The Ukrainian Week

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The analysis of local elections

The role of micro-business in Ukraine's economy

How Ukrainians are coming to terms with the Holodomor

THE CHOICE OF THE REGIONS

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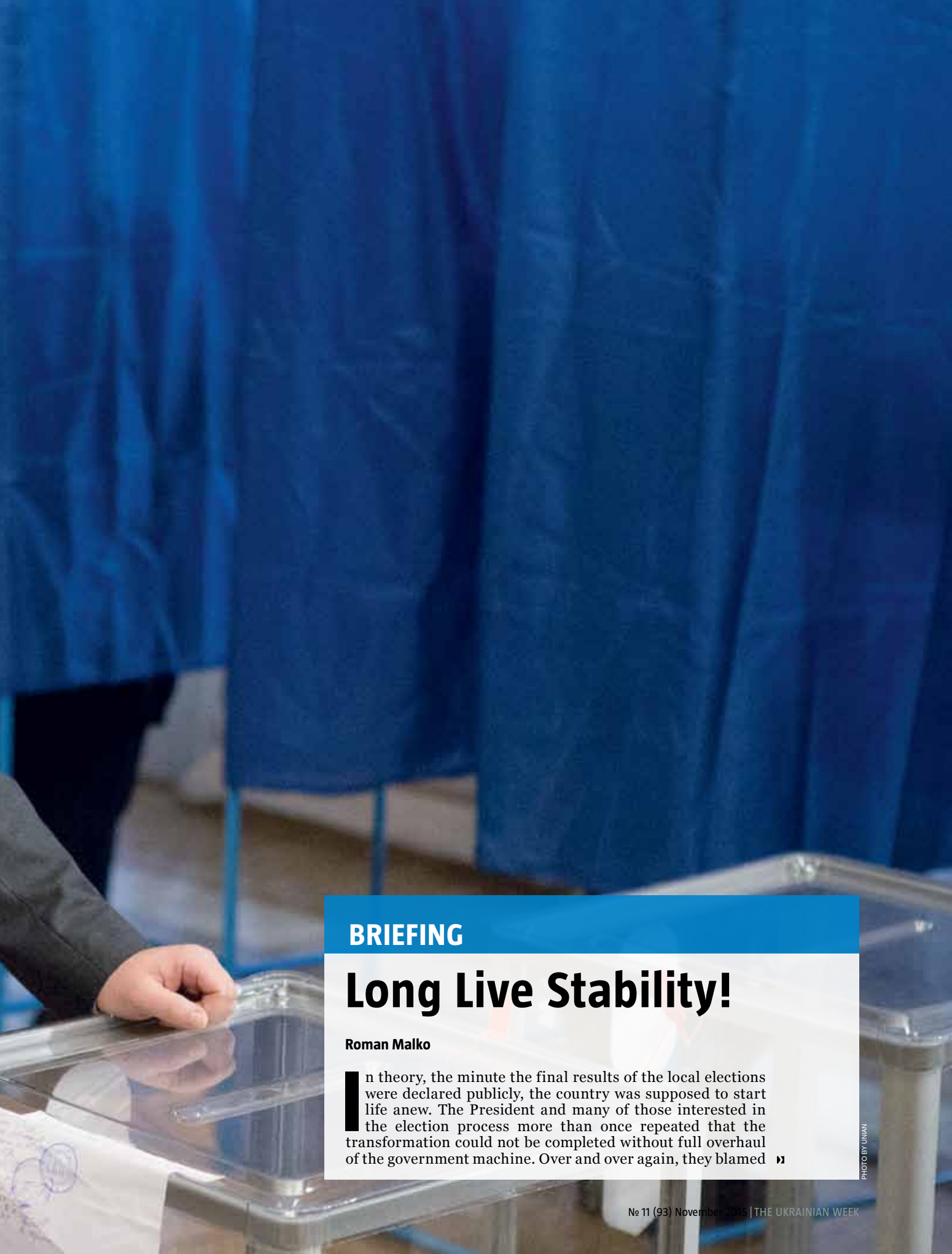

BRIEFING

Long Live Stability!

Roman Malko

In theory, the minute the final results of the local elections were declared publicly, the country was supposed to start life anew. The President and many of those interested in the election process more than once repeated that the transformation could not be completed without full overhaul of the government machine. Over and over again, they blamed ››

PHOTO BY UNIAN

those from the camp of predecessors for hampering the victorious stride of reforms. But, the culprits don't stand a chance from now on, they said, while using the culprits' methods to persecute competitors, create political projects to steal votes from others, and control the election process. In short, those in power expected pretty good results for themselves.

In practice, something went wrong. Right after exit-polls showed low support for the party of the President and its satellites, their leaders began to declare witch-hunt plans to reveal those who failed to deliver the expected result. Could the President be sorry now for launching the dangerous game of "local elections" and blessing the transformation of the campaign into a freak show? One can only guess. He is a skillful player who never betrays emotions. But we don't need his emotions. The mere fact that the President's party failed to garner high support, as planned in the top cabinets, means that someone will be held responsible for this. So far, Ukrainian voters have outsmarted expensive spin doctors.

The current outcome has brought about many unexpected surprises, opening old sore wounds which had bothered those in power before but seemed like something that doesn't need emergency treatment. For instance, the landslide victory of Ghennadiy Kernes, the No1 enemy of Ukraine's current Interior Minister Avakov in Kharkiv, and brilliant results for the Opposition Bloc and its clone party, Renaissance in South-Eastern Ukraine, pretty good support for Samopomich which stole the votes of young and middle-class pro-Ukrainian electorate (the Poroshenko Bloc apparently counted on them, among others) – all this can hardly qualify as an accomplishment that will leave the power holders happy.

Clearly, these newly-revealed results should not be interpreted as a revanche of the former Regionals or the defeat of those currently in power. Local governments have changed to some extent, and this is good. The triumph of the Poroshenko Bloc along with its numerous satellites did not happen, but they still managed to garner a pretty decent result compared to all other projects. There is hardly a local council all across Ukraine where at least one Poroshenko Bloc candidate will not be present. What background these people have is a different matter. Poroshenko Bloc's unscrupulous franchise of its brand to various culprits from the past has stirred much public outcry already, while elections in Mariupol and Krasnoarmiysk, both in Eastern Ukraine, that were disrupted at the very last day, confirmed earlier mistrust for promises about clean-ups and overhauls. The deals between representative of those in power and the old guard, which many proactive voters had lamented about during the campaign, manifested themselves clearly. In fact, this could be for the better. It means that at least some I's are dotted, so mainstream parties no longer have to bluff and pretend to be who they are not. Fortunately, Ukrainians have at least some reasons to feel safe for a little while: the force and security bloc has been reinforced, reliable people are in key offices, while the most destructive elements have been warned to keep their heads down.

Actually, President Poroshenko has grown very wary of all this revolutionary chaos. He is a man of money, and money doesn't like much fuss. If the President believed even a little that he can change the country, he would have done so with all the "green light" he has. But he is more concerned with stabilization. It is now becoming clearer why his response to some events Ukraine underwent was so obscure. Why wasn't martial law introduced after the aggressor invaded the country? Why was the investigation of the killings on the Maidan so messed up? And why some of those who should long have been in jail never even got close to the Pechersk Court?

Social frustration with the government is growing. Low voter turnout and meager support of those whom people have completely lost trust for are evidence of this. The fact that Svoboda is returning into the political orbit, the Right Sector's rates are growing, and the support of Samopomich and Batkivshchyna is going up against the backdrop of the shrinking Poroshenko Bloc results and the plummeting rates of Premier Yatseniuk's Popular Front, will surely push the top players to seek more reliable allies who are not infected with revolutionary zest. In fact, these allies are already available: ultimate alliance is probably a matter of time. In this situation, no one should be surprised by the government's obsession over repeated elections

DEALS BETWEEN THOSE IN POWER AND THE OLD GUARD, WHICH PROACTIVE VOTERS LAMENTED ABOUT, MANIFESTED THEMSELVES CLEARLY IN THE ELECTIONS

in Mariupol and Krasnoarmiysk where, polls suggest, ex-Regionals could get confident victory. This could be just one element of the deal those in power have to carry out in order to ensure further quiet and comfortable existence.

Unfortunately, Ukraine's agenda for today focuses on the notorious stability. This includes the comeback of "professionals" and "solid managers", rather than what the country actually was hoping for. This stability does not include any additional moves to tilt the system that has been built carefully for years. The promises of massive lustration of prosecutors and judges, huge success in reforming civil service and struggle with corruption, bold reform initiatives and profound reboot in various sectors should not mislead anyone.

The latest elections were the litmus test that was quite revealing. The second round of mayoral elections is about to take place in mid-November. For some, it's a second chance to confirm or debunk our worst fears and prognosis. We will soon find out how those in power and society do in this test, whether Ukraine will have a chance to switch from words to action, and actually launch the vital pendulum of change, or whether it will regress, along with its dreams, back into "stability". While everyone is busy counting votes, "may God help us", as we say in Ukraine.

Local Reforms?

Hanne Severinsen

After the EuroMaidan, the dream was, that there would be subsequent presidential, parliamentary and local elections in order to change the country upside down from an oligarch society into a democratic one. Everybody knows after 25 years' experience that "things take time". But you have to build on something, that can grow in your own garden—not just rely only on "imported seed".

The Council of Europe, Venice Commission, EU, OSCE/ODIHR—all can give advice and send experts, urge and follow-up. But in the end all this has to be implemented in a way that builds on the society's own "trial and errors", so that the rules are understandable and you know their purposes.

Legislation should not just be a lip-service game. Society should play by home-grown rules exactly because their purpose is understood.

Here, the local dimension is an important tool for giving room for new people who are trusted locally and can grow up in their own society, as well as probably earn their way to the Parliament. Therefore, local elections should be an important tool for the "new beginning" everybody hopes for. They should be a competition between various choices and different ways forward. In many countries, a politician starts his/her way with local voluntary work and working together to solve local challenges.

Local politics is to prioritize and make responsible decision on all what matters in your local community. And pay locally for the improvement you demand. Until today, money and responsibility has been non-transparent and control has been a tool for those in power to act "smarter" at the expense of those who don't have power. Politics has been a power-game that has corrupted the society.

It is therefore important to set new rules for the local game. Ukraine has a lively civil society, and many are good organizers. But local politics seems to be overruled by the oligarch race to take control over cities and oblasts.

The law says that every candidate, when registered should submit a declaration of money obtained and spent. This is very important because then the voters know about the forces behind the candidate. But where are the implementation and punishment for failure to do so? Look at billboards, advertisement and rallies paid for by the candidates: their cost does not fit with any declaration—submitted or not. Why not make an easy web-site where all these facts can be seen?

When sent out to see how the new law on local elections functions as an observer, I am impressed to see how the local election staff—especially, very strong and competent women—try to make the best out of a very complicated and unclear system on the day of the vote. The system has so many levels that it is not easy to detect how the result comes out.

First of all, if the election is local—why should only party-candidates be eligible? There are big differences between Zakarpattia and Odesa, so there could be many reasons for new movements in an area to be more trusted than "party-soldiers".

At a certain layer the "first-past-the-post" system is applied. This means that when 7 candidates get 7-17% of the votes in the area, the one with 17% wins over all the others. Here, a system of proportional election would be more representative. But when you look at the proportional system the lawmakers have labeled as "open-list", it is a distortion of what is meant with this principle.

THE RUSSIAN AGGRESSION WILL IN THE LONG RUN BEST BE FOUGHT IF UKRAINIANS FREE THEIR ENTREPRENEURIAL POWER AND SHOW THAT THEY HAVE TALENT

The open-list system means, that the voters can influence who of the party list will be elected by voting for a specific candidate they prefer.

Under the current procedure, however, the party headquarters determine the No1 candidate on all lists, while the others can be randomly elected if they run against weak candidates. It is also still too easy to pay deposits for candidates with clone-names to run and confuse the voters.

The election law is strange and has a strange backrgound. After big discussions and consultations, a brand new system suddenly appeared in July and was passed by the Parliament. It had never been used before, except for the only time—once in St. Petersburg.

For the future of Ukraine one may sincerely hope that decisions on election law—be it for the presidential, parliamentary or local elections—will not be taken in such a strange background, often raising a suspicion that the present parties do not want newcomers. The election law should not be designed to secure the power of those in power. Its whole idea should be that the elected forces or people represent their voters. And if they lose this trust, they will not be reelected.

Ukraine is suffering today because of the Russian aggression and should be helped to defend itself. But Ukraine will also help itself in the long run by being a democratic prosperous European value-based State.

The Russian aggression will in the long run best be fought if Ukrainians free their entrepreneurial power and show the world that they have talent and national resources that will flourish in a free, predictable, law-based and reformed just system.

Hanne Severinsen is an international observer in Ukrainian elections, former co-rapporteur on Ukraine for PACE. President of the European Media Platform and member of Danish Helsinki Committee for Human Rights

Oligarch Turf Wars. 2.0

Denys Kazanskiy

Triumph of oligarch-backed parties and debut of new independent movements

While the vote count continues as this article goes to press, it is safe to say that the local elections have confirmed what much of the debate recently focused on: Ukraine has been divided into spheres of influence between the oligarchs that are seeking to consolidate authority over their territories.

The country's regions still look more like fiefdoms. In a number of oblasts, the election result for a political party is linked to the name of the oligarch backing it more than it is to the party's platform.

Preliminary results of the most recent local elections crystallize this problem. Only a handful of mainstream parties managed to get more or less equal shares of votes throughout the country: these include Petro Poroshenko's Solidarnist (Solidarity), Yulia Tymoshenko's Batkivshchyna (Fatherland), Oleh Liashko's Radical Party, and Andriy Sadoviy's Samopomich (Self-Help). They will be represented in local councils in almost every oblast. Syla Liudey (Power of the People) and Demokratychnyi Alians (Democratic Alliance), two new parties which climbed to success both in Western Ukraine and in the Donbas, have become a welcome surprise. At the same time, many proxy parties backed by oligarchs and regional feudal lords have also made it to city councils. These are mostly political tools designed to lobby the interests of specific individuals or groups.

Oligarch-backed parties have different results in different oblasts: their rates depend on the authority their owner has locally. For example, Ihor Kolomoisky's political project, UKROP, won 25% in the oligarch's core Dnipropetrovsk Oblast and the city of Dnipropetrovsk, as well as in Volyn, where it outran all competitors by a significant margin. In Rivne Oblast, neighboring on Volyn, UKROP is hardly passing the 5% threshold although the two oblasts share pretty much the same mindset. In Donetsk Oblast, which is close to Dnipropetrovsk in its mentality, UKROP failed to even cross the 5% threshold.

Another of Kolomoisky's political projects, Vidrodzhennya (Renaissance) party, made up mainly of former Party of Regions members and tailored specifically for south-eastern oblasts, has won a landslide victory in Kharkiv, where this party is headed by the long-time controversial Mayor Hennady Kernes. Hastily created just a few months ago, it won 54% of votes in this major eastern city. Any Western spin doctor would be envious of such results, but in Ukraine such miracles, unfortunately, are pretty normal. This victory proved that party symbols, principles or platforms make absolutely no difference to most Kharkiv residents. The only thing they find interesting are personalities. Should Kernes suddenly join some other political project tomorrow, be it Kolomoisky's UKROP or Poroshenko's Solidarity, the level of support for those parties in Kharkiv will instantly skyrocket, and Vidrodzhennya will fade like the Party of Regions and the Opposition Bloc did earlier.

In Odesa, Doviryay Dilam (Trust Actions), a party privately owned by the incumbent Mayor Hennadiy Trukhanov, won 34% of votes, outdoing the race by a large margin. Poroshenko's Solidarity managed to get only half of that in Odesa. Serhiy Kivalov's personal political project, Morska Partiya (Sea Party), crossed the 5%-barrier, gaining over 6% of votes. This results spells growing influence of local clans in Odesa Oblast.

In Dnipropetrovsk, Hromadianska Syla (Civil Force), a party fully controlled by a local politician Zahid Krasnov, won 12% in municipal elections. Outside of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast no one has ever heard of it.

Yedynyi Tsentr (United Center), a party owned by the Viktor Baloha-led clan in Zakarpattia, has performed locally even better, winning elections in several cities of the oblast. In Mukacheve and Chop, the oblast's two major hubs, it got significantly ahead of all mainstream parties currently present in Parliament. But this is not a result of a good political platform the party offered. The fact that this triumphant march stops abruptly at the administrative borders of Zakarpattia Oblast gives an idea of where the sphere of influence of its sponsor and owner ends.

Oleksiy Koshel, Director General of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine, noted a marked rise in the popularity of regional parties in these local elections, and some may even be a threat to Ukraine's sovereignty. "I'd like to say that Ukraine has no regional parties. We are a unitary state, not a federation. All parties in Ukraine exist at the national level," Koshel said. However, it is clear that some nationwide parties are being used as purely regional projects. Interestingly enough, the former Party of Regions, rebranded as the Opposition Bloc, has embarked on this course. Its influence is now limited only to south-eastern Ukraine. This project, in fact, is now owned by Dmytro Firtash and Rinat Akhmetov, and managed to show good results only in the regions where their oligarchic clans are still influential.

The only region where the Opposition Bloc had an overwhelming success is the Donbas. In Kharkiv Oblast, the party even failed to register for the elections; its electorate switched to the newly-created mayor-led Renaissance party. In Dnipropetrovsk, the Opposition Bloc won the elections but failed to get the majority of seats in the local council. In Odesa minicipal elections, the Opposition Bloc only came third, winning about 13% of votes, while its electorate voted for the parties owned by long-time and controversial local politicians Trukhanov and Kivalov, who ended up with the total of 40% of votes between them.

