 1932-1933. Ukrainians on Nov. 28, 2020 — the fourth Saturday in November — mark the 87th anniversary of the genocide.

Lifestyle

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

On Black Friday, Nov. 27, shop for goods with discounts from local producers, supporting them amid the ongoing crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Gretzky, Sawchuk & more: Ukraine's rich NHL heritage

TeleProstir Studio



Ukrainian filmmaker Volodymyr Mula (C) directs a scene from his "Uke" documentary in Gilbert Plains, Manitoba in Canada in January 2020. The children in the shot wear jerseys with the names of North America's National Hockey League players with Ukrainian roots. These players are the protagonists of the documentary.

By Artur Kornienko
kornienko@kyivpost.com

Wayne Gretzky is regarded as the greatest hockey player of all time, but many don't know that he has Ukrainian origins. Even Ukrainians themselves.

Kyiv-based filmmaker Volodymyr Mula set out to change that with his "Uke: The Untold Story of Hockey Legends" documentary. It chronicles the contribution of hockey players with Ukrainian heritage to North America's National Hockey League, which celebrated its 103rd anniversary on Nov. 26.

"My goal was to show that these former NHL players are proud of their Ukrainian heritage," Mula told the Kyiv Post after working on the documentary for three years. "Each of their unique stories of victory inspired me to complete this film."

As director and producer, Mula dug through archives to find over 50 players of Ukrainian descent who have won the league's main

Stanley Cup, and he licensed NHL's footage of their performances. He interviewed about 10 of them or their family members in Canada and the U.S.

Gretzky, who is on the list of history's greatest athletes in any sport, along with Michael Jordan, Pelé and Babe Ruth, is also in the movie.

The 90-minute film comes out in theaters in Ukraine on Dec. 3. Mula hopes to have the Canadian and U.S. premieres in 2021 if the COVID-19 pandemic subsides. After that, the movie will be released on the Amazon Prime Video streaming platform in the U.S. and the U.K.

The heritage

Mula says that children of Ukrainian immigrants helped establish and develop the NHL, created in 1917 in Canada and expanded in 1924 to include teams from the U.S. The first player of Ukrainian extraction to win the Stanley Cup was Jack Leswick with Chicago Blackhawks in 1934.

Some 275,000 Ukrainians fled to Canada, escaping national and eco-

nom oppression, two world wars and Bolshevism in the first half of the 20th century. In Canada's cold climate, they worked hard on land that was free, while their children found something exciting to do in long winters — hockey.

"These children saw how hard their parents worked and wanted to achieve more from hockey," Mula says. "This Ukrainian hard work and desire to win helped them reach success."

The father of Eric Nesterenko, the Stanley Cup winner as a center with Chicago Cougars in 1961, was a nationalist from Chernihiv Oblast who fought against the Bolsheviks. Mula says that Nesterenko compared his father's struggle with that of modern Ukrainians defending from the Russian aggression.

"Ukrainians fought against everybody — they wanted their independence," Nesterenko says in the documentary.

This spirit could be a part of the reason why Ukrainians have made such excellent hockey play-

ers, according to Orest Kindrachuk. The successful hockey center was also born to Ukrainian immigrants to Canada, and as a rookie won two Stanley Cups with Philadelphia Flyers in 1974 and 1975.

Kindrachuk says in the film that Ukrainians were very brave and tough people, "and that's probably where we got it from."

Other Stanley Cup winners of Ukrainian descent that appear in "Uke" include Eddie Shack (1962, 1963, 1964 and 1967 with Toronto Maple Leafs), Jeff Chychrun (1992, Pittsburgh Penguins), Ken Daneyko (1995, 2000 and 2003, New Jersey Devils) and Ruslan Fedotenko (2004 with Tampa Bay Lightning and 2009 with Pittsburgh Penguins).

The legends

But there are also athletes whose figures and achievements reach beyond trophies. Four players of Ukrainian origin are on the list of

City Life

With Yana Mokhonchuk
yanamokhonchuk@gmail.com

Weekend lockdown provides another heavy blow for restaurants, bars and movie theaters

Ukrainian businesses have gone through it all during the COVID-19 pandemic — and many are still standing. But with new restrictions in place, the question many owners have is: For how long?

First, they were forced to shut down during a harsh quarantine imposed by the government in March. Then, as lockdown conditions eased in May, they adapted their service by adopting new safety requirements. Those included physical distancing, a mask-on policy, providing employees with sanitizers and protective gear and making food delivery safe. Restaurants got some summer relief with outside terraces. But, amid the onset of cold weather, the less safe and less popular option of dining indoors is adding new financial perils.

And now, a weekend lockdown that took effect on Nov. 14 has delivered another tough blow, forcing non-essential businesses to close at least through the end of November. Restaurants are only allowed to provide takeaway and delivery options.