Interestingly, even in Pavlohrad, a mining city in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast where Rinat Akhmetov owns the city's main enterprise, Pavlohradvuhillya (Pavlohrad Coal Plant), and enjoys almost unchallenged authority, the Opposition Bloc's candidate failed to garner a convincing victory. When it became clear that the Opposition Bloc candidate Anton Vershyna failed to win in the first round over his opponent from UKROP party and popular war veteran Yevhen Terekhov, the Central Election Commission simply reduced the number of voters in the city on paper. Following this overhaul, the Central Election Commission Head Mykhaylo Okhendovsky said that Akhmetov's candidate, Vershyna, had won in the first round and the second round would be canceled. This brutal manual interference with the election process caused public outcry: UKROP and civil society presented strong enough arguments to make the President himself comment on the elections in Pavlohrad. As a result, the city will have the second round of elections.

The Pavlohrad scenario proved that Akhmetov is gradually losing his influence and can no longer secure victory for his candidate without outright fraud even in his core city. Dnipropetrovsk Oblast is in the meantime gradually passing under control of the local oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky.

OLIGARCH-BACKED PARTIES HAVE DIFFERENT RESULTS IN DIFFERENT OBLASTS: THEIR RATES DEPEND ON THE AUTHORITY THEIR OWNER HAS LOCALLY

Amidst all those turf wars, however, there is a beacon of hope. Parties, such as the small and independent of oligarchs Power of the People and Democratic Alliance, have been successful in a number of oblasts. They managed to do what seemed impossible just a couple of years ago by making it to local councils in Donetsk Oblast. The Power of the People won about 7% in Dobropillya, a town in Donetsk Oblast, while the Democratic Alliance got about 10% in Novohrodivka, another town in the Ukraine-controlled part of Donetsk Oblast.

The Power of the People's website states that its candidates have made it to at least 35 local councils across Ukraine, and their candidate Volodymyr Shmatko won the mayoral election in Chortkiv, a town in Ternopil Oblast, Western Ukraine. All this signals that people have grown wary of oligarchic parties and prefer candidates who barely pay anything for TV campaigns.

The fact that both the Democratic Alliance and the Power of the People campaigned almost exclusively in social media, is also an indicator of the growing importance of the internet in Ukrainian politics. If this trend continues, oligarch-backed parties will soon have to face serious rivals, and sink into oblivion as relics of the past in a longer-term prospect.

Michel Tereshchenko:

"We have to clean all of Hlukhiv of corruption"

Interviewed by **Hanna Trehub**

The new mayor of Hlukhiv, a descendant of the renowned Tereshchenko family, talks to ***The Ukrainian Week*** about his team, how he plans to cooperate with other mayors in Sumy Oblast, how the city's economy can be realistically revived, and how to shore up the border with the Russian Federation, which is only 15 kilometers away.

You've been elected mayor in a town where the seat has not changed hands in 18 years. How did you manage such an amazing victory? What are the conditions you will have to work under and what kind of people will you have to work with now?

Actually, people from Hlukhiv asked me to run in this election. I agreed and offered my proposals: the city needs to be cleaned of corruption, businesses need a shot in the arm, and we need new jobs. These are not predominantly political issues, but they have to be dealt with for Hlukhiv to get on the right track again. I'm not a politician. I don't belong to any parties and I never thought that I would run for the job of mayor here in Ukraine.

I support all the really democratic parties that there are in this country. But the political games going on today are a real surprise to me. For instance, the Volia Narodu or Will of the People party that fronted my opponent for the mayor's office, a former Party of Region's man, Yuriy Burlaka, got into some strange negotiations with the Poroshenko Bloc and bought it out in Sumy Oblast like some kind of franchise. The residents of the oblast couldn't really figure out what the difference was between the Poroshenko Bloc and the Will of the People during these local elections.

PHOTO BY ANDRIY LOMAKIN

Hlukhiv is a historical town that has a lot of meaning for all of Ukraine. So it shouldn't be run by mafias, bandits and smugglers. It's not meant to be a buffer zone. I want to see it become one of the most beautiful towns in Ukraine and in Europe. Can this be done? Absolutely. We not only have to build the border of Ukraine today, but the border of Europe, actually. Hlukhiv is a border town. It's important that it become a kind of showcase, a lighthouse, and a magnet that will draw people.

I intend to work outside party lines, in a non-partisan manner. We need people who are willing to work openly, transparently and professionally because we have to clean all of Hlukhiv of corruption. Strong community organizations can really be of help in this by putting pressure on all the parties and government offices. I'm going to help one of these organizations get registered this week. From what I can see, political parties in Ukraine have lost the trust of voters. They are mostly business clubs that foster their own interests and don't understand that voters expect something very different from them. It's wrong for government institutions to be on the side of one candidate or another during an election campaign.

You have managed to set up a competitive European-class manufacturing facility in Hlukhiv, you've attracted investors to a depressed town, and you've generated new jobs. What approach will you use as mayor to improve the economic situation?

A lot of locals are living on contraband right now. 18 years ago, Andriy Derkach, a national deputy (and deputy leader of the Will of the People group — **Ed.**), came to Hlukhiv from Dnipropetrovsk and has controlled most of Sumy country to this day.

What changed in all those years? Well, we had 10,000 jobs in this town, because four large, powerful enterprises operated here. All of them are in suspended animation today. The local food processing industry was also very strong but 12 years ago, raiders took over the meat packing plant and all that's left now is a ruin, even the bricks have been stripped away. The dairy plant stopped working a few years, same for the cheese-making plant. Three months ago, the Hlukhiv commercial bakery closed its doors. There was once a food-processing plant that produced ciders, juices and jams. It's a hollow shell today. The linen plant is still standing, but it's not working, either. I bought out the local textile plant that has stood here for over 20 years. All that was left of it was ruins and scrap metal. This company has been re-equipped and some smart investors were attracted. It's operational today.

Why is Hlukhiv filled with ruins? Why isn't anyone investing in the town? I have shown that it's not that hard to put some capital into this place. Obviously, those who were running Sumy Oblast for the last 18 years find it more convenient for locals to be poor and jobless. That makes it easier to buy them off and take control of all the public resources.

Hlukhiv is really on the verge of collapsing today because it has no jobs and its residents are incredibly poor. And because of corruption, water costs twice as much here as in Kyiv. Everything that possibly can be privatized has been, including the local cemetery. Peo-

ple now have to pay around UAH 5,000 for a plot to bury someone. Next to Hlukhiv is a sand quarry that belongs to the former mayor, his friends and relatives. And this was the only place in Hlukhiv where you can buy sand. Yet not a penny from that quarry found its way into the local budget. Everything from the hilltop to the valley was privatized. Corruption is growing by the day and the city is dying. Only those who are corrupt and the customs service are doing well. For young people, Hlukhiv offers few prospects: smuggling, corruption or working for Customs.

And all this is happening on land where you cannot only grow flax and non-narcotic hemp, but much more. My ancestors grew sugar beets here and built a lot of sugar plants. Today, these plants are closed, chopped up for scrap metal and sold. There's plenty of demand for what you can grow in the soil around Hlukhiv. And there are markets all around Ukraine where this kind of product can be sold as well. I already mentioned the linen factory: there are 47 looms in good condition standing there and someone could be making canvas. The Ukrainian army could really use that today, because it's importing canvas from Russia right now. The director of this factory preserved the equipment and the workforce and he's ready to start working as soon as he has some orders. I went with him to Kharkiv where I met the person in charge of buying canvas for the Armed Forces and when we finished negotiating, she finally gave us an order.

What kinds of steps do you plan to take now and further to improve the defensive capacities of the northeastern border with Russia where Hlukhiv is situated?

Putin's plan for Ukraine is to break the country up into three parts. The first was to be occupied territories: Donbas, Crimea and whatever else Russia was able to take. The second, in Western Ukraine, was to be a weak agricultural state mostly based in Halychyna, similar to Moldova, which would join the EU and NATO. The third section, between these two, was to be a buffer zone. That might include Sumy Oblast, but I have no desire to see Hlukhiv turned into that kind of zone. The problem is that no one seems to want to strengthen the northeastern border. Possibly it's more convenient for some people the way it is, because there's no control. The situation with oversight of the border and customs services is no better here than in Mukacheve, Zakarpattia Oblast. French cheeses and other banned goods go to Moscow through Hlukhiv and we don't know what comes to us in the opposite direction.

There are other risks as well. If Russia opens a second front against Ukraine, then it's most likely to come through the section of border near Hlukhiv. Why is no one reinforcing this section of the border or controlling what comes through it? 12 kilometers from the international border next to the city are empty army barracks that no one is using. The first line of defense at Konotop is 80 kilometers further west than Hlukhiv. Why is there no battalion or even group of battalions? Is everyone really that indifferent to the situation? I want to talk about this situation with the president because we need to protect our people, our land and our assets.

Every mayor has his team. Who is already working with you in Hlukhiv and whom else are you planning to bring into the team?

I already mentioned that I am helping one local organization get registered. There are people who want to join our team in order to help clean up Hlukhiv and get the city working normally again. If I may say so, we have our own laboratory of practical research. Through Facebook and e-mails, I have received a slew of CVs and we are in the process of selecting those with whom I will form a team. It will include 10 volunteers who will assist me in coming up with rapid and responses to urgent issues and with unplanned tasks. This group will operate in parallel with the city council. I've used what Mikheil Saakashvili did in Odesa Oblast as a template, when he announced an open competition for those who wanted to work in his administration. The city council will function normally and it's important that it also have specialists doing specific jobs. We have the majority on the council and I don't expect too many surprises. Maybe altogether this will change this system that is like gangrene eating up Ukraine. There are lots of people here who say the right things but few of them are actually doing the right things. The results of our team's work should be evident pretty quickly, what's working and how—and what's not.

The city you are now head of is a Hetmanate capital that most Ukrainians only know about from their school history books. It's not easy to get there. What do you plan to do to make it more of a tourist attraction?

It's true that Hlukhiv is one of the historic capitals of Ukraine, the place where four hetmans set up residence, and where the idea of the Ukrainian state was born. The First Malorossiyan Collegium also took place here, a body set up by Pyotr I to turn Ukraine into Malorossiya or Little Russia. In the end, the tsar had to disband the council because it brought together under one roof the great intellectuals and administrators who began to formulate the idea of Ukrainian statehood! In the 18th century, Hlukhiv was a very beautiful town, you might even say a very European one. For instance, from 1725 to 1914, it had a theater that performed plays exclusively in French.

80 kilometers from Hlukhiv is Baturyn, yet another hetman capital. That's where the Razumovskiy palace is situated and the Kochubey Family Museum. Yet there's not a single hotel or restaurant in the town. We intend to set up the necessary tourist infrastructure in Hlukhiv and to make the center of the town no less beautiful than Lviv. Our history is just as impressive. Not only do we still have the 10 buildings erected by the Tereshchenko family to which I belong, but also the premises where the Malorossiyan Collegium met. The downtown was very beautiful a few centuries ago. War and the bolsheviks left it shattered. The only thing they did was erect a statue to Lenin. Who needs it? Was a few hundred years ago. I think that if we do something like this in Hlukhiv, we can interest tourists.

Michel Tereshchenko is an entrepreneur and a descendant of the Tereshchenko family, famous Ukrainian industrialists and magnates. Over 1981-1990 he lived in the US and served as an officer in the submarine fleet of the US Navy. Since 2003, he has lived in Kyiv and Hlukhiv. He founded the Tereshchenko Heritage Foundation, whose purpose is to support work on buildings erected by his ancestors in the two cities more than 100 years ago. Meanwhile, he is expanding his flax and beekeeping businesses in Hlukhiv, where his forebears lived for several centuries and supported the town in so many ways. On March 21, 2015, Tereshchenko was granted Ukrainian citizenship. On October 25, he created a sensation by taking more than 60% of the vote in local elections and winning the mayoral race in Hlukhiv.

The More Things Stay the Same

Denys Kazanskiy from Sloviansk, Lysychansk and Severodonetsk

With the elections over, Donbas remains the base for yesterday's Party of the Regions, but democratic parties have made serious inroads

Election results in Donbas were a disappointment for those who expected the mentality of people living in Eastern Ukraine to change substantially. When Ukrainian soldiers pushed back the Russian proxies in northern Donetsk Oblast and entered the liberated towns, it seemed like the hegemony of anti-Ukrainian forces in this region had been eradicated. But while winning the military confrontation, Kyiv proved politically emasculated. With the exception of a few "unlucky" individuals like Sloviansk's notorious former mayor Nelia Shtepa, who spent a few days chilling their heels in the basement of the Aidar volunteer battalion, the organizers of the anti-Ukrainian insurrection and the illegal referendum never faced proper justice for their actions. Worse yet, they were all allowed to participate in the elections and to once more take power in their hands in the region.

The outcome, as we say in these situations, was predictable. Members of the local clans who controlled the oblast for decades were easily able to take the upper hand again. Nor did they have to come up with anything particularly original to do so. They simply repeated their usual tricks, and nobody stopped them. Someone warned voters who worked for public institutions or were employed at their companies to vote "the right way." Someone paid off commission members in cash to ensure "the right results." Someone handed out baskets of goodies to voters. Someone paid outright for voters to cast their ballots a certain way...

All that changed were the brands under which the members of the old guard campaigned this time. Instead of the Party of the Regions that everyone was heartily sick of, ballots now contained such parties as Opposition Bloc and Nash Krai, meaning 'our region.' But the people stayed the same. And without much effort, they won their regional base, leaving their opponents from patriotic political forces in their dust.

ONE-TRICK PONIES RULE

Needless to say, the results in Donbas are not cheering, with not just former members of the Party of the Regions once more in power, but individuals who are open, determined enemies of Ukraine. In Dobropillya, the separatist Andriy Aksionov, who was one of the organizers of the DNR referendum on May 11, 2014, won the mayoral race with a comfortable margin. Druzhkivka returned its incumbent, Valeriy Hnatenko, who attended rallies with the DNR flag in his hand in support of Russian operative Igor "Strelkov" Ghirkin. In Sloviansk, it looks like Vadym Liakh will win the first round, the candidate who promised on his billboards to "Love Sloviansk like Nelia." Local councils also saw the massive return of people who had participated in anti-Ukrainian rallies and blocked Ukraine's military vehicles.

The Opposition Bloc and Nash Krai parties won a majority of the vote in every local council in the region, including through open buying of votes in many instances. This happened most openly in Severodonetsk, where Nash Krai was headed by a local mogul called Serhiy Shakhov. His people handed out coupons to local voters that could be exchanged for UAH 100-200 on Election Day near the polling stations. This primitive method gave Nash Krai nearly 22% of the vote, which was remarkably good for a party that had only made its appearance a few months earlier.

THE RESULTS IN DONBAS ARE NOT CHEERING, WITH NOT JUST FORMER MEMBERS OF THE PARTY OF THE REGIONS ONCE MORE IN POWER, BUT INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE OPEN, DETERMINED ENEMIES OF UKRAINE

On the eve of the election, the deputy governor of Luhansk Oblast, Olha Lyshyk, had posted an urgent report in Facebook: "Right now, there's massive vote-buying going on, on the streets of Severodonetsk! Unknown people with lists of personal information—names, surnames, patronymics, passport details, identification codes—are handing out coupons that the voter is supposed to bring to someone who will be standing near the polling station tomorrow. This person will have a green badge. When the voter hands in the coupon, that person will give them UAH 100. The campaign is being run by Nash Krai. The coupon, which one of our voters just showed me, is marked, "District 10, Collector 1684, Recipient 1685."

The coupons were later handed in to the wrong people by a number of these voters. Typically, they were handed out to pensioners and people who looked down and out. Many of them did not understand whom they were supposed to give the coupon to, to get their money and gave them directly to election observers. Some women who were caught red-handed denied their involvement in the con and swore that they had simply found the coupons lying on the ground...

Interestingly, this same Serhiy Shakhov had already used a similar scheme for buying votes during the 2012 Verkhovna Rada election. At that time, he and a number of others, including Artur Herasymov who today is a national deputy in the Poroshenko Bloc faction, ran in the election on the FPTP lists in Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts under the "Shakhov Team" brand. They also handed out coupons to voters, which could then be exchanged for UAH 50 at every rally in support of Shakhov and his men, ensuring huge turnouts for his events. The final amount was paid to voters on Election Day.

Depressing "stability". The most impoverished towns in Donbas still offer decent support to the ex-Regionals

THE WORSE THINGS ARE, THE WORSE THE RESULTS

And so, it would appear that nothing has changed in the last three years in Donbas. Even the war does not appear to have taught voters and politicians a thing. With 67% of the ballots counted in Severodonetsk, the Opposition Bloc was leading with 38%, Nash Krai was second with 22%, Solidarnist had 10.0% and Samopomich had 9.2%.

The Opposition Bloc is in the lead just about everywhere with a huge advantage across Donbas. What's more, a strange trend has been observed: the worse a city is doing, the more its residents support OB. A record success was had by former PR members in impoverished Lysychansk, which suffered enormously due to street fighting in the summer of 2014. Its council now has members from four of the seven parties that ran there: Opposition Bloc with 55.4%, Solidarnist with 15.1%, Samopomich with 8.1% and Oleh Liashko's Radical Party with 6.2%.

Nearly all of this oil refining center's plants are closed, yet this has not prevented former PR members, who had a monopoly on all the industry in the region, from once more gaining a sound majority. The result is a vicious cycle: things are really bad because the Opposition Bloc "owns" the town, but people vote for the Opposition Bloc because things are really bad.

Sloviansk suffered from serious military action and was occupied by Strelkov's terrorist gangs for several months, yet turnout was under 30% on Election Day: residents simply ignored the event. Yet even among those who voted, they predominantly supported the Opposition Bloc and Vadym Liakh, Nelia Shtepa's biggest fan. Preliminary results give Liakh 52.6% of the vote and his nearest rival, the pro-Ukrainian Oleh Zontov only 20.3%. This huge result for Zontov was a reflection of the low turnout among anti-Ukrainian voters.

In the vote on party lists in Sloviansk, the Opposition Bloc leads with a healthy majority at 52.1%. The 5% barrier was also passed by Nash Krai, the Agrarian Party, the Radical Party, Solidarnist, and Samopomich. As in other Donbas cities, the $64,000 question is: Whose side is Nash Krai going to be on? It's rumored to be linked to the Poroshenko Administration, so it can be expected to cooperate with Solidarnist. However, the members of this party paint a rather different picture: at the first opportunity, they will most likely switch to pro-Russian forces and act against the interests of the country.