As Ukraine routinely sets new infection records, the weekend lockdown — or even tougher measures — are expected to last through the winter holidays. Protests outside of the Cabinet of Ministers have had no effect. Some enterprises ignored the government edicts, prompting police to fine and shut down 2,400 of them during the first weekend. The following weekend, Nov. 21–22, more than 1,300 companies shut down.

While quick to punish violators, the authorities have been slow to help the struggling sector. President Volodymyr Zelensky recently announced a plan for compensating some self-employed entrepreneurs and employees. But the meager payments of Hr 8,000 (\$280) are hardly enough.

How to survive?

To survive, the owners of Veterano Brownie, a coffee shop and brownie bakery in the capital's Podil district, offered free delivery and involved the entire staff during the spring lockdown. Owners Julia Kochetova-Nabozhniak and Roman Nabozhniak say that loyal customers helped them survive back then. "We do not plan layoffs. Our team is a key priority," Kochetova-Nabozhniak told the Kyiv Post.

'Uke: The Untold Story of Hockey Legends' hits big screen on Dec. 3

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100 Greatest NHL Players, selected by distinguished members of North America's hockey community. Their stories are also showcased in Toronto's Hockey Hall of Fame.

One of them is Johnny Bucyk, who led the Boston Bruins to two Stanley Cup championships in 1970 and 1971. The parents of the long time Boston left winger came from Lviv Oblast. But his father died when Johnny was 11, so his mother had to work two jobs.

"Hockey was the main sport," Bucyk says in the movie. "We started out playing a lot of street hockey."

The most iconic but also tragic figure in hockey history is Terry Sawchuk, one of the best goaltenders ever to play the game. The four-time Stanley Cup champion with Detroit Red Wings in 1952, 1954, 1955 and with Toronto Maple Leafs in 1967, Sawchuk was born to a family of immigrants from western Ukraine.

He died at only 40 after a life of multiple injuries, alcoholism and depression. He's one of the few players elected to the Hockey Hall of Fame just one year after his final season. Mula interviewed Sawchuk's son, Jerry, for the movie, who said his father spoke Ukrainian.

"They called my dad 'Uke' all the time. That just stuck on him everywhere he went," Jerry Sawchuk says in the documentary.

This "Uke" or "Ukie" monicker given by Canadians to Ukrainian immigrants and then their descendants among hockey players inspired the film's title.

One hockey legend who refused to talk to Mula and his film crew was Mike Bossy, a record-breaking scorer with New York Islanders. Bossy was a crucial element of the Islanders' four-year reign as Stanley Cup champions in 1980–1983.

But the filmmaker could not ignore Bossy's contribution and found that his grandfather was a soldier with the Ukrainian People's Republic that opposed the Bolsheviks. In Canada, Bossy's grandfather collected money to help overthrow the Soviet Union and defended national minorities.

The Great One

"Uke" would not be complete without Gretzky, nicknamed "the Great One" when he was just 10. Gretzky's otherworldly talent made him the leading scorer in NHL history, with more goals and assists than any other player. He still holds 60 NHL records and won the Stanley Cups four times in 1984, 1985, 1987 and 1988 with Edmonton Oilers.

While Gretzky's mother was Irish-English, his father Walter Gretzky's origins have been disputed.

Some claim Walter is Belarusian

Wayne Gretzky (R), a Canadian of Ukrainian descent regarded as the greatest hockey player of all time, and Volodymyr Mula, the director of the "Uke" documentary, pose for a photo with a Ukrainian flag after an interview in St. Louis, the United States, in January 2020.



TeleProstir Studio

because his father Terentiy came from the village of Ogdemer in modern-day Belarus. Others say he is Russian because those were the lands of the Russian Empire. Ukrainians argue that Ogdemer is part of the ethnic Ukrainian region of Beresteishyna.

While Walter's mother Maria came from the village of Panovychi in Ukraine's Ternopil Oblast, some claim that she was Polish because the village had a large population of ethnic Poles.

But there is one strongest argument that Terentiy and Maria were Ukrainians. They spoke Ukrainian — the language that only ethnic Ukrainians spoke when Ukraine was part of the Russian and the Austro-Hungarian empires.

"I learned Ukrainian first because my mother didn't know how to speak English until later," Wayne Gretzky's father Walter told Mula in the film. "So Ukraine is the motherland of our family."

Wayne Gretzky himself had not confirmed his Ukrainian origins before "Uke." He only did so indirectly by attending a "United for Ukraine" fundraiser in 2014 that helped Ukrainian medics at the frontline of Russia's war, organized by Eugene Melnyk, the Ukrainian Canadian owner of Ottawa Senators.