Buying votes in Severodonetsk

STILL OCCUPIED AFTER ALL THESE TEARS

Local patriots bitterly joke that Donbas continues to be an occupied territory. And there's more than a grain of truth in this. 18 months after their release from Russian terrorists, Sloviansk and Lysychansk look just like the Ukrainian Armed Forces saw them when they entered in July 2014.

Ruined buildings in Semenivka remain rubble. Holes in the asphalt from exploding mines fill with water every time it rains and are slowly turning into massive potholes. The traffic signs are dented and torn where shrapnel and bullets hit them...

On the broken walls that are all that remain of a large home, a poster hangs with a plea to the President and PM: "Mr. President and Premier of Ukraine! Have you no shame for the empty promises to restore residential buildings?" This house once belonged to a local official from Party of the Regions and some say that the poster is little more than election campaign of the PR against those in power. But the ad works. All the residents of this village with whom we were able to speak agreed with it: the government promised compensation for our destroyed homes, even promising to build a new village, but nothing has been built in the last year.

We can argue whether Ukraine should have to pay to restore towns destroyed by the Russian proxies, or whether the responsibility lies with those who organized and supported the separatist referendum on May 11. But locals have their own interpretation of things. The residents of Donbas live in their own world and all the bad stuff is traditionally blamed on Ukraine.

NOW FOR THE GOOD NEWS

And yet. If we look more closely at the results of the election, there are clearly very positive changes. First of all, the communists have disappeared. The Nova Derzhava or New State party to which the old CPU activists switched after their party was banned, lost their electoral battle on all fronts and failed to make it into a single local council. And it's noteworthy how well the pro-Ukrainian parties did, after not being able to ever get enough to even cross the threshold in previous elections. Samopomich gained 8-9% in the larger towns in Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts. In Novohrodivka in Donetsk Oblast, the humble Democratic Alliance actually picked up 10% of the vote. And in Dobropillya, more than 7% of the electorate supported Syla Liudey or Power of the People, whose members are mostly young people with no political experience. Incidentally, this last party did most of its campaigning and advertising through Facebook, which shows just how powerful social networks have become even in Ukrainian society.

Altogether, the number of pro-Ukrainian candidates in local councils in Donbas has increased since the previous elections. But positive changes are too slow in coming. All those who are keen to see reforms take place and are actively working for them may not be able to realize those ambitions. It's always much easier to damage and destroy than to restore and build. In this election, the majority of voters in Donbas supported the masters in this: the professionals of skimming, scamming and kickbacks.

Tetiana Kozachenko:

"We are like pain in the neck for all those interested in staying in their seats"

PHOTO: UKRINFORM

Interviewed by **Ilya Lukash**

The State Fiscal Service, Prosecutor General's Office and the Ministry of Interior Affairs seem to be in a competition for the most absurd excuse for evading lustration. A year after the law On Government Cleansing, the lustration law, took effect, the Unified State Register of Individuals Subject to Lustration counts nearly 760 people. Some officials who should be lustrated remain in public offices. ***The Ukrainian Week*** spoke to Tetiana Kozachenko, Director of the Lustration and Government Cleansing Department at the Ministry of Justice, about the most notorious cases of sabotage and the prospects of cleaning up the government.

Where does the strongest sabotage of lustration come from?

In principle, lustration has taken place as envisaged by law. Still, some scandalous incidents in the implementation of the law have taken place, in particular in law enforcement bodies and the State Fiscal Service. All these incidents are public, overt and disreputable. They show how difficult the process of lustration is when interests intertwine not only with specific positions, but with specific people and the desire to keep them in the office in contradiction to the lustration law. Some notorious cases have taken place in the State Fiscal Service, the Prosecutor's Office, the Interior Ministry and the Presidential Administration.

Take the case of Serhiy Kuzmenko, Head of the Kirovohrad Oblast State Administration. He is under lustration for serving as Head of the Oleksandriyivsky County Administration and Deputy Head of the Kirovohrad State Administration when Yanukovych was president. The current president was supposed to dismiss him before November 27, 2014, i.e. within ten days since the lustration law took effect. Yet, Kuzmenko is still serving in his position. Here the issue is not only about the law, but about moral standards. People came out on the Maidan against lawlessness, impunity and abuse of power by the government. At that point, Kuzmenko was in Parliament and voted for the draconian anti-protest January 16 laws. Leaving him in his office now is disrespectful of society beyond the measure of cynicism. And this is not the only such incident!

Deputy Chief of Staff Oleksiy Dniprov is, too, still in his office.

What was Dniprov's "feat" that leads to demand of his dismissal?

There was no "feat". In fact, lustration is not about branding or labeling, or defining whether an individual is good or bad, nor does it bring forth administrative or criminal liability. It is a filter that sets temporary restrictions on holding certain positions. These restrictions should apply equally to all.

Dniprov served as Deputy Minister of Education (under the Yanukovych government—**Ed.**). This post falls under the lustration law, so he could not have been appointed into the Chief of Staff team. Unfortunately, we see a situation in Ukraine when people can't do something de jure but are perfectly able to do it de facto. Such appointments publicly demonstrate that those in power, the Administration and certain officials are unwilling to comply with law.

It is obvious that the state has the right to defend itself in order to guarantee the rule of law for its citizens. Therefore, it is in its capacity to grant access to civil service.

The lustration law puts temporary restrictions on people like ex-Prosecutor General Viktor Pshonka, ex-Interior Minister Vitaliy Zakharchenko, ex-Tax Minister Oleksandr Klymenko, or ex-First Deputy Chief of Staff Andriy Portnov, as well as many other officials who failed to ensure proper operation government bodies in accordance with law.

Lustration best compares to emergency actions for poisoning, when intoxication develops and the body starts poisoning itself with self-generated toxins. It is possible to survive such intoxication without surgical

intervention, but the body risks falling into a coma or a slower detox process and more damage. So, before the medications take effect—for Ukraine, these include reforms and time to draft and implement them—emergency actions must be taken to save the body which is already in a pretty bad condition.

But lustration does not solve the problems of staff quality: appointments can be given to people who don't fall under lustration criteria formally, but are not prudent and prefer to continue current criminal practices. This is not a reason to leave the previous officials in offices. In this case, society, citizens and media should discipline the government and act as watchdogs over who is appointed in certain offices.

What actually happened in Ukraine? Government bodies seem to fit in the standards formally. They have respective laws, premises and personnel. In personal conversations every official shows understanding, respect and professionalism. Yet, as an overall body, they have long lost their function capability and do not meet demands of society.

So, lustration alone is not enough. It should be followed by the treatment with "medications", including transparent selection of personnel, disciplinary and criminal liability, and other mechanisms.

In Ukraine people cannot expect law enforcement bodies to protect them, courts to deliver just verdicts, and the state to provide services in line with the law and citizens' rights and obligations. When people see specific cases of lustration sabotage and poor choices of personnel, they lose trust in the government and reforms, and get frustrated with lustration because it is conducted by

Tetyana Kozachenko is a lawyer, Director of the Lustration and Government Cleansing Department at the Ministry of Justice. As a EuroMaidan activist, she provided legal support to those detained and convicted during the Revolution of Dignity. In December 2014, Ms. Kozachenko was part of the Ukrainian delegation to the Venice Commission defending the Lustration Law before the international community

those who have to be lustrated themselves. People think that lustration is not tough and radical enough. But it was difficult to even have the current lustration law passEd. Remember that it was voted by the same people that had earlier voted for the January 16 draconian laws.

Why did they then support the lustration law?

For most, this was a populist step in the run-up to the parliamentary election. If they didn't vote, people would think that they oppose government cleansing. It wasn't their desire, but the demand of the voters. Still, this is already a step towards healing. They wanted it to be all perfectly legal; they are resisting now, but it's too late: the process has been launchEd.

What happened in the winter of 2013-2014? This was basically terror by the state. Government bodies have not changed since. They are not something new. Back then, all these bodies just removed their masks. Civil servants, including judges, showed whom they served: political purposes and the system, not people and the rule of law.

Anders Aslund said during the presentation of his book that all old civil servants should be kicked out, not just 10-12% of »

them lustratEd. Maybe your Lustration Department should be renamed into Civil Service Overhaul Department?

The Ministry of Justice does not have the right to perform lustration. What are you talking about?! We can only make public information regarding examinations of officials, cooperate with the Public Council, society and consultants, and advise on the dismissal of officials in compliance with the procedure envisaged by the lustration law. In fact, lustration does not cover 10-12%, it doesn't even cover 3%. For instance, our register of individuals subject to lustration includes nearly 760 people, as I mentioned earlier. The government machine employs nearly 300,000 people, plus around 200,000 in law enforcement. Hundreds of officials have already resigned voluntarily. We can't provide more accurate figures since the process is decentralized: some people could have resigned (without waiting to be lustrated—**Ed.**), so they are no longer in public offices.

The Ministry of Justice secures the procedure for lustration. In fact, the only weapon we have is publicity. Lustration Department does not have the right to dictate who should undergo lustrations. We analyze information, verify it, compile lists of individuals that are subject to lustration based on the processed information, and make inquiries to state bodies on the basis of appeals submitted by citizens, publications in the mass media and results of our examinations.

How do officials elude lustration? Through courts?

For the most part, yes. At the moment the courts have found a way to issue "indulgences" from lustration. For example, Oleh Valendiuk, Acting Prosecutor General of Kyiv, was not lustrated (he served in senior positions at the Prosecutor General's Office in 2008-2014—**Ed.**), but was promoted by a court ruling that has been missing from the register of court rulings for over half a year. The Prosecutor General's Office did not appeal against this ruling, nor did it inquire into the court ruling itself. Kyiv District Administrative Court has ruled that the Prosecutor General's Office should "restrain from dismissing" Valendiuk, meaning that it basically banned his dismissal. We have submitted three letters to the Prosecutor General's Office regarding non-fulfillment of its obligations and in the end appealed against the ruling on our own.

THE LUSTRATION LAW NOTES THAT THE VERIFICATIONS AND CLEANSING OF ALL GOVERNMENT BODIES SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY 2016. AFTER THIS, THE LAW SHOULD WORK AS A FILTER

Do you know what the Court of Appeals said? "The Ministry of Justice is not entitled to filing appeals in this case since its interests are not violatEd." They were talking about the agency entitled by law to ensure the procedure of inspections and to run the unified lustration register! We submitted a cassation. The Higher Administrative Court opened a case but there has been no progress for a month and a half, and the case has not been designated for review.

There was a similar situation in the State Fiscal Service of Kyiv. It is headed by Liudmyla Demchenko, who should also undergo lustration. She was appointed Deputy Director of the Tax Inspection Service in Pechersk District of Kyiv in the summer of 2013. What criteria should one have met to have been appointed chief of Kyiv's wealthiest district during the heyday of the Yanukovych Family? Then, in the summer of 2015, State Fiscal Service Head Roman Nasirov appointed her as Head of the Tax Inspection of the entire city (the interview took place before Ms. Demchenko was dismissed in line with the lustration process in early November—**Ed.**).

In truth, all these incidents do not mean that there was no lustration. The mere fact of how openly these notorious cases are discussed sends a signal to society that demands changes from the officials. Yet, we now have another commonplace practice. Some people who don't fall under lustration criteria resign voluntarily (because of public pressure—**Ed.**). Can you think of any Prosecutor General resigning voluntarily at any point in the past the way Vitaliy Yarema did? Or Ihor Bilous, Head of the Fiscal Service, who also resigned voluntarily after investigations, checks and public protests against him? But what did the system do with that? It appointed Ihor Bilous as Head of the State Property Fund. So much for rotation in civil service. This is not horrible, it's a nightmare!

Ukraine has 45 million people. Is it not possible to find an honest decent person for any position? Our country has no less potential than Poland, Germany or France. The only thing that differs us from them is that the highly corrupt elite rule the country through stolen money.

How much longer will the Lustration Department function?

The lustration law notes that the verifications and cleansing of all government bodies should be completed by 2016. This means that all officials who are in offices or are candidates for offices should undergo verifications by then. Following this, the law should work as a filter and keep the people who meet lustration criteria out of civil service for a specific period.

We have drafted a bill that proposes establishing an independent body reporting to the Government. It will have real leverage to enforce the lustration law, particularly in cases of sabotage. The Venice Commission supported this proposal.

Will you manage to cleanse those who resist the change by 2016?

It's not the Ministry of Justice that does the "cleansing". Lustration is implemented in line with the procedure approved by the Government. Indeed, the procedure could be delayed or partly distortEd. For instance, I assume there could be further attempts to discredit lustration by government bodies. Remember searches in my apartment and the apartment of one of our Department employees back in April? I can't rule out such "surprise" incidents in the future.

Can you list many other government bodies that not only speak about problems openly, but give specific names? We are like pain in the neck for all those interested in staying in their seats regardless of the lustration law.

But we can't lose hope and say that it hasn't and won't work out. There is no turning back. So, we keep going!

Recently, I have met with people in NGOs and state institutions who inspire me to keep doing the work that is more of a struggle. Such people work even in the Prosecutor General's Office, ministries and other government bodies. They are a handful, but they are there.

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Most Wanted: A Crib Sheet for the President

Denys Kazanskiy

The Ukrainian Week has put together a little list of those whom the current Administration should add to its sights so that it does not stop with Ghennadiy Korban

The arrest of the UKROP party boss, a notorious Ukrainian "biznesman" by the name of Ghennadiy Korban has been a major political scandal. The government's action was condemned on nearly all political sides tied to tycoon Ihor Kolomoyskiy, and even parties unrelated to him. The press also responded aggressively. Korban's detention was immediately labeled selective justice. "Why haven't they arrested such Regionals as Vilkul, Boyko and Bakulin, too?" opinion-makers asked in Facebook.

There's really no answer to this question. Endless debates over the infamous "Boyko Towers" continue without result in Ukraine for the last few years, separatist mayors quietly go to work every day even though they organized the overthrow of Ukraine's Constitution in Donbas last year. Nearly all the high-profile allies of Viktor Yanukovych who are responsible for the corruption, violence and war in Ukraine look quite unworried these days.

In response to the storm of commentary and statements that echoed after the arrest of one of Kolomoyskiy's closest associates, President Poroshenko was quick to reassure the country that he had no intention of stopping with Korban and that other arrests were on the way.

"My response is very simple," said Poroshenko in a television interview. "Firstly, a few weeks ago when the Rada withdrew immunity from national deputies accused of a crime, I promised very clearly that this was just the beginning. The process of combatting corruption and our determined efforts to restore rule of law continue."

"PUT YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR MOUTH IS"

Of course, he did not give any names and still hasn't. But the press has known them for a very long time and journalists are tired of repeating the names of those at the heart of major corruption scandals in article after article. Yet the President's statement offers another excuse to bring out the parade of Most Wanted who robbed and cheated under Yanukovych and not only continue to live and work without fear in Ukraine, but dream and plot their return to power.

Who should be next to whom armored Cougars with Alfa troops will drive up? The first name that screams out is the notorious "Gas Prince" Yuriy Boyko whose crimes have been written about so much that there's simply nothing to add. For instance, in 2011, when the Energy Ministry was headed by Boyko, the state-run Chornomornaftogaz bought drilling rigs for inflated prices, costing the state UAH 200 million in losses, equivalent to USD 25 million at the time. Just this year, on April 23, the Prosecutor General's Office began a pre-trial investigation. Yet Boyko remains free and the Verkhovna Rada has been in no hurry to withdraw his deputy immunity. Oddly, there was far more enthusiasm among lawmakers and the Prosecutor's Office when it was necessary to do this and approve the arrest of Deputy Ihor Mosiychuk, who was being accused of taking a bribe of—check this—USD 5,000.

MANY OF THOSE WHO EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR KORBAN WERE NOT SO MUCH UPSET OVER HIS ARREST BUT OVER THE SELECTIVENESS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE RELUCTANCE TO PUNISH OBVIOUS ENEMIES OF THE STATE

Of course, Boyko's close ties to Russia's Gazprom may be playing a role here. They say that the Russian giant is covering the Ukrainian MP, protecting him against any run-ins with the law, while Ukraine's power elite doesn't want any more quarrels with its energy supplier over such a minor detail as Boyko embezzling UAH 200mn. There are uglier rumors as well. In the backrooms there is open talk about Boyko bringing those very UAH 200mn to Bankova, the Presidential Administration and that's why he can sleep so peacefully. But of course, there is no hard evidence to support these rumors.

One way or another, sooner or later, the President and Prosecutor will have to explain why one of the most corrupt ministers from the Azarov Cabinet is still walking free. For now, they seem to have armed themselves with the old Nasruddin recipe: put things off as long as you possibly and then come elections, firing the Prosecutor, a change of Government and so on.

A video of the titushky attack in Dnipropetrovsk can be seen here:

MOST WANTED FOR CRIMES AGAINST UKRAINIANS

Dmytro Koliesnikov, another deputy from the Opposition Bloc and a former governor of Dnipropetrovsk has been waiting for the Alphas on Cougars for a long time. In winter 2014, during the peak of the confrontation in Kyiv, as power was slipping from Yanukovych's hands and one after another local Maidans began popping up across the country, it was Koliesnikov who called in the

titushky in Dnipropetrovsk and issued orders to beat up the political opposition who had come outside the oblast administration. The thugs were issued bats right inside the Administration Building, after which they launched a real massacre. The police stayed back while the titushky shot at people with traumatic weapons, knocked them down, and finished off fallen activists with bats and metal pipes. Videos of this terrible night are still available on the internet.

Soon afterwards, it became known that Anatoliy Buriak, who runs the Kryvbas basketball department today, was directly responsible for organizing the transport of titushky from Kryvyi Rih to Dnipropetrovsk. The honorary president of this sports club is none other than Yuriy Vilkul, father to another notorious deputy from the Opposition Bloc, Oleksandr Vilkul. It was the younger Vilkul who arranged for the titushky to attack the rally while then Governor Koliesnikov had the order carried out.