"We had a lot of Ukrainian influence in our family," Gretzky said in a speech there.

To put all doubts to rest, the filmmakers had to interview Gretzky himself, which wasn't easy. Gretzky's public appearances cost \$100,000, Mula says, and the filmmaker exhausted every other possibility he could find. He even stalked the star athlete at a hotel in Toronto, but Gretzky just passed him by.

"Uke's" total budget was Hr 5.76 million (\$203,000), 77% of which Ukraine funded through the State

Film Agency. The rest was crowd-funded by individuals and organizations in Ukraine, Canada and the U.S. Ukrainian diaspora also helped greatly with logistics, Mula says.

When the shooting was almost complete, Kelly Hrudef, a Ukrainian Canadian goalie who played with Gretzky at Los Angeles Kings, helped arrange a meeting with the legend. For Mula, the interview was a reward for all his efforts over three years of filming.

"Gretzky absolutely recognizes his Ukrainian origins in the inter-

view," Mula says. "He also thoroughly knows Ukraine's situation (with Russia's war) and understands the geopolitics."

For more on Gretzky's views about his Ukrainian heritage, you have to see the film, Mula says.

"Uke" hits Ukrainian cinemas on Dec. 3 with screenings in Ukrainian. Canadian and U.S. premieres will be scheduled for 2021 if the pandemic abates. After that, the movie will be released through Amazon Prime Video streaming platform in the U.S. and the U.K. 🇺🇸



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City Life

Weekend lockdowns may deliver a fatal blow to more in service sector

page 12 →

But finances suffered greatly. Delivery and takeout require more spending on transportation and packaging. The owners, moreover, are still paying off loans used for the café's launch in 2019.

Veterano Brownie owners prefer a full lockdown over a weekend one. A full lockdown triggers the force majeure clause in many agreements, allowing entrepreneurs to defer lease and loan payments.

Still, in November, the café is better prepared for disruptions. It introduced a new menu item: brownie in a jar. The dessert is made of trimmed edges of brownies, cream and salted caramel. It can be frozen and stored for up to 30 days. "This is also a way to reduce food waste," Kochetova-Nabozhniak says.

The entrepreneurs were again surprised by the loyalty of Kyiv residents. "At first, we thought that one person by the bar would be enough to serve over the weekend, but our guests supported us so much that we're having a full shift staff starting from the second weekend," Kochetova-Nabozhniak says.

Now the café is offering a 30% discount on Black Friday. They are also introducing corporate gift options for the upcoming winter holiday season.

Frozen nightlife

The situation is worse for clubs and bars, which need weekend patronage to thrive. For Kyiv's HVLV bar (pronounced "Khvylovyy"), a weekend lockdown is almost as damaging as a full one. "The weekend quarantine skewed our sales by about 60%," co-founder Andy Yankovskyi told the Kyiv Post.

The abruptness — approved just three days before coming into force — left no time to prepare. "It's all very stressful because you don't know what new trick the Cabinet will play tomorrow, shooting point-blank without warning," Yankovskyi says.



Protesters hit cutlery to make noise as they attend a rally against the strengthening of measures amid the COVID-19 pandemic in front of the Cabinet of Ministers in Kyiv on Nov. 11, 2020. Later that day, the government imposed "weekend lockdown," which forces non-essential businesses to close on Saturday and Sunday, while restaurants are allowed to do delivery and takeout.

Yankovskyi would also prefer a full lockdown for the chance to postpone payments to suppliers.

HVLV did not lay off any employees yet, but cut managers' salaries by 10%. "We have a very strong and friendly team, in which we have invested a lot of time and effort, and we would like to keep it," Yankovskyi says.

The first harsh lockdown in March pushed HVLV to launch delivery, mostly consisting of their specialty drinks. But that wasn't much of a success. "A bar is a place where people come exclusively for the bar magic, which takes place behind the counter, when a bartender is making your drink," Yankovskyi says.

This time, HVLV has improved the delivery menu, adding many food options. Now, there's a variety of

sandwiches, bowls, soups, hummus, as well as 15 signature cocktails, lemonade and other drinks.

But the owners don't count on more than covering salaries for employees.

Cinemas in debt

Unlike restaurants and bars, cinemas were left with no options on the weekend.

Since the start of the pandemic, theaters have had to reduce the number of seats at screenings to ensure adequate distance between moviegoers. Many big premieres that were supposed to attract bigger audiences have also been canceled. The business has suffered enormously.

One of Ukraine's largest cinema chains, Planeta Kino, is having trou-

ble making ends meet, going deeper into debt. The company has nine cinemas in six Ukrainian cities. The weekend lockdown will cost them 70–80% of all revenue.