So far, there's no word about any kind of suit against Vilkul. Sometimes his name comes up but nothing more than talk. It seems that no one will be held responsible for the violent Dnipropetrovsk attack. Compared to the bloodshed that followed and continues today, it seems that the current Administration sees this event as a mere trifle not worth anyone's attention.

THE OTHER WHEELER-DEALER

Beside Koliesnikov, we can also look at the much better known Kolesnikov from Donetsk, Borys. Nobody is especially interested today in the massive wave of corruption that unrolled during the country's preparations for the EURO 2012 football championship. Yet just a few years ago, nearly all of Ukraine's independent media were vociferously accusing this politician of corruption. So were the politicians. For instance, in July 2012 Arseniy Yatseniuk stood at the VR podium and called for a special commission to look into how USD 10bn had been spent during the preparations for the games.

"The opposition demands a commission to investigate the spending of US $10 billion that were received for the construction of infrastructure for EURO 2012 from the pockets of 46 million Ukrainians," Yatseniuk stated. "It's these 46 million Ukrainians who made EURO 2012, they paid the taxes and they have a right to know where this money went, and to see those who stole the USD 10 billion taken to court."

For obvious reasons, no investigation was ever made into Kolesnikov's corrupt schemes under Yanukovych. Still, even after the ex-president fled to Rostov-on-Don, no one has been in a hurry to establish what happened to those billions. It seems that no one would stop Yatseniuk from properly launching such an investigation today, but for some reason he's no longer quite so hot and bothered.

ALL THOSE UNPUNISHED ACCOMPLICES

SBU investigators should long have looked closer at the separatist mayors in Donbas, of whom there are so many that they couldn't possibly fit into a single article. The winner of the mayoral race in Dobropillya was none other than the organizer of the local "referendum," Andriy Aksionov, while the incumbents, Valeriy Hnatenko and Yuriy Khotlubey, who were returned in Druzhkivka and Mariupol, and Rubizhne's Yuriy Khortkiv are all known accomplices of the terrorists—and all remain unpunished. All of them are responsible for the bloodshed and violence, for the outbreak of the war, yet for some 18 months now, law enforcement agencies have been unable to bring to justice even these people, never mind those who gave them their orders and stood behind them all this time.

It's even come to the fact that an infamous Luhansk separatist like Arsen Klinchayev, who for some reason moved to Kyiv to live, was simply beaten up by ordinary citizens whose patience had reached its end. The current Administration hasn't had the willpower to bring even the pettiest underling to trial.

This kind of apparent "loyalty" on the part of the highest officials in the land and their unwillingness to punish thugs who caused bloodshed has angered thousands of ordinary Ukrainians who fought on the front and felt the war on their own skins. And not only among them, but among all patriotic Ukrainians. Many of those who expressed support for Korban were not so much upset over his arrest but over the selectiveness of law enforcement and the evident reluctance to punish obvious enemies of the state. All Ukrainians can hope for is that the recent statements by President Poroshenko will not remain lip service and that other criminals will soon be arrested and tried for the thousands of crippled bodies and shattered lives.

And while the entire country watches the adventures of Ghennadiy Korban, few noticed yet another bit of news. On November 1, a bail bond worth UAH 3.7mn expired for the one-time Party of Regions faction leader in the Verkhovna Rada, Oleksandr Yefremov. Effectively, he is no longer under arrest and can officially take back all his ill-gotten cash.

Crimea, the Theatre of the Absurd

Tamila Tasheva

Faced with prohibitions and pressure, Crimean Tatars, as well as the most active part of the Crimean population, are forced to flee

Every other new acquaintance tells me that Crimean Tartars are a hospitable and friendly people. For many Ukrainians, Crimea is the place of their childhood, their first date at a summer camp and, of course, memories of pleasant meetings with Crimean Tartars.

Having been deported in May 1944, the Crimean Tartars returned to their peninsula when it was already part of independent Ukraine, and it subsequently became a completely different place. The indigenous people of Crimea started to feel at home in their native land again. They had lived through totalitarian bans on everything they knew and persecutions of those willing to return to Crimea in Soviet times, but finally got the opportunity to develop and restore the lost greatness of their people when Ukraine became independent.

Today, Crimean Tartars are again faced with prohibitions and pressure. The Russian occupation of Crimea has led to neighbours and colleagues informing on each other, empty streets, fear and uncertainty.

Flirting with the Crimean Tartars, the occupational authorities first promised to provide them with comprehensive support, but then switched to the next stage of their plan—trying to get rid of the native people of Crimea. The most active part of the Crimean population, including journalists, public and political figures, students and entrepreneurs, were forced to leave. According to different estimations, 20 to 45 thousand Crimeans, half of them Tartars, have left the peninsula since the occupation. It has been a year and a half since the occupation, and Russia has managed to infringe all the basic principles of human rights, from the freedom of peaceful assembly to the freedom of speech, the freedom of movement, the right to a fair trial and the most vital—the right to life.Various sources say between 12 and 21 people have gone missing or been found tortured to death since March 2014, when the so-called "little green men" first appeared in Crimea.

Reshat Ametov, Hero of the Heavenly Hundred, was the first to be tortured in Crimea. In early March 2014, he dared to organise a one-man protest against the occupation of the peninsula in front of a government building. He was caught by so-called "Crimean Self-Defense" forces and was found brutally murdered several days later. The death of Reshat Ametov, father of a large family, is still under investigation. In general, there are serious problems with investigations and due process in Crimea. ***Ten Crimean Tartars*** are currently being investigated ***and seven more*** have been convicted since the annexation. The February 26 and May 3 cases are often compared to Moscow's Bolotnaya Square case, in view of the obvious political context and lack of evidence. According to the Investigative Committee, the state is the injured party in the case of the "mass riots" that took place near the Crimean Parliament on **February 26, 2014** (meeting of Crimean Tartars in support of the integrity of the state and pro-Russian activists). Even if we imagine Crimea to be a legally integrated part of Russia, recognised by the international community and Ukraine, the events of February 26 have nothing to do with it, as a totally different jurisdiction was in place at that time. The Investigating Committee has opened a case regarding death by negligence. It is worth mentioning that no victims ever made a complaint to the Russian authorities.

The same applies to the **May 3 case**, aimed exclusively at persecuting opponents of the occupation. To

Memory ban. Police block a road out of Simferopol on May 18, 2015, as Tatars walk away during a march commemorating the 71st anniversary of deportation

ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT ESTIMATIONS, 20 TO 45 THOUSAND CRIMEANS, HALF OF THEM TARTARS, HAVE LEFT THE PENINSULA SINCE THE OCCUPATION

Tamila Tasheva is Crimean Tatar native currently based in Kyiv. She is co-founder and coordinator of Crimea SOS, a volunteer initiative

recap, several thousand Crimean Tartars went to meet their leader *Mustafa Dzhemilev* on the administrative border of Crimea and Kherson Oblast. Dzhemilev was previously denied entry to Russia and, as it later emerged, to the peninsula. Special-purpose vehicles and numerous armed soldiers were sent out against peaceful unarmed men. There was a little unrest during the demonstration, but the situation was resolved through negotiations. Later, hundreds of participants had to pay fines of between 10 to 50 thousand roubles, while *Tair Smedlyaev, Rustem Abdurakhmanov* and *Edem Osmanov* have been placed under investigation. Musa Abkerimov received a suspended sentence of four years and four months.

It would seem like only a little time has passed, yet the Russian administration of Crimea has already managed to: deny entry to Crimean Tartar leaders Mustafa Dzhemilev and Refat Chubarov, make it impossible to study in the Crimean Tartar language and intimidate the local population with numerous house searches, summons for interrogation at the FSB and cases of missing people. Not to mention closing the ATR TV Channel, making it impossible for Crimean Tartar and independent mass media to operate, persecuting religious communities, organising arson attacks on mosques, seizing property, exerting pressure on the Mejlis and creating puppet structures presented to the world as an alternative to widely recognised Crimean Tartar institutions.

Against this background, the feeble work of Ukrainian state agencies to protect their citizens living in the occupied territory seems somewhat insulting. This is the reality of the current situation: no state strategy on the de-occupation of Crimea, no help for displaced persons from Crimea to adjust to new communities, no mention of the Crimean issue in the media and among the top echelons of power. Crimean Tartars understand they can only rely on themselves. Crimean Tartar leaders Mustafa Dzhemilev and Refat Chubarov, citizen activists and journalists bring up the Crimean question at the highest level through people's diplomacy and active participation in international events.

This lack of a strategy and measures aimed at de-occupation inspired the Civil Blockade of the Crimea campaign. A new wave of repressions against Crimean Tartars is already underway. On November 2, the houses of ATR TV employee *Elzara Islyamova* and well-known journalist *Liliya Budzhurova*, as well as the relatives of *Lenur Islyamov*, co-organizer of the Civil Blockade of Crimea, were searched at 6 a.m. Islyamov's Moscow house was also searched. It is obvious that these repressions are linked to Crimean Tartar activists' work on the Crimean issue. Even Serhiy Aksyonov, the so-called Crimean Prime Minister, has made many statements about expropriating the campaign organiser's property in Russia and Crimea. It is also worth mentioning the absurd statements of Natalya Poklonska, so-called Crimean Public Prosecutor, on the absentee arrest of Mejlis leader Refat Chubarov and the repeal of his Crimean entry ban, saying something like "Please come back, we're waiting for you".

Today, Crimea is home to the theatre of the absurd. The worst thing about it is that, apart from the main characters, there are audience members who are being forced to endure and often be involved in this "performance" against their will.

PHOTO: AP

Andrius Kubilius:

"One step for Ukraine is to try and create a solidarity front of similar countries"

Interviewed by **Anna Korbut**

The Ukrainian Week spoke to ex-Premier of Lithuania, leader of the Homeland Union—Lithuanian Christian Democrats, and member of the International Advisory Council on Reforms for the President of Ukraine, about how Ukraine is seen in the international community today, what forces post-revolutionary societies elect, and what is the biggest threat to Ukraine's European integration.

Ukraine's Western partners are actively helping our country reform. On the other hand, they insist on scenarios for the "settlement" of the current conflict with Russia in the Donbas that could be dangerous for Ukraine. Hence the question: how exactly is Ukraine viewed in the EU today, and what it is thought to look like in the future?

There are two aspects to this. One is what Ukraine looks like geopolitically, with regard to Russia, its aggression and Minsk process. Another one is what Ukraine looks like internally, in terms of reform.

I see an interesting development geopolitically: it looks like Mr. Putin is changing his tactics - though not his goals. He is clearly diminishing military aggression in Ukraine while going for military adventures in Syria. The fact that there is no more shooting and deaths on the frontline in Ukraine is good. But the question now is what Putin wants to achieve next—both in the Donbas, and in Ukraine overall. I think that this general goal is what we should all have in mind. I am reading that one very simply: his goal is not territories in Donetsk, Luhansk or Crimea, but all possibilities for creating new obstacles for Ukrainian leadership in conducting reforms and making it into a success story. His tactics are simple: to push the Donbas back to Ukrainian authorities that will then be responsible for the region's recovery. His other dream is to see the Donbas, with all the possible conflicts and unsealed border, as Ukraine's domestic problem. My proposal for the Ukrainian political leadership would be to speak about Minsk agreements in very simple wording: that what is needed from them after the ceasefire sets in is not elections in the Donbas, which everybody is discussing now, but real control over the border with Russia for the Ukrainian government. Only then can Ukrainians speak of elections in the region. This should be said in a very clear way. So far, I see some confusion in the Western community: to an outsider, it looks like the Minsk Agreements are working since the ceasefire is in place and some military equipment is withdrawn. The next stage is the elections—they would allow Putin to push the region with all its problems, including open borders, back into Ukraine, and thus make it look like a domestic issue. The result would be a lot of chaos inside Ukraine and prevention of the Ukrainian leadership from implementing reforms. That's my reading of the current developments, even if a very simplified one.

Do Ukraine's Western partners realize how dangerous the re-integration of the Donbas as it is now is for Ukraine? Is Ukraine communicating this threat well enough? What can it do, if anything, to explain this better?

In the real world of the Western community, the understanding of Ukraine's situation is not a very deep one, and sometimes very shallow. Ukrainian politicians should take this into account.

We were facing the same thing back in the 1990s. It wasn't easy to explain what the Baltics are even to some politicians in serious Western capitals. Baltics

and Balkans sounded very similar to them. This is reality and we need to face it.

Also, there are not too many efforts on the part of Ukraine to explain this and create possible networks using its friends in the Baltic States, Poland and some other countries, to expand Ukrainian voice in the Western capitals. This should be a very important task of Ukrainian politicians, having in mind long-term developments.

Back in the 1990s, we of course enjoyed much more political attention from the Western community. But we were also trying to create all possible networks — not only with those who retired from politics, but the acting politicians. We had very good cooperation with the Scandinavians, British and Americans. That allowed us to present our message in a stronger way.

Another step is to try and create a solidarity front of similar countries. At the point of EU and NATO expansion we created the Vilnius 10 group of all aspiring countries who joined NATO after the first wave. We had good assistance from Poland which was determined to "put foot in the NATO door" to keep it open to Lithuanians.

This networking helps send your message not only through formal ministerial meetings, but through all other possible channels — including cultural leaders. To have activities in big capitals of Europe and show that Ukraine is a country of very strong European culture. Ukraine should send this clear message which is so far not very well present in EU capitals.

The success of this message largely depends on domestic reforms. So far, neither Ukrainians, nor Western communities have been very happy with those...

On reforms, I see a lot of progress done by the government. Of course, not everything has been achieved. But there is a lack of what I call strategic communication capabilities in the government. It is not clear what priorities they are trying to achieve. That creates problems in cooperation between the Government and Parliament, as well as in keeping adequate relations between the Government and society. When those in power can't explain what they want to achieve, it is very difficult to say what they achieved, and society says that nothing is happening, no reforms are taking place, and disappointment follows.

From our own experience, this is quite normal, even unavoidable. We faced the same thing in the 1990s. In some way, Ukrainians, as well as friends of Ukraine, should not be upset with such developments. When I'm asked to advise Ukraine on the Baltic experience, I always say that we can't give advice, but we can tell our story of how big expectations of our people changed into disappointment about miracles not happening overnight. That is very normal. When I speak with ordinary people in Ukraine (I just spent a week cycling in Western Ukraine), I feel that I speak to Lithuanians in the 1990s. Absolutely identical emotions. We, as friends of Ukraine, should not be afraid of this development , as well as of possible political changes resulting from this. In 2000, on the 10th anniversary of Lithuania's independence, I became Prime Minister and was leading Government No 10. This means that each year we changed at least one government. That's pretty normal for post-revolutionary democracies. It's not that I promote an idea of changing the government in Ukraine this year. All I say is that we should not be afraid when such changes happen. My last point, it would be very important to have a much more clear political structure in Ukraine. I mean Government coalition and the opposition, both pursuing one idea of going towards Europe, but one being, say, center-right and the opposition — center-left. This would give people a good choice between two different camps, but not between Brussels and Moscow.

This is probably one of the most serious threats right now. This "opposition" camp in Ukraine is mostly comprised of opportunists who have proven to be a convenient tool of Russian and pro-Russian policies before. Therefore, the support of disenchanted electorate for them can be risky for Ukraine. Is there any recipe for adequate communication with these disenchanted voters to minimize the risks of a revanche?

I would say that there is no miracle communication strategy. Each post-Soviet country, for quite a long period of time, has many people who feel nostalgic for the Soviet past. It's absolutely normal. We did opinion polls in 2004 when Lithuania became EU member, 14 years after independence, developing rapidly. When we asked whether life was better then or in Soviet times, 50% of the population chose the latter option. These were mostly countryside people with low income and education level. This simply means nostalgia, not that real life during Soviet times was better. That influenced their political choice heavily. We saw that those people were voting not for us, who made the revolution and got back independence, but for the party established on the basis of former communists. This is normal, and you can't explain these things to such people.

What helped us was that, from the very beginning, Lithuanian political landscape had been formed by two major blocs. One was Sajudis, the party that grew out of the pro-independence movement. The other one was the former Communist party that reformed itself into Social Democrats but was keeping many symbols attractive to those voters I mentioned. Their leader did not change the vector from Brussels to Moscow. That was the major factor that helped us keep the pro-European direction even if half of the voters kept their nostalgic feelings for the Soviet past. Even those who went out and said that or Soviet life was better and we should stop going to the EU, try to establish our own Lithuanian way which could be profitable for Moscow at that time, would have voted for them. So, we benefitted from having democracy on two legs — both moving in the same direction. One could be pushing more rapidly, the other one doing so slower.

"ELECTIONS IN THE DONBAS WOULD ALLOW PUTIN TO PUSH THE REGION WITH ALL ITS PROBLEMS, INCLUDING OPEN BORDERS, BACK INTO UKRAINE"

In Ukraine I see a problem with this. You have a center-right governing coalition. But second elections after revolutions usually go in such a way that the voters do not support the ruling coalition (as in Lithuania in 1992), but the parties that manage to consolidate the nostalgic electorate. The question is who this will be in Ukraine. If it's the pro-Moscow movements, it's bad.

It's easy to advise politicians in Ukraine to just create a social-democratic party here theoretically to fulfill that function. But it's much more difficult to do in reality. Creating the kind of political landscape that will be on two legs walking in the Western direction, and offer the different voters good alternatives, is a challenge.

Master of Emergencies

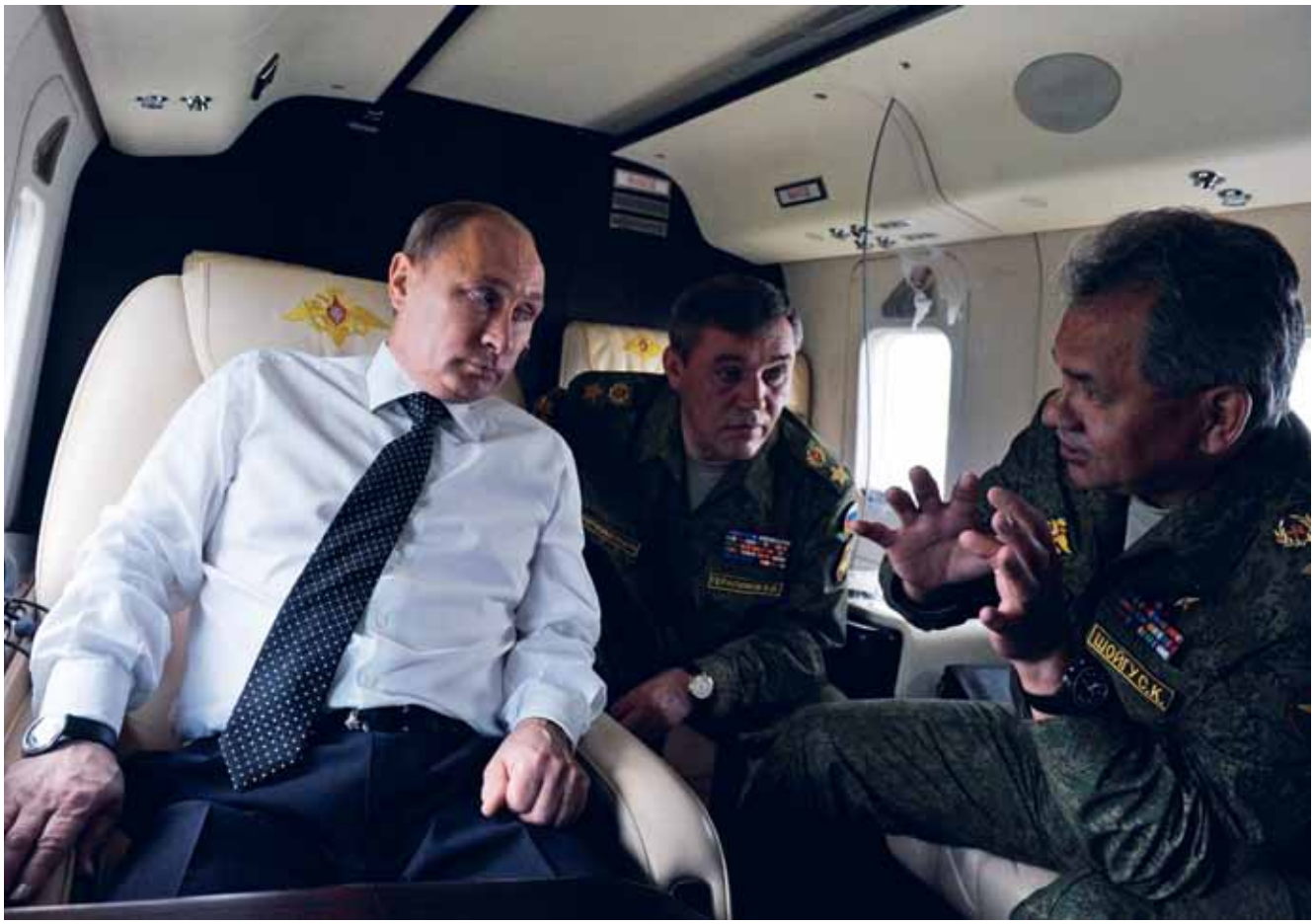
The trusty defence minister is the only person to serve in every government since the fall of the Soviet Union. He could be the next president

On Vladimir Putin's birthday in October, his defence minister, Sergei Shoigu, brought him a gift: the latest briefing on Russia's military campaign in Syria. It included news that cruise missiles fired from the Caspian Sea had struck targets nearly 1,500km away. "We know how complicated such operations are," Mr. Putin replied approvingly. That evening the pair celebrated by playing an ice-hockey match with their amateur club. Mr. Putin knocked in seven goals, and Mr. Shoigu scored one for good measure. Their team won handily.

Since Mr. Shoigu took over the defence ministry in late 2012, his partnership with Mr. Putin has flourished off the ice, too. The Russian armed forces have emerged as the primary instrument of Mr. Putin's foreign policy. In Crimea and eastern Ukraine, along the edges of NATO airspace and now in Syria, Russia has projected power with newfound effectiveness. Under Mr. Shoigu, Russia's armed forces have "demonstrated a capability and organisation and logistics skill-set that we have not seen before," says Evelyn Farkas, who was until recently the Pentagon's top official on Russian affairs.

But Mr. Shoigu is much more than Russia's latest defence minister. At 60, three years younger than Mr. Putin, he is the longest-serving member of the Russian government; his tenure stretches back to 1990, before the collapse of the Soviet Union, when Mr. Putin was still toiling in obscurity in the St Petersburg mayor's office. He made his name at the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MChS), a semi-militarised rescue service with a wide remit that he built himself and led for nearly 22 years. By skilfully navigating Russia's Byzantine bureaucracy, he has accrued power and popularity without making any notable enemies. "There's no one else like him in the ruling class," says Evgeny Minchenko, an analyst who studies the Russian elite. "It's an absolutely unprecedented story."

Russia is a land of emergencies, from droughts and forest fires to sinking submarines, apartment-block bombings and school hostage dramas. The most recent



addition is the crash of a charter plane over the Sinai peninsula, possibly due to terrorism (see article). So it is hardly surprising that the minister of emergency situations should become one of the best-known figures in Russian politics. Although Mr. Shoigu does not belong to Mr. Putin's coterie of ex-KGB men from St Petersburg, he is a trusted insider. Mr. Minchenko, who releases a widely circulated yearly report called "Politburo 2.0", puts Mr. Shoigu second in influence among Mr. Putin's associates, trailing only his chief of staff, Sergei Ivanov. When big decisions like the operations in Ukraine or Syria are made, Mr. Shoigu is indispensable. His combination of loyalty, competence and popularity also makes him one of a handful of potential successors to Mr. Putin.

Mr. Shoigu grew up in southern Siberia, in the little-known republic of Tuva. He had a liking for sports, backyard brawls and risky stunts, such as hopping the ice floes across the powerful Yenisei river. Such high jinks earned him the nickname Shaitan ("Satan"). An engineering degree in Krasnoyarsk and several successful construction projects led to a summons to Moscow in 1990 by the Communist Party leadership. After a stint on an architecture committee, Mr. Shoigu took over a new corps of rescue workers, turning it into the highly effective organisation that eventually became MChS. He also showed unflinching loyalty, coming to the aid of Boris Yeltsin during the attempted coup in August 1991 and again during the constitutional crisis of October 1993.

In the chaos of the 1990s, Mr. Shoigu became a reassuring presence. Besides handling fires and natural disasters, he served as a mediator in conflicts from South Ossetia to Tajikistan and Chechnya. In 1999, as Mr. Yeltsin prepared to hand the reins to Mr. Putin, his team tapped Mr. Shoigu to lead a new political party called Unity, which later morphed into United Russia, the current ruling party. Mr. Yeltsin described Mr. Shoigu as "our greatest star".

When Mr. Putin took power, his strategists needed to define the amorphous new leader for the public. Gleb Pavlovsky, a former Kremlin adviser, says the administration "consciously crafted" Mr. Putin's image in part on Mr. Shoigu's: "Putin was supposed to be a rescuer, too." Mr. Shoigu, who had never wanted to enter party politics, wisely ceded the spotlight. He understood, as Mr. Pavlovsky puts it, "that one log can't support two bears".

Instead, Mr. Shoigu ingratiated himself. In 2000 he gave Mr. Putin a black labrador, Koni, who became the president's favourite dog. He accompanied Mr. Putin on his macho, shirtless adventure trips. He patriotically took holidays in Russian forests rather than on French beaches. The men shared an interest in history; Mr. Shoigu became president of the Russian Geographical Society, a revived tsarist-era group that serves as a club for the Russian elite.

OFFICER AND GENTLEMAN

After Anatoly Serdyukov, the previous defence minister, fell out of favour, Mr. Putin put the armed forces in Mr. Shoigu's hands. Mr. Serdyukov oversaw much-needed reforms, but alienated the top brass. Mr. Shoigu has largely preserved the changes while restoring morale. "Under Shoigu, the army began to believe in itself," says Mikhail Khodarenok, editor of the *Military-Industrial Courier*, a defence weekly.

Mr. Shoigu has concentrated on military readiness—and public relations. He has ramped up exercises and snap inspections, says Dmitry Gorenburg of Harvard University, an expert on the Russian army. Early decisions, such as ordering soldiers to switch from archaic cloth foot-wraps (*portyaniki*) to socks, helped restore the reputation of an army that had been derided throughout the post-Soviet era.

At first his pragmatic attitude held for relations with the West, too. Mr. Shoigu affably called Chuck Hagel, then the American defence secretary, by his first name. "Whereas the default position for many Russian security officials is to throw up roadblocks, he seemed to relish blowing through them," says Derek Chollet, a former assistant secretary of defence.

The Ukraine crisis ended that chumminess. When Mr. Putin decided to seize Crimea, Mr. Shoigu dispatched a deputy, Oleg Belaventsev, to oversee the invasion. (Mr. Belaventsev is now presidential envoy to Crimea.) Mr. Shoigu's experience as a crisis manager served him well. "The Crimean operation demonstrated a new Russian army," says Mr. Minchenko. "And Shoigu became a symbol of that army."

MR. SHOIGU REMAINS RUSSIA'S MOST TRUSTED AND POPULAR POLITICIAN NOT NAMED PUTIN. HE HAS AVOIDED SCANDALS AND IS PERCEIVED AS RELATIVELY CLEAN

On May 9, during celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany, Russian television cameras fixed on a black convertible ferrying Mr. Shoigu onto Red Square. Decked out in full military regalia, he crossed himself as he passed under the Kremlin walls. The highly unusual gesture was seemingly designed to allay any questions about the half-Tuvan, half-Russian's Christianity. The attention bestowed upon Mr. Shoigu became the topic of fresh speculation: was he destined for higher office?

THE ULTIMATE EMERGENCY

The question of what comes after Mr. Putin haunts Russia's political system. The president's grip on power is based in part on the idea of bezalternativnost, the lack of alternatives. If a real number two were to emerge, it would "be the start of a game that [Mr. Putin] fears because he cannot control it," argues Mr. Pavlovsky.

But if a shortlist exists, Mr. Shoigu is probably on it. He remains Russia's most trusted and popular politician not named Putin. He has avoided scandals and is perceived as relatively clean. (The anti-corruption campaigner, Alexey Navalny, has accused him of building a gaudy pagoda-style home worth USD 18m—charges Mr. Shoigu's representatives have denied.) Mr. Shoigu has long denied having political ambitions. Yet that may work in his favour. "He's not obviously desperate to climb the greasy pole," argues Mark Galeotti, a Russia scholar at New York University, "which might mean that he's precisely the one who ends up on top of it." When the ultimate emergency strikes, Russians may well turn to their first rescuer-in-chief.

Polish Politics in a New Era

Piotr Buras

How Law and Justice will change Poland and what it means for Europe

If a party gets defeated after eight years in power, it is usually a sign of democratic normalcy. On October 25, it happened to the Civic Platform, the party of Donald Tusk and Ewa Kopacz, which has held power in Poland since 2007. With just 23% (down from 40% in 2011) it suffered a painful disaster, giving way to the opposition Law and Justice whose pledge"for a better change" was supported by almost 39% of voters. Law and Justice won the majority in all age groups and in all but two regions. Yet, the unprecedented landslide victory for the Law and Justice, dubbed as the most important one since 1989, is not just a standard case of alteration of power.

FORGING THE DEFEAT

The ground for the democratic triumph of Jaroslaw Kaczynski's national-conservative party had been prepared by a long-lasting and deeply anti-democratic campaign of delegitimisation of political opponents (government) and claims that the change of government would be identical with Poland—finally—regaining its independence and sovereignty. With the government accused of betraying Polish interests, of being allegedly responsible for the crash of the presidential airplane in Smolensk in 2010, and thus not deserving any kind of respect, Polish politics underwent a phase of extreme polarisation in the last five years. Those claiming to have the exclusive right to represent the "real Poland" and Polishness (Law and Justice) perceived their opponents not as democratic competitors, but as unpatriotic foes who deserved to be eliminated from political life. It was the party leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski who, a few years ago, set the goal for the party to have a "new Budapest" in Warsaw, alluding to the shift of Hungary by his admired fellow-conservative Viktor Orban. These ramifications of political debate and culture explain the high stakes in this year's parliamentary election. The ground-breaking importance of Law and Justice's future one-party rule is encapsulated in the question to what extent will the national-conservatives change the rules and foundations of Polish liberal democracy.

The party's victory is a result of the liberal Civic Platform's defeat in the battle for symbols and narratives. That Poland is a "ruined country" has been a claim by Law and Justice which found fertile ground in those parts of society that did not buy into the government's self-admiring claim of Poland as a "green island", referring to successful transformation and tremendous economic achievements the whole Poland and its citizens should be proud of. As much as this picture matches economic indicators, it does not resonate with perceptions of large parts of society, especially in provincial Poland where young people work on short-term and poorly paid contracts without social security. Nor does it please those whose material aspirations rose quickly following the long-lasting narrative (and promise) of catching-up with the West. In that sense, the Civic Platform also became the victim of its own success: the economic growth of the past decade (the fastest in the entire EU) fuelled expectations that could not be easily met. But the main mistake of the government was its inability to address the rising concerns of the people, as well as its own arrogance revealed, for instance, in 2014 through the tape-scandal that shed light on the highly unpleasant reality of backroom politics. The defeat of a party subscribing to the legacy of the Polish transformation model and the most successful decade of Poland's EU membership symbolically marks an end of this important period—and highlights its deficiencies and unsolved problems.

INTERESTINGLY, KNOWN FOR ITS STRONG ANTI-RUSSIAN SENTIMENTS, THE LAW AND JUSTICE WILL MOST LIKELY NOT ESCALATE CONFLICTS IN THE ALREADY TENSE RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW

In his speech just after the results were announced, Jaroslaw Kaczynski declared that his party will abstain from taking revenge on political opponents and concentrate instead on hard work to implement its programme. Those who fear an Orbanisation of Poland—an understandable concern given the party's affinity with illiberalism and its draft constitution limiting powers of institutions supposed to control the democratic majority—do not trust the leader whose has so far rather destroyed than supported consensual politics and non-partisan sense of community. But Law and Justice has fared well so far with its softer image—the victory of the newcomer Andrzej Duda in the presidential election in May and the Spitzenkandidat for the post of Prime Minister Beata Szydlo in this election being the best examples. This is a different mood in the country compared to 2005 when the Law and Justice came to power for the first time. Ten years ago a number of appalling corruption scandals made the pledge for complete moral renewal and institutional reshuffle of the re-

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public palatable for many. Today, people are wary of eight years of Civic Platform's rule symbolised in Donald Tusk's words about "warm water in the tap" as the party's ultimate ambition (no revolution, no big ideas), and thus devoid of any goal beyond the stabilisation of the status quo. It is clearly no longer enough, but the citizens do not expect and wish the Orbanesque frenzy either. They want that the political elites address their concerns and solve problems whose existence — in the opinion of many — the government has long denied.

WILL THE WINNERS DELIVER?

The Law and Justice's electoral pledges and the claim that the Poles "deserve more" are a pitfall. Backtracking on the pension reform which introduced the retirement age of 67 would be irrational given demographic trends. But this is what the party was elected for. To introduce generous child benefit of 500 zloty per child would be a heavy burden on the public finance and a gap which could be hardly filled if the party, as promised, lowers the taxes. But again, it is politically unsustainable for the party to backtrack on this central aspect of its programme. The new government will need to skilfully navigate around its populist promises and voters' expectations — the outcome is uncertain. Higher state expenditures may bring some boost to economic growth in the next two years but high public deficit, protectionism and unfavourable treatment of foreign investors (new taxes on big retailers and banks) may result in the loss of long-worked-for credibility of the Polish economy. And deepen radicalisation of the voters if the economy starts crumbling instead of flourishing in three-four years.

After this election, increased tension with Brussels and EU partners seems inevitable, because the ruling party will also be bound to compromise its domestic policy agenda as a result of European policy-making. To keep their head above water and maintain public support, the Law and Justice will have to make sure that not too many (if any refugees) find shelter in Poland. The threats of Islamisation, diseases refugees may bring into the country, and a looming Berlin diktat were the main ingredients of the party's anti-refugee propaganda which shaped public discourse in the country. And the promise to use coal as the main energy source for decades to come, as well as to use public money to finance the unviable coal mines clearly contradicts the EU's mainstream climate and energy policy (which the Law and Justice would like to opt-out from), putting Warsaw on a collision course with Brussels.

However, in the more general foreign and security policy issues no revolutionary change is to be expected. In relation to Russia and Ukraine, in the field of energy and climate policy, and in stressing the importance of NATO and the US in security policy, Polish interests won't change with the Law and Justice government. Despite the polarisation of party politics, there is still quite a broad consensus on Poland's core foreign and security interests, though less so on how to pursue them. The Tusk-Kopacz government of the Civic Platform consistently argued that strong partnership with Berlin and Paris ("being in the mainstream of EU politics") is the best strategy — otherwise, Poland risks becoming irrelevant. The Law and Justice would rather form a counterweight to the big powers, one that takes in Central Europe and Baltic States.