"We cannot pay rent for all our premises now," co-owner of Planeta Kino Dmytro Derkach told the Kyiv Post.

The company reduced shifts and cut salaries by 50% for employees of the central Kyiv office and the management team. Some quit.

In the worst-case scenario, Planeta Kino will have to shut down all cinemas and lay off more than 500 employees and wait until mass vaccination brings life back to normal.

"We work with huge losses and in this case, we will not last long," Derkach says. ☹

Opponents of Odesa mayor seek his ouster over Russian citizenship

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that Trukhanov will be fired from his job if he is convicted by the High Anti-Corruption Court in the Kravan case.

"Trukhanov can only be defeated if he is jailed," Ustymenko said. "In this case he might not serve until the end of his term."

The mayor has also been investigated in several other corruption cases but has not been charged in any of them.

Kuzakon argues that Prosecutor General Iryna Venediktova is blocking the charges. The Prosecutor General's Office did not respond to a request for comment.

Galanternik's clout

The political landscape in Odesa has also changed due to Trukhanov's alleged conflict with his ally, a secretive Odesa businessman Vladimir Galanternik.

Local anti-corruption activists previously accused Trukhanov and his alleged business partners, Galanternik and Alexander Angert, of having turned Odesa into their private fiefdom, awarding the most lucrative land and municipal contracts to their own companies. An Italian police dossier from 1998 identifies Trukhanov and Angert as members of a mafia gang, according to the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, a Kyiv Post partner, in 2016.

Galanternik's clout in Odesa has decreased significantly, several sources, including Kuzakon, told the Kyiv Post. He has not visited Odesa recently due to fear of ongoing criminal cases, Kuzakon said.

"Galanternik's influence has disappeared," he added. ☹



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Responsibilities:

- creating a content plan for the video unit, defining the visual style of the unit's videos
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- 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
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- 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



The U.S. Embassy will have an online vehicle auction beginning on Tuesday, November 24, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. The online auction will end on Wednesday, **December 02, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.**

All subject vehicles are being sold "as is, where is", are **temporarily imported into Ukraine, are not customs cleared** and have no expressed or implied warranties on the condition of the vehicles. Bidders must register and log into the website by following the link: <https://online-auction.state.gov> in order to bid on auction items.



World Health Organization

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR Europe

WHO invites applications for the post of **National Professional Officer (HIV and hepatitis)**

WHO is looking for a National Professional Officer (HIV and hepatitis) to WHO Country Office in Ukraine. The incumbent will provide technical assistance in HIV and hepatitis prevention, diagnosis and treatment to the Ukrainian Ministry of Health, Centre for Public Health and the National HIV and Hepatitis Programmes, with the overall aim to end HIV and hepatitis in Ukraine.

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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.

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LIFESTYLE

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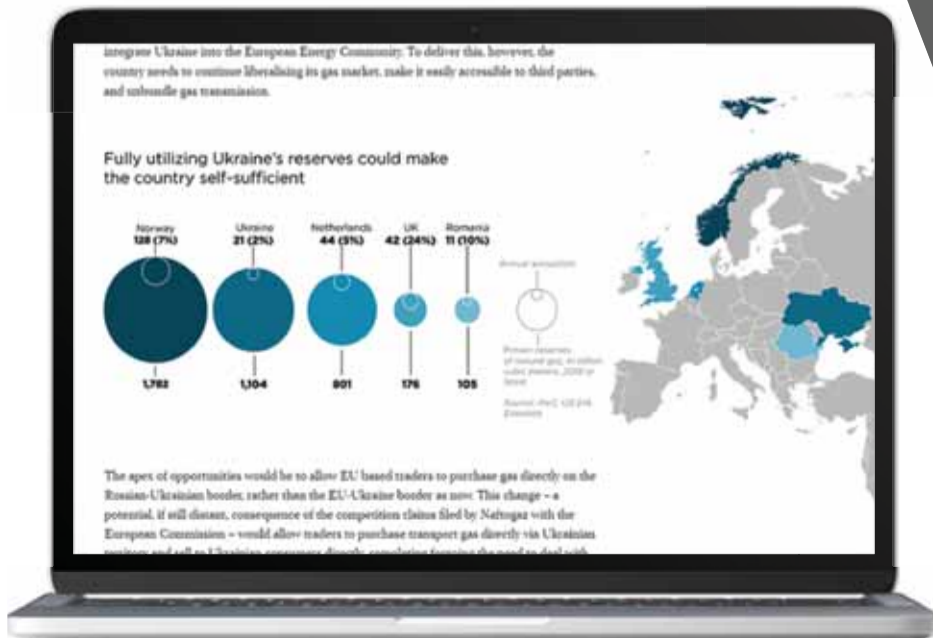
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Kyiv Post

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