PHOTO BY AP

Big-time victory. Law and Justice's Beata Szydlo ran a successful campaign for Andrzej Duda and is now designated Poland's Prime Minister

Interestingly, known for its strong anti-Russian sentiments, the Law and Justice will most likely not escalate conflicts in the already tense relations with Moscow. As much as the Poles support Ukrainian transformation, the appetite for a prolonged confrontation with Russia is limited, not least among the voters of the Law and Justice who care much more about Polish narrowly defined interests than international solidarity. To be sure, the party was very vocal on the demand for a place for Poland at the negotiation table in the Normandy framework, something that was perceived as an indicator of the country's prestige. But this is no longer a priority. The same is true for military or financial support for Ukraine, already fairly limited and not likely to be substantially increased by the new government. The Law and Justice criticised the Kopacz government for a failed Eastern policy but does not have much to offer either for Ukraine or in terms of a long-term strategy. Moreover, some new tensions are looming. The package of legislation on the politics of memory adopted by Verkhovna Rada in the spring (on the day of the then President Komorowski's visit to Kyiv) was very critically received in Poland, even by Ukraine-friendly intellectuals and experts, as a blow to the Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation. While the Civic Platform government was always instrumental in separating these issues from the political dimension in bilateral relations, the national-conservatives are likely to pay much more attention to them while talking to Kyiv at the governmental level.

Some people talk about "Orbanisation-light" as the most likely scenario for the next four years of Polish politics. Whatever shape it takes, it will have an impact on Poland's position in Europe, as well as the country's relations with the main partners, most notably Germany, but also Ukraine.

Life on the Edge

Oleksandr Kramar

What is happening with microbusiness in Ukraine today?

In Ukraine as in most parts of the world, expectations of growth and of alleviating poverty and unemployment are very often tied to small and medium business. What's often left in its shadow is the most numerous group of small enterprises, microbusiness. With a few hired hands in addition to the actual owner and monthly sales that are at most in the low five figures in euros, this type of business is very different from other SMEs, the low end of which typically have at least 10 employees and millions or even tens of millions in annual turnover. Yet the social significance and potential socio-economic role, even its role in the socio-political transformation of Ukraine, gives microbusiness a considerable place in the overall scheme of things.

Leaving out occupied Crimea, Ukraine had 1.55 million microbusinesses in 2013, the latest and fullest statistics available from Derzhstat, the government statistics bureau. This category includes physical entities who are entrepreneurs (FOP) with fewer than 10 employees and annual turnover of under EUR 2mn. Small enterprises account for only a few tenths of a percent of all 1.25mn FOPs, while those that qualify as medium enterprises are a few hundredths of a percent. Microbusinesses accounts for nearly 90% of all FOPs. They are equal to 10% of all households in Ukraine. However, the real share of owners of such businesses could well be much smaller, as in some families, one member could be registered as several FOPs or microbusinesses. The average number of individuals working in microbusinesses is 2.5, while in FOPs it's 1.8. The majority of these are the actual owners who only when necessary—and often unofficially—hire help on a more-or-less permanent basis. It has to be admitted that a major portion of FOPs are actually pseudo-businesses, being only a means to reduce tax liability for those actually employed in most of these enterprises.

A separate case is the smallest level of business in the Donbas. In pre-war 2013, Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts had registered 213,000 microbusinesses and FOPs, who together provided jobs for 391,900 residents of the region. Moreover, although the share of microbusinesses providing employment in the commercial sector—25-30% of all those employed and 15-17% of hired workers—was lower than in most other regions in Ukraine, it was at a level higher than in the City of Kyiv and Dnipropetrovsk and Kyiv Oblasts.

But the war radically changed things. It has forced owners of microbusinesses to migrate from the region in large numbers, operations have been shut down, and in some cases businesses have been confiscated and destroyed by the militants. The war has also led to the loss of a major bit of territory and of its entrepreneurs, the overall degradation of socio-economic conditions, and even the physical destruction of assets in the region. All this justifies the analysis of Ukrainian microbusiness without including all of the Donbas.

THE SOCIO-ECONOMICS OF MICROBUSINESS

In 2013, with the exclusion of Crimea and Donbas (for more convenience, microbusiness data is hereinafter provided with the exclusion of these regions under occupation), Ukraine's microbusiness employed 2.4mn of the 7.8mn Ukrainians working outside the public sector, budget organizations and banks, and the self-employed. Thus, Ukraine's smallest enterprises provide nearly 33% of all jobs in the commercial sector outside of banks, and provide work to 20% of hired workers.

Microbusiness accounts for the largest number and share of jobs, 1.5mn and 60%, in the trade and car repair sector. Microbusiness also provides work for 30.5% of those in private healthcare (but only around 30,000 individuals), with medium enterprises taking a larger share, 45.4%.

In manufacturing, transport and farming, some 100,000-200,000 and more are working in microbusinesses, but this accounts for only 7.7% in overall manufacturing and 17.2% in agriculture. Medium enterprises beat these numbers, as do large ones—with the exception of the farm sector—, and small enterprises, with the exception of transport. On the other hand, in agriculture, the share of microbusiness can be expanded considerably by adding in the very widespread family farms, known as personal rural farmsteads (OSH) that are predominantly oriented on produce and have their own farm equipment.

When we look closer at the activities of microbusiness, it becomes clear that in a slew of sectors, it has a relatively larger proportion of profitable enterprises, compared to all the categories of businesses that are larger. In 2014, about 66.9% of micro enterprises were in the black, but among large enterprises, only 51.8% were, and among medium enterprises, only 62.6% showed a profit.

The largest share of profitable microbusinesses was among those in farming, forestry and fisheries at 94.3%, in trade at 66.9%, education at 66.2%, in ICT 65.4%, transport 64.9%, and manufacturing 64.2%.

UKRAINE'S SMALLEST ENTERPRISES PROVIDE NEARLY 33% OF ALL JOBS IN THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR OUTSIDE OF BANKS, AND PROVIDE WORK TO 20% OF HIRED WORKERS

Still, the farm sector has more companies showing a profit among medium enterprises while in transport, large enterprises rule.

By comparison, the most positive results compared to large and medium enterprises could be seen among microbusinesses in trade—66.9% profitable versus 49.6% among large and 60.1% among medium businesses; in sports entertainment and recreation 59.4% profitability versus 25.0% and 37.1%; in ICT 65.4% versus 57.9% and 50.0%. Private education and healthcare also shows a larger share of profitable micro enterprises than medium businesses.

Of course, this could well be largely a result of a more widespread practice of fictitious losses and schemes for transferring profits offshore among large and medium enterprises, as well as among wealthier small enterprises.

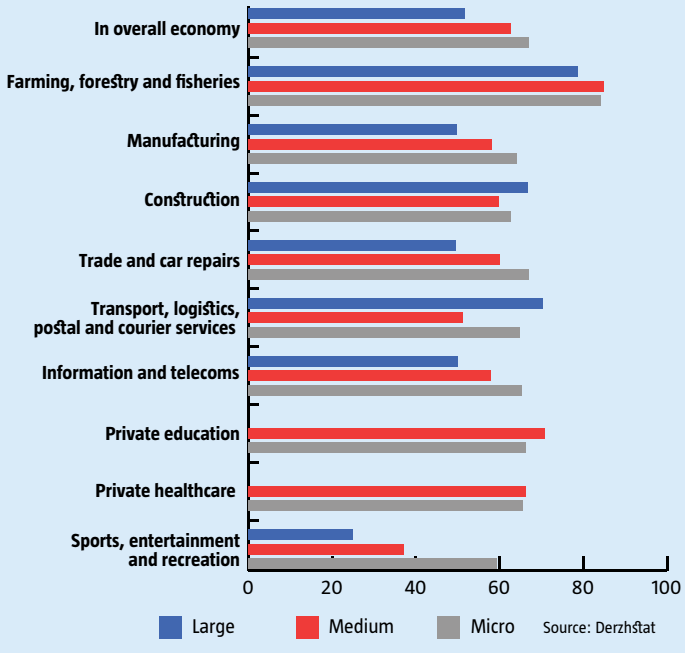
A REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

In previous articles, we discussed the "10 employee" coefficient, i.e. the number of employees at enterprises with 10 or more hired workers relative to the number of micro manufacturers, that is FOP and microenterprises with less than 10 hired hands. In general, at that time, this indicator was 4 or less across Ukraine, and the smaller the number of hired individuals, the more petty business-oriented that region. The reverse was also true. The pettiest businesses appear to be in the Carpathian region, which includes Chernivtsi, Zakarpattia and Ivano-Frankivsk Oblasts, and in the south-central region, which includes Kherson and Mykolayiv Oblasts. In these regions, the "10 employee" coefficient ranges from 1.4 in Chernivtsi to 2.2 in Mykolayiv. Most of the other oblasts in Western, Central and Southern Ukraine are within that range, going from 2.3 to 2.7. The lowest coefficient was in Kyiv and Dnipropetrovsk Oblasts.

In this article, we attempt to classify oblasts according to the share of those working in microbusiness among all working residents and the proportion

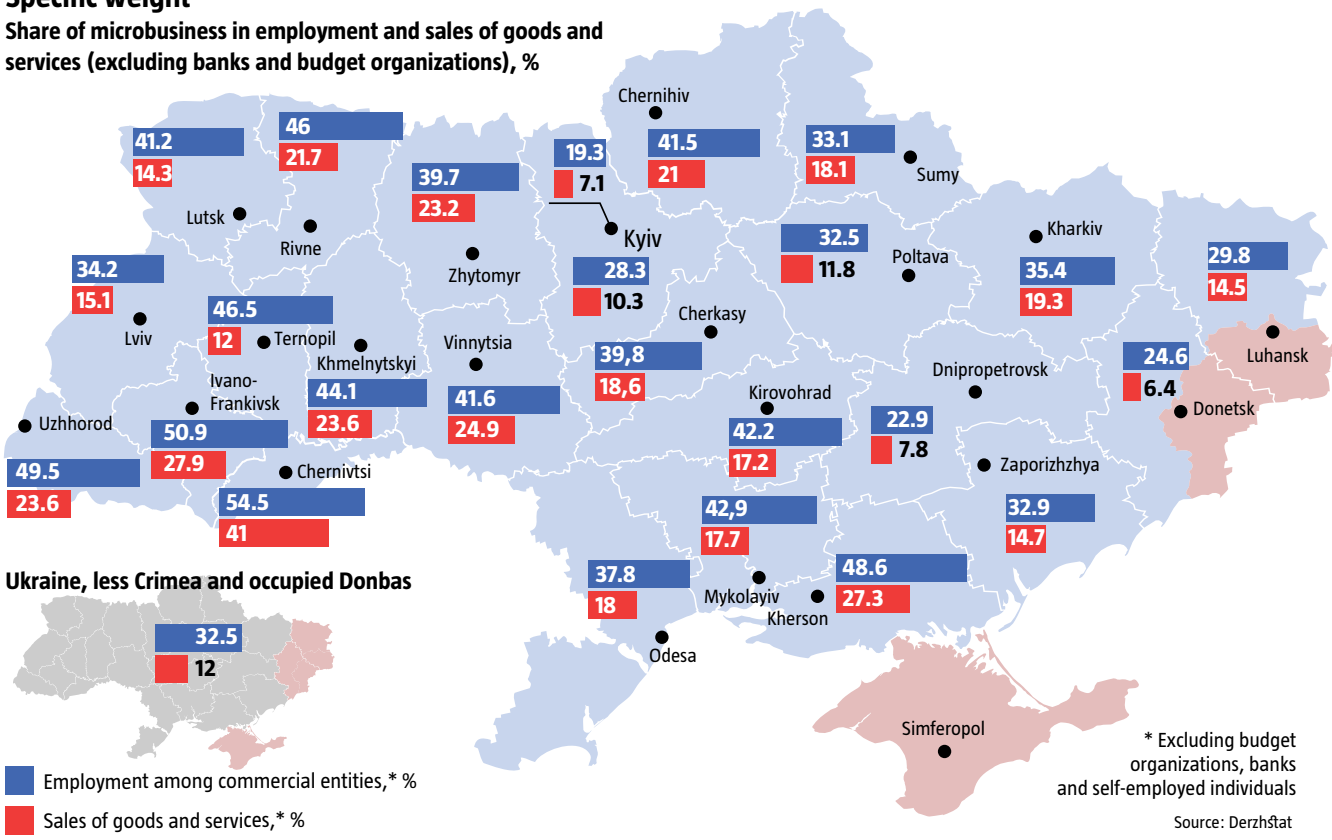
COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

Share of profitable microbusinesses compared to medium and large businesses in various sectors of the economy, 2014, %



Specific weight

Share of microbusiness in employment and sales of goods and services (excluding banks and budget organizations), %



* Excluding budget organizations, banks and self-employed individuals

Source: Derzhstat

of sales of goods and services in the commercial sector, excluding banks.

The regions with the biggest share of large and medium businesses—the City of Kyiv and Dnipropetrovsk and Kyiv Oblasts—show only 13-18% of all hired workers in the commercial sector working for micro enterprises and FOPs. This is where the lowest share of micro enterprises is involved in selling goods: 7.1% in Kyiv, 7.8% in Dnipropetrovsk and 10.3% in Kyiv Oblasts. Numerically, however, these three regions provide for nearly 40% of all goods and services traded by petty enterprises on a national scale and it is there that the smallest businesses have generated the most jobs for hired hands: 277,900 in Kyiv city and oblast, and 120,700 in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, which is also about 40% nationwide, excluding occupied Donbas, of course.

In the 15 oblasts in Central, Southern and Western Ukraine, companies with fewer than 10 hired workers and FOPs—here and further all FOP are included—account for about 40% and more of officially registered workers in the private sector. This indicator is 46.0% in Rivne Oblast, 46.5% in Ternopil, 48.6% in Kherson, 49.5% in Zakarpattia, 50.9% in Ivano-Frankivsk, and 54.5% in Chernivtsi Oblasts. Poltava, Zaporizhzhia, Sumy, Lviv, Kharkiv, and Odesa Oblasts are closer to the national average.

Among others, such indicators suggest that, after decentralization, reasonable tax rates and, more importantly, responsible compliance with tax obligations, especially after payroll deductions, will be crucial elements to the filling of local budgets in most of these oblasts. With the exception of a small group of industrial towns and major interregional centers—Kharkiv, Odesa, Lviv, Kryvyi Rih, Kremenchuk, and Mariupol—large and medium enterprises do not represent enough of a share of employment to compensate for the preferential conditions for microbusinesses.

In terms of sales of goods and services, as well as job creation, microbusinesses represent a smaller share. As noted above, only about 20% of those employed nationwide, with the exclusion of the Donbas, even in those oblasts where micro enterprises and FOP account for nearly 50% of all employment, this indicator is only in the range of 34-37%, that is, in Kherson, Chernivtsi, Zakarpattia and Ivano-Frankivsk Oblasts. The share of microbusinesses in selling goods and services across Ukraine, without the Donbas, is much smaller. The highest rate is 40% in Chernivtsi, and in Ivano-Frankivsk, Kherson and Vinnytsia Oblasts, where they represent 25% or more. Only about 20% of the total volume of sales is due to microbusinesses in Khmelnytsk, Zhytomyr, Zakarpattia and Rivne Oblasts.

AFTER DECENTRALIZATION, REASONABLE TAX RATES AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, RESPONSIBLE COMPLIANCE WITH TAX OBLIGATIONS WILL BE CRUCIAL ELEMENTS TO THE FILLING OF LOCAL BUDGETS IN MOST OF THESE OBLASTS

"We wouldn't mind change ourselves"

Stanislav Kozliuk

How the micro-merchant crowd lives

It's a row of pale, dirty-colored little shops with various contents: some selling dishes, some selling kids' toys, some popular "Everything for 10 hryvnias," some selling produce. Kiosks. Officially known as MAFs, meaning small architectural formations, we run into them on the streets, in underground passageways, at bus and tram stops, every day, year in and year out. Sometimes they disappear, others come in their place: where you bought flowers yesterday, today they're selling cigarettes. In another six months, it's alcohol; a year later it's clothing.

The lives of these micro-merchants are not easy. Too many of them are barely breaking even or earning marginal profits. Most of them would rather move into a shopping center, but the truth is that they just can't afford it.

"COURTESY VISITS" FROM INSPECTORS

A tram stop in Left Bank Kyiv. A cluster of white MAFs nearby. Despite it being the weekend, there are almost no customers, so the sellers huddle together, talking about life as they sip on their coffees. Trying to keep warm. We enter the nearest shop, which sells toys. The shelves hold a wide selection, from matchbox-sized toy cars for kids age 3 and older, to board games and remote-controlled helicopters. A young woman called Viktoria stands behind the counter. She looks about 25. She's complaining: the power was cut "for two hours" nearly a week ago.

"I would say that lack of electricity is our biggest problem," Viktoria says, stamping her feet to keep warm. "My terminal doesn't work so I can't track sales in our online shop. Not to mention how cold it is. In the fall, you can still more-or-less handle it, but when it's wintertime, who's going to be able to stand around at -20C? Half an hour, an hour, max." Outside, it's 6C.

"How much do we pay?" Viktoria responds. "Well, the official rate that they tell you is a joke. UAH 500 a month. Of course, there are no such prices. The real rent we pay takes about a week to cover. It depends on luck." The young woman turns to her latest customer and shows some shiny cars. "Earlier, this shop was at one of the shopping centers not far from here. But the rent is even higher there. Four years ago, when the dollar was worth 8 hryvnias, the same space cost at least UAH 3,000."

Yet things would have been just fine had the management of the mall not decided they wanted more. "They would suddenly change the terms and conditions of your contract, even though those were not written into the contract that you had signed with them," says Viktoria. "For instance, I came to work one day to find that the shop had been sealed shut and I can't get in. We had to call the police and resolve it. In fact, this kind of attitude was one of the reasons why we left the mall and moved to the market."

Lately, however, there haven't been any inspections. "But two-three years ago, they loved to pop in unexpectedly," the young woman explains. "For instance, some young guy, an inspector, comes in and says, without even setting foot into the space, 'I'm not even going to talk to you for less than UAH 3,000.' Of course, if everything's above-board in your business, this kind of 'inspection' doesn't worry you. I have a folder that I keep with me with all the documents, permits and bills so that I can show them and they will go away.

"But sometimes that doesn't work. Lately, the Pension Fund has been picking on people. Supposedly we didn't pay our tax for 2012. Or maybe 2011. In that kind of situation, you take all your bank invoices, go to them and twist their noses a bit," says Viktoria with a quiet smile. "It really was pretty funny: they said that we hadn't paid our taxes for 2009, but I only registered as an entrepreneur in 2010. On the whole, though, I agree that something has to be done about these kiosks. Especially downtown. They are really pretty hideous, especially in the historical parts of the city. The $64,000 question is what alternatives can be offered so that they can continue to work. Maybe renting space in buildings on the ground floor or something."

MOST MICRO-MERCHANTS TRADING IN KIOSKS WOULD RATHER MOVE INTO A SHOPPING CENTER, BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT THEY JUST CAN'T AFFORD THE RENT

PROFITABLE EYESORES

At the entrance to a Metro station, a cluster of ragged plastic booths leans into each other, creating a gauntlet to the subway. Crowds of commuters flow past the burned-out and advertisements. Sometimes someone stops for a couple of minutes to check out a display case, but not thinking for long. Within seconds people are moving on, often without even opening the door to the tiny shops.

We go into one of these MAFs, a large-ish space with dishware on display. At the counter, a woman of about 45 stands, carefully measuring visitors from behind her glasses. She speaks without hurry, occasionally casting a glance at the door. ››

PHOTO: UNIAN

Coffee revolution. In June, Kyiv authorities threatened to shut down mobile coffee shops, a burgeoning micro-business across Ukraine. The owners protested against this at the Kyiv City Administration

"To tell you the truth, I don't like these shops much myself," says Oksana. "They look absolutely wretched. Too many of them look like that even when they are being set up: ugly, uneven, higher in one place, lower in another, inconsistent colors. You don't even feel like going to the Metro when you see things like this. But there isn't much choice these days. I've worked here since 2003. I started out with a small shop of my own, and later we expanded."

"But right now," she says with a sad look at the shelves, "times are tough. I used to buy goods worth UAH 15,000 at a time. Our bus would come back full of boxes with different kinds of china. Now, there's only 3-4 boxes. You find yourself looking at them and thinking, where's my order? You can see for yourself that the shelves are half-empty. People are becoming poor, we are becoming poorer. Earlier, when shoppers came in, you would assess what they were likely to be able to afford and you could propose well-known brands. People bought expensive dinner sets and left satisfied. Now, customers look at the prices, buy a mug for UAH 30 and leave. The more expensive German dinnerware collects dust on the shelves."

Recently a shopping center opened its doors right next to them. "Some reps dropped by from the center's management and proposed that we rent space for our shops," Oksana says, remembering the visit. "I even considered moving there. Who wouldn't want to? To work in a well-lit, clean place that's warm, so that you could take your coat off and not freeze. But when I added up the costs, I had to stay here. Right now, I'm paying UAH 200 per sq m, while the mall charges around UAH 400-600 and more. Most of us simply can't cover this kind of cost. For me to buy product and pay the rent, I need to bring in at least UAH 40,000 a month. Lately, this has become impossible. So we're working at the expense of purchases." She turns around and addresses the next customer.

"Visits from inspectors?" Oksana thinks a minute. "It's quieter these days, but about five years ago, everybody and his monkey's uncle would drop by. Firemen, the consumer protection union... These last guys were particularly persistent. They arranged inspections and even scandals. Of course, they usually only wanted cash from you. So we had little choice but to 'resolve the problem.' Well, you understand where we paid a fine and where we simply cut a deal. Although all our documentation is above-board, as is the rent, and the shop has all the necessary documents." We say goodbye as another customer walks in.

SETTLING SCORES WITH THE MAFs

Nor are such tiny shops spared conflicts with competitors, especially if the retail space is in a competitive location: next to the metro, at bus and tram stops, opposite shopping malls. And if someone decides that they want to set up their own shop on your spot, even permits won't save the owner.

"Try to put your kiosk at a bus stop?" says Svitlana, repeating the question. "Nope, someone just off the streets can't do this. You have to have connections." Svitlana is sitting next to a small heater in her tiny women's shop. She's been operating this shop for nearly four years. Before that, she worked in a bank.

"You have to understand that you need lots of permits to put up a kiosk," Svitlana explains. "Some of them are issued by the district administration, so at the least you have to have good connections there. And a MAF can be good business for someone else.. What's cheaper—buy-

ing an apartment and renting it out or putting up a small shop and rent that out for the same price?" She laughs.

"Everything depends on the spot where you want to work," Svitlana goes on. "Metro stops and shopping malls are all listed, but rent is high there. Let's say I pay UAH 3,000 a month for 7 sq m. My friends who sell cheese opposite a shopping mall are paying UAH 10,000. And even so, they were pushed out not long ago...because the mall considered them competitors! The management announced that the kiosk was into their territory by 5 cm and next thing you know the kiosk's gone. Of course, it came back after a while. I think some money must have crossed hands." Svitlana glances out the window for potential customers, but they are only looking at the mannequins in her showcase. When we see that no one is planning to come in, the conversation continues.

"According to law, a MAF is supposed to be given two weeks' notice before being taken down," Svitlana goes on. "Hard to know if that really happens or not. For instance, there was a guy next to us selling vegetables. He had a kiosk and a small trailer. Then one day, he was taken away. We only know that, come November, there will definitely be some kind of kiosk on that spot."

Her colleague, Irakliy, works at a roadside café that has taken over Kyiv in the last few years. Irakliy says that it's hardly reaching for the stars, but it could be considered to be cutting into business from Moscow!

"I'm from the Donbas myself, not far from Artemivsk," says Irakliy. "At one time, I was going to Moscow to work but this year I decided to try my chances in Kyiv. There are definitely pros: you're in Ukraine, your passport is in your pocket, and you're a citizen. And the pay's about the same. You can make at least UAH 7,000. In Moscow, I had 30,000 rubles." He pours us some mulled wine and continues to explain.

"When I went through training, I was in a spot near one of the institutes, where were several of these roadway cafés," Irakliy goes on. "However, one day, someone showed up to inspect us and took everyone away, except me. It appeared that all the 'neighbors' were missing the necessary permits to operate there. At that point, I began to take in around UAH 3,000 a day." Irakliy laughs.

"If it comes right down to it with the kiosks, and cafés, then you have to start with the legal aspect," he says. "I mean, making them all operate according to law and pay taxes to the budget. To make sure they're all operating conscientiously. Then comes the question where to put them in the first place." The young man moves the mulled wine to the side and serves another customer.

"IF IT COMES RIGHT DOWN TO IT WITH THE KIOSKS, AND CAFÉS, MAKE THEM ALL OPERATE ACCORDING TO LAW AND PAY TAXES TO THE BUDGET," SAYS IRAKLIY, A ROADSIDE CAFÉ BARISTA

"It all depends on the rental rates," explains Oksana. "Maybe if the shopping centers were run by the cities or the government and not private owners, the cost of retail space would be more reasonable. I think this would probably resolve the issue of junked-up streets. Right now, there is no one answer to this problem."

Algirdas Šemeta:

"Criminal law is used in business all too often"

Interviewed by **Tetiana Omelchenko**

The Ukrainian Week discusses the relationship between government and business, the progress of reforms and the adoption of European practices in Ukraine with business ombudsman Algirdas Šemeta.

How is the business ombudsman funded in Ukraine?
Today, the ombudsman's office is fully funded by international donors—nine European and American countries. Neither the Ukrainian state nor Ukrainian businesses finance the institutions. Funds have been provided for two years, i.e. from the beginning of this year to 2017. An extension to this is being discussed at the moment. At the same time, after the adoption of the law that the government is discussing now, we will start negotiations with governments and business associations regarding their gradual inclusion in financing the business ombudsman. In the future, it would be a good idea to progressively involve the Ukrainian state too.

Which proportion of the funding was allocated by donors and how is it divided among the nine European countries? What is the total amount of donor funding and which country makes the greatest contribution?
The budget allocated for two years is about EUR 3mn, or EUR 1.5mn per year. It's hard to talk about proportions, because it's an unusual situation. The EBRD account that our institution is funded through also includes funding for other projects, not just ours. The National Council of Reforms has a service structure that is also funded from this account. Part of the state-owned enterprises reforms is also funded by these structures. I don't know what the total sum is, because it's the responsibility of the EBRD.

PHOTO BY ANDRIY LOMAKIN

Does your organisation only work with big business or with medium-sized enterprises too?
We work with all types of businesses. If you take the statistics that we have at the moment, over 80% of complaints come from small and medium-sized businesses, whereas a relatively small part are from big business. It's much more difficult for a small business to defend itself against the action or inaction of various government bodies, so we naturally get complaints from them. They see us as an institution that can protect them and their legal interests.

What is the nature of complaints from SMEs?
We don't see much difference between small, medium and large businesses. There are some specific features: quite a lot of complaints about regulations of small architectural formations (these mostly include street kiosks and roadside cafes—**Ed.**) come from small businesses, which isn't relevant to big business. At the beginning, we received complaints about the introduction of cash registers among small businesses. Other problems arise in both SMEs and large businesses. If classified, then the largest number of complaints are about the State Fiscal Service (around 40%). Here I would highlight VAT reimbursement, electronic VAT declarations and situations when tax agents can't find a business at their place of registration. We get a lot of complaints regarding electronic tax administration and criminal cases against businesses.

In second place after the tax office are complaints about law-enforcement agencies. They are mainly related to criminal proceedings for abuse of power during pre-trial investigation (searches, seizure of documents, questioning witnesses or suspects). You get the impression that criminal law is used in business all too often. I have extensive experience in the EU, but have never seen criminal law used so frequently among businesses. There's another set of issues linked to the execution of court decisions.

There were also several cases in the ATO zone and Crimea. The latter ones primarily involve returning property to businesses from the occupied Crimea. Business had to all but buy back what they previously owned from themselves there, i.e. pay customs fees and VAT on property that was in the Crimea.

What is the procedure for filing complaints to your office?
We have an electronic contact form on our site. It's very simple: who's complaining, what they're complaining about, which steps the business expects from us and whether they have performed any ac-

tions themselves. The form offers the possibility to attach a document confirming the facts in the complaint and submit it in an electronic format. The complainant will automatically receive confirmation that the complaint has reached us. Then we consider whether the complaint matches the criteria that exist in our regulations within 10 days. There are several cases we do not consider: if a private-sector business is complaining about another private-sector business or a court judgement. We don't review judicial rulings. Less than a year must have passed since the violation, in other words we work with recent issues. A very important point is that we are sometimes forced to reject a complaint by our regulations: a business must use at least one administrative procedure before contacting us, if such a procedure exists. A good example is the tax office. If inspectors violated a business's rights, a rather clear appeal procedure exists within the tax office.

The party must go through at least one stage of the appeal, and if the answer does not satisfy the business, then they can contact us. In fields where there is no appeal process, you can get in touch with us immediately. If the complaint meets our criteria, we inform the business that it has been accepted for consideration and then conduct a detailed examination of the complaint within three months. Another very important point: we look at things neutrally, so we assess the facts the business gives us and listen to the other party. If they are complaining about the tax office, we talk to them, listen to their arguments and then determine if the business is right or wrong, in our opinion. If the business is right, we take steps to remedy the situation. We received many complaints over a short period — about 400. We started work in early May this year and to date have closed 50 cases that decisions were made on. They were mostly decided in favour of the business. Other complaints are in progress. During this short period, we were able to give more than 135 million hryvnias (ar. USD 6mn — Ed.] back to businesses (where it is possible to calculate a tangible benefit). There were cases involving VAT, cancellation of fines and penalties, recognition of expenses. I can cite several examples when the tax authorities did not want to recognise expenses, so the business could not deduct them from their profits, which are then subject to income tax and other taxes. This is only the "hard money", so to speak, that we gave back to businesses.

What type of business figures in this 135 million — small, medium or large?

I would say that it's about 50/50. We have a lot of little amounts for small businesses, but for them 20-40 thousand hryvnias is a very significant sum of money. We had a VAT case when millions were returned to a business. It wasn't even a big business, more like a medium to large one that simply could not stand up for its rights due to the inaction of the tax authorities.

What have you achieved since your appoint ment to the post?

Firstly, I would say that businesses are very positive about our work. When we take on a complaint, we send the business a questionnaire that they use to evaluate our actions. So far, we have only received very positive feedback. We get thank-you letters too. It would be very difficult to pick out any specific cases here. But one thing is interesting — my staff say that for the first time in the history of modern Ukraine the Central Investigation Department at the Interior Ministry apologised to a large international foreign business for misconduct during a search at their premises. The fact that it happened for the first time is very impressive. There were some very important cases when we managed to get criminal proceedings closed. In international practice, including the EU, US or other developed countries, if criminal proceedings are opened against a business, that's the worst thing that could possibly happen to them. It spoils their reputation and makes it almost impossible to continue working.

How is your work with businesses organised? Are you in contact with the complainant?

We use all forms of communication. The complainant is fully aware of our moves. If we make a step toward the tax office, then we immediately get in touch with the complainant and explain what we've done, informing them how the case is progressing. I think this is good practice.

There were occasions when my staff had to make personal visits to study specific situations. From time to time, complainants want to present the facts that they have in more detail, so they come to our office. Sometimes additional questions arise. Then, of course, we invite the person to come and see us. If the complainant doesn't live in Kyiv, we try not to increase their expenses on communication with us. In this case, there's the phone, Skype and other communication channels. It happens, although not often, that a business comes to us to discuss additional points that were not reflected in the specific documents they sent.

To what extent does the government take notice of business needs?

I got a positive impression, because in many cases they do not only listen to us, but also make decisions based on what we recommend. Of course, not everything is great. We would like closer or more constructive cooperation with the security forces. There are many difficulties here. They really protect their uniform.

Right now, we're preparing a memorandum of cooperation with the Interior Ministry. I hope that we will sign it in the near future. I've already spoken to Mr. Hrytsak, the head of the Security Service (SBU), and he also expressed willingness to sign the document. I think that it's very important for them, as it sends a kind of signal to the regional structures that their leadership is ready to work with us. I hope this will lead to more constructive cooperation.

The Ministry of Economy is doing a very good job and works closely with businesses. There are many ›

Algirdas Šemeta was born in 1962 in Vilnius and graduated from the Faculty of Economics at Vilnius University in 1985. After the restoration of Lithuania's independence, he worked at the Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Finance. He headed the latter in 1997-1999 and 2008-2009. In 2010, he took up the post of European Commissioner for Taxation, Customs Union, Audit and Anti-Fraud. Since 2014he has been business ombudsman in Ukraine, appointed on the recommendation of the EBRD.

problems in this area, of course, and it will be difficult to change everything quickly. Nevertheless, the minister himself, in my opinion, is the initiator of the most radical reforms. I hope that they will give positive resultssooner or later.

We can also mention the Ministry of Agriculture—I meet with farmers, and there has been visible progress. Of course, there's the very complex sector of infrastructure, where we also had issues with complaints from foreign investors. After we got involved, there was positive dialogue with the Ministry of Infrastructure to address the problems that we raised. It's rather difficult to list all the ministries linked to business. There are very high expectations of tax reform, which is quite a demanding task for the Minister of Finance.

Do the ongoing reforms in our country meet the needs and expectations of business?

It's very important to understand the situation that Ukraine was in after the Revolution of Dignity. Unfortunately, we have to note that over 25 years there were no reforms that had a positive impact on business. Therefore, a lot of problems have accumulated in this area.

There are very positive developments in addressing licensing issues, as well as the transparency of government procurement. Before, international businesses that work here didn't even consider doing this because corruption was rife. They couldn't participate according to their internal rules. Now the situation is significantly improving. In my opinion, people who assess the business climate in Ukraine will notice this.

How do you feel about the draft tax reforms and which one do you consider optimal?

In my opinion, an optimal tax system does not exist. If it did, it would have already been applied somewhere. The tax system is very dependent on the specific situation in a specific country. I don't take it upon myself to judge the positive or negative aspects of particular models. I've already drawn attention to the fact that I believe the emphasis should be placed on reforming tax administration and customs. That's where the biggest problem is. There will be a tariff of 18% or 16%, but that's not the most important thing. Of course, the tax burden is an issue that must be addressed. Labour taxes are very high. Taxation in this area should be decreased and compensatory devices found that would not have an adverse impact on the budget and be easy to administer. Complex taxes are difficult to administer. So I would look for simpler compensators. The main focus should be on changing tax administration systems, which are still in a dire state.

If we draw parallels with Lithuania: how does your experience of working there help in resolving issues in Ukraine? How did the state help business during the 2008 crisis?

Of course, we went through many of the reforms that are currently being developed or implemented in Ukraine, so we know both the positive and negative aspects connected with them. I wasn't only finance minister of my own country twice, but also came here at the end of my term as European Commissioner for Taxation and Customs Union, Audit and Anti-Fraud, and this experience helps me use European tools in everyday Ukrainian life.

The situation was very difficult during the 2008 crisis. The treasury was empty and we had a large number of commitments to internal and external creditors. I had to take a lot of unpopular steps. A distinctive feature of our crisis is that we conducted the necessary reforms within six months. We quickly regained the confidence of creditors and were able to enter international financial markets, which was very important. Frankly, people get tired of constant reforms. Major changes must be carried out as quickly as possible. Not like in Ukraine, because Lithuania is an EU member and gets substantial help from them. The first steps we took in the midst of the crisis were to redirect EU aid towards businesses. Tools and guarantees were created for them. That probably also helped us to get out of the difficult situation.

Which parts of this can we use in practice?

You shouldn't only learn from Lithuania. There are a lot of good European practices and Lithuanian experts are helping in various areas here in Ukraine. These methods are accessible, because the EU is open, and they can be used—there's no need to reinvent the wheel. Let's take the issue of VAT reimbursement: there's the Estonian practice, where the VAT is reimbursed within one day, and the Portuguese method, which transferred the whole system onto electronic declarations. The system runs like clockwork and businesses are very pleased with it. I don't think that we should focus on the example of a single country. There are experts from different countries in Ukraine and they all have good examples from their country; we just need to implement them now.

BEFORE, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESSES THAT WORK HERE DIDN'T EVEN CONSIDER GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT BECAUSE CORRUPTION WAS RIFE. NOW THE SITUATION IS SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVING

Minister Abromavičius and I have repeatedly discussed the reform of statistics. I was in charge of this sector in Lithuania and reformed it completely, so we can take the example of Lithuania here. I know that they're working with the National Anti-Corruption Bureau. We have a special investigation service that already has practical experience. Once again, I would like to focus on taxation. In Lithuania, the tax office managed to go from last to first place in business trust ratings. So there's something we can learn from: which tools were introduced and which methods were applied. Businesses understand that the tax office simply developed a service of risk assessment systems—it doesn't attack everyone indiscriminately, but carries out selective and effective raids in the places where there are real problems. As for ways of serving business: in Vilnius you can go to a customer service centre and feel like you're in a bank. There are consultants who it's nice to talk to. You tell them your problem and they explain how you can solve it. And you come out of there satisfied. These are some simple examples that we can learn a lot from.

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Do It Yourself

Stanislav Kozliuk

Can activists defend community interests even if outwardly undemocratic forces control local government?

Over a little more than two decades of independence, bona fide feudal principalities were formed in some regions of Ukraine, where the hypothetical head of a county stays in office for at least 15 years, his brothers, sisters, relatives and in-laws long entrenched in government agencies. These "family businesses" will do anything, except defending the interests of local communities. Which, in fact, vote for the same people from election to election, sometimes for buckwheat, sometimes for new benches outside their houses, and sometimes simply for idle promises. Active citizens, after years of fighting such a system, could be forgiven for being disappointed and giving up, convinced that they have no influence and it is easier not to interfere with "dirty politics".

Nevertheless, practice shows that the situation is nowhere near this critical.

THE KINGDOM OF DARKNESS

Local elections, however strange this might sound, could become a key tool for implementing change. Despite a number of obstacles. Indeed, these recent elections offered few opportunities for new political forces and civil society activists to make it onto local councils without cooperation with big parties. One reason, according to activists, was the new law passed a few months before the election campaign. It only allows party nomination, thus limiting opportunities for active community members to nominate themselves as candidates. In addition, it is now harder for small, local political parties to be elected, as the electoral threshold was increased (from 3 to 5%) and a rather large deposit is required to take part. In addition, there are no restrictions on the use of advertising during campaigning. Therefore, local political movements without strong financial or media resources found themselves on an uneven playing field with strong national parties.

The Maidan failed to give boost to new political forces at the regional level. Active social groups were unable to unite into a non-partisan movement that could compete with the old system. For example, there is a significant percentage of conscious citizens that are ready to defend their interests at the regional level in Kharkiv, despite the proximity of Russia and the Occupied Donbas. However, there is no standout leader that these Maidan activists and volunteers could get behind. Instead, the majority of the new parties are in fact political projects that appear just before the election, and afterwards — vanish into thin air. They do not usually have an extensive network of offices in the regions, nor a history and ideology.

What's more, activists emphasise that in most Ukrainian cities, even Kyiv, the level of self-government and community involvement in decision-making is very low. Communities are not always well-informed about draft resolutions. Not to mention modern forms of self-government, when it is not the representative body, but the communities themselves that are involved in the decision making process. Using petitions, electronic voting and so on. Incidentally, activists note, such forms of governance have long been popular in Europe. At the same time, even socially active Ukrainian citizens have no desire to find out about these tools in some places, never mind the majority of local people. And the further you go into the regions from the central cities, the worse the situation is. Especially in small villages and towns.

Activists that we were able to talk to in various regions of Ukraine say that not all issues are resolved locally. For example, the Central Election Commission in Kyiv influenced recent mayoral elections involving odious figures in Kherson and Kharkiv, among others, even though there were probably plenty of reasons for Hennadiy Kernes or Volodymyr Saldo, for example, to not have got onto the ballot paper. Activists are convinced: if Kyiv will continue to make compromises or arrangements, solving "problems" with money and behind-the-scenes agreements, then the situation will remain unchanged.

ACTIVE COMMUNITY MEMBERS INSIST THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO WORK WITH THE LOCAL POPULATION AND EXPLAIN THE NEED FOR NEW INITIATIVES, THEREBY WINNING THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE

WITH THE SYSTEM OR AGAINST THE SYSTEM

Despite these grim facts, there is cause for cautious optimism. For example, some political forces that were elected to councils support increased transparency and openness from local authorities. Among the proposed measures are the publication of draft resolutions and decisions adopted by local councils and executive authorities, as well as the introduction of online inquiries and petitions. Such political forces may not have the necessary majority in many councils to introduce these transformational standards. But with support and persistence from the community, they can realise new initiatives while being in the minority. For example, a number of local councils in Ukraine have adopted regulations requiring local deputies to declare con-

Village development strategy. A group of locals in Bobrytsia, Kyiv Oblast, develops and implements projects, such as street-art festivals and cycle tracks, and involves village locals in discussions

flicts of interest if a draft decision may concern them personally, their family or business. Activists believe that this requirement will safeguard against corruption in the regions.

In addition, active community members insist that it is necessary to work with the local population and explain the need for new initiatives, thereby winning the support of the people. Indeed, activists agree that this is a long and complex process that will not bring quick results. However, the recent elections show that a part of society is increasingly focused not on colourful outdoor advertising, but ideas and hard work.

Most people that we managed to talk to emphasise the fact that it is possible to change the system and confront not exactly honest politicians by other methods than force. This is an extreme step, as we saw in Vradiyivka, Mykolayiv Oblast, where there were mass protests in 2013. Again, Kyiv could help in solving problems. Or more precisely, the national parties that at least declare support for democratic principles. Ideally, large political players in these small "principalities" could resist the "czars" that essentially occupied the regions. By putting forward their candidates, these political forces could oust district-level oligarchs.

However, it is not worth relying on external help alone. Ukraine has enough examples of communities implementing their own initiatives in defiance of local authorities or in cooperation with them.

Indeed, there is a village in Kyiv Oblast called Bobritsya, where individual members of the community decided to work on developing their area without being part of the village council or other government bodies. They created an initiative group and charitable foundation to raise funds for various projects. Subsequently, this initiative group produced a development strategy for the village and submitted it to the local council for consideration. At the same time, awareness-raising activities were conducted with local residents and they were actively involved in discussing projects. In this way, the activists managed to implement a number of initiatives: holding a street art festival, installing notice boards in the village, organising cycle paths and so on. This format allowed them to avoid conflict with local government and involve community members in the management and implementation of initiatives alongside the authorities. But even in the absence of dialogue with the authorities, work with members of the community, if it is active and interesting suggestions are made, will sooner or later lead to an increase in their popularity and support among the people. This, in turn, creates an opportunity for the initiators of the projects to be elected to local councils in the future and, having the necessary powers, implement their initiatives.

The last local elections are proof of this. For example, Anna Herashchenko, not widely known among the general public, won mayoral elections in the village of Tyahlova, Kharkiv Oblast. Activists stress that she went to a reasonably Sovietised and pro-Russian village, but was able to unite people, find support for her initiatives and, ultimately, win the elections. In Kherson Oblast, blogger Dmytro Voronov became mayor of small town Tsyurupynsk, while in Hlukhiv, Sumy Oblast, first place was taken by Michel Tereshchenko, removing a protégé of regional oligarch Andriy Derkach from office.

Karol Modzelewski

"The seed of authoritarianism has sprouted in the minds of Eastern European peoples due to frustration with liberal democracy"

Interviewed by **Hanna Trehub**

Polish dissident and leading ideologue of the Solidarność movement Karol Modzelewski talked to ***The Ukrainian Week*** about the revival of independent Polish culture, science and education as an integral part of the struggle for Poland's independence and the rise of domestic authoritarianism as a threat to modern Eastern European societies.

What is the continuation of Solidarity in Poland today?
There is no continuation of Solidarity as a phenomenon in modern Poland. The Solidarity movement was actually a revolution directed against the communist regime and total dictatorship. It undermined the Communist Party monopoly on influence and power in the very heart of production, among the workers. Nevertheless, when making agreements with the authorities Solidarity did everything they could to avoid direct confrontation, bloodshed or open demands to overthrow communism. Solidarity knew that the USSR and Soviet Army stood behind the Polish People's Republic, so it wasn't worth tempting fate in the form of Soviet intervention. We didn't want to end up like Czechoslovakia or Hungary. There were Soviet tanks in Legnica, but they never made it to Warsaw. They set off to go there in 1956, and were stopped not by the people, but Khrushchev after a conversation with Władysław Gomulka. It was impossible to keep Solidarity within a secure framework, which obviously didn't exist, because for Brezhnev's team the legal existence of an independent movement inside the Soviet camp was a threat that could provoke a domino effect not only in Warsaw Pact countries, but also in the USSR itself. Therefore, there were demands for the Polish authorities to put down the movement as soon as possible.

Why was the Polish anti-communist movement called Solidarity and not anything else? Was it a coincidence?
Why Solidarity and not anything else? Because that's what strikes in various Polish cities were called. People didn't protest for their own sake, but to support the general demands put forward during the Gdansk Shipyard strike. The word "solidarity" did not appear in the communist lexicon, although it sounds rather

collectivist and could well have been part of it. It was considered inappropriate.

In 1980 at a congress of representatives from the new union, which then had no name, we found out that the name should include "independent" and "self-governed", because that's what was written in the Gdansk Agreement. The then-government decided that new trade unions could be registered either on a sectoral basis, or territorially in the regions, but could not unite into a nationwide Polish organisation. I'm sure that this was done on a "divide and rule" basis. A dream of our government that never came true. We had to confront this. The advisors of Lech Wałęsa and the Gdansk Committee were against an All-Poland unitary organisation, as were the founders of the Free Trade Unions Committee. The former were afraid that if we act in defiance of the government, that would inevitably lead to conflict and partly negate the achievements of the Gdansk Agreement. The latter, who actually started the strike in Gdansk, feared that outsiders would come to us from Rzeszów, Poznań, Wrocław and Kraków– it would be impossible to trust them,as there would be no guarantee that they do not have ties to the Interior Ministry. The people who came to Gdansk from other cities insisted that we must unite to stop the authorities from crushing the strikers one by one.

Seeing that there was a consolidated front against uniting among organisers of the aforementioned congress, I took the floor to strongly oppose it as head of the delegation from Wrocław. I was successful. At first, Jan Olszewski, a delegate from Mazowsze, pointed out the possible dangers in the event that we approve a national trade union. I spoke after him and said that we should create a nationwide alliance of trade unions called Solidarity to distinguish it from other unions, i.e. to protect our identity. Strangely enough, this idea was supported by thunderous applause. Wałęsa, as was his custom, then changed his course of action, took the microphone from my hands and supported my idea, saying that's exactly what we should do. Five minutes later, representatives of the city delegations met in a separate room to coordinate all the aspects of registering a nationwide union, which is now known by all as Solidarity.

Your academic advisor for your theses was historian Aleksander Gieysztor, one of the heads of the Department of Information at the Armia Krajowa's Bureau of Information and Propaganda. Why did he decide to leave the underground after the war to get involved in science and education? Was this a conscious form of resistance to communism?

Professor Gieysztor was a pupil of Marceli Handelsman, a brilliant pre-war medievalist. He was 23 years old when the Second World War started. He served as an artillery gunner and was wounded in 1939. After recovering, he walked back to Warsaw and lived in his apartment there. He immediately joined the Secret University, because the Germans banned Polish universities, and many lecturers were executed. At the same time, he joined the Armia Krajowa, first as the deputy of Jerzy Makowiecki, head of the Department of Information at the AK's Bureau of Information and Propaganda. Gieysztor was very distressed when Makowiecki was killed by members of a group that was associated with the Polish underground, but acted on the orders of extreme right elements within the AK leadership. They were a lot more to the right than your Right Sector. These hardline nationalists believed that the liberals who managed the AK Bureau of Information and Propaganda were capable of cooperating with the Russians, so must be physically removed. They also handed Marceli Handelsman over to the Germans as a Jew, and he died in 1945 in Dora-Nordhausen concentration camp, Thuringia. After all this, Gieysztor took charge of the Department of Information and participated in the investigation of Makowiecki's murder. In the end, his murderers were sentenced to death by an underground court, but the Warsaw Uprising started before the punishment could be enforced. Gieysztor, unlike the others, knew that it would fail, as they would get no support from the allies, the Russians and the British, who did not want to go against Stalin. The thing is, he was the messenger who went to England through German-occupied Europe to learn about the political situation on the eve of Germany's defeat. After visiting London, he informed the AK leadership in Warsaw that the rebellion was doomed, because Europe had already been divided into spheres of influence at the Tehran Conference and Poland was to be part of the Soviet zone.

FOR BREZHNEV'S TEAM THE LEGAL EXISTENCE OF AN INDEPENDENT MOVEMENT INSIDE THE SOVIET CAMP WAS A THREAT THAT COULD PROVOKE A DOMINO EFFECT NOT ONLY IN WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES, BUT ALSO IN THE USSR ITSELF

While in German captivity, Polish officers weighed up the pros and cons of returning to communist Poland or going to the West. Gieysztor decided to go back. In Warsaw, he was summoned to see the head of the AK Bureau of Information and Propaganda, Colonel Jan Rzepecki, who said that Gieysztor was still bound by his oath and that while the AK had been dissolved, a new civil organisation called Freedom and Independence was to be created. Gieysztor headed the Bureau of Information and Propaganda at this organisation. His older university friend Tadeusz Manteuffel advised him to go back to Rzepecki and say that he and his university colleagues would no longer be involved in any kind of partisan resistance and would work on Polish university education. Colonel Rzepecki realised the soundness of this approach from prison. The Communist government made a deal with him — he brings his people out of the underground and nothing untoward happens to any of them. He would be the only person to end up behind bars. »

Karol Modzelewski is a Polish historian, writer and politician. An opposition activist in the Polish People's Republic and one of the leading ideologues of Solidarity, he suggested the name for this resistance movement. Author of many studies on medieval European history and an autobiography for which he won the Nike Literary Award in 2014. Member of the Polish Senate from 1989-91.

By order of Jan Rzepecki, Gieysztor brought everyone out of the underground, giving up their documents, money and weapons. Subsequently, he occupied himself with the development of Polish higher education and the Academy of Sciences alongside Tadeusz Manteuffel. There was a kind of unwritten agreement between the communist authorities of Poland and university intellectuals from the AK — they would be left alone and allowed to re-establish Polish universities in their own way, because there were almost no specialists left after the war and life had to go back to normal. There were no guarantees, for one side was weak and the other predatory, but the deal really did remain in force until the very end of communism. That is to say, they succeeded in creating a sort of ecological oasis inside universities against the background of communist dictatorship. Of course, they had to make concessions on modern history and, to some extent, philosophy and sociology. But there was still a certain freedom, albeit somewhat relative, of research and didactics that the Communist Party had no direct, rigid control over. Professors Gieysztor, Manteuffel, Kula, Herbst — the most significant pre-war Polish historians that created a free educational environment in Poland — were not members of the Party. In fact, what they did had its effect at the end of the 1980s, when Poland became independent. It was a positivist approach.

You mean, the independence of Poland before 1989 was the result of work by not only the Solidarity trade union movement, but also Polish intellectuals?

There were two forms of resistance in Poland when it was divided. In the Kingdom of Poland, i.e. the territory controlled by the Russian Empire, which was more oppressive than Austria and Prussia, there was an underground movement and rebellions at first. In fact, every uprising in the nineteenth century worsened the cultural and social situation in Poland, not to mention the human cost. After the failure of the last revolt, a positivist movement emerged, whose members believed that it was not necessary to shed blood in hopeless battles, that it would be better to slowly but surely work on the development of Polish culture and the economy until the possibility to revive an independent state would manifest itself at the international level. The Nazis and Stalin's regime, despite what people say now, left no room for the sort of positivism that I'm talking about. Hitler and his followers thought that Polish life should be wiped out completely. After 1945, there was Soviet hegemony outside and a communist dictatorship inside Poland, but the conditions were more forgiving — space was left for work in schools and universities, to develop science and so on, which, as I said earlier, Polish intellectual circles took advantage of.

What role did the compilers of Kultura magazine, including Jerzy Giedroyc and Bohdan Osadchuk, play in the positivistic process you mentioned?

Mieroszewski and Giedroyc left General Anders' army, based in the Soviet Union, soon crossed the border with Iran and went to the West. They fought in Italy and Africa. Later, people from this corps established Kultura magazine, which subsequently began to seek links with Poles in Poland itself and moved away from the intransigent Polish exiles in London, who, in their opinion, demanded the impossible and were therefore losing influence within the country. Giedroyc and Mieroszewski believed that we should not demand the return of Lviv and Vilnius to Poland, that we should support the ambitions of Ukrainians, Belarusians and Lithuanians to achieve their own independence. Giedroyc thought it was important for the Polish ambassador in Kyiv to be accepting of an independent Ukrainian state. An independent Ukrainian state — these guys were ahead of the curve! The independence of Ukraine, which has much in common with the setup of the current Polish ruling elite, guarantees the independence of Poland. Giedroyc understood that if post-Soviet Russia devours Ukraine, it would inevitably return to an imperialist footing, which would be a threat for Poles. We can see this today.

Bohdan Osadchuk championed the Ukrainian cause within Kultura, and there was a friendly attitude towards him. This magazine had a powerful influence on the Polish intelligentsia and its prestigious upper circles. We managed to get the Open Letter to the Party that Jacek Kuroń and I wrote across the border. It was in Kultura and was printed as a separate booklet. So the workers didn't read it, but the Polish intelligentsia did.

HISTORIANS GIEYSZTOR, MANTEUFFEL, KULA, HERBST CREATED A FREE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT IN POLAND. WHAT THEY DID HAD ITS EFFECT AT THE END OF THE 1980S, WHEN POLAND BECAME INDEPENDENT

During the discussion at this year's Eastern Partnership Culture Congress in Lviv, you said that against the background of today's challenging twists and turns, Eastern European countries, especially Ukraine and Poland, have to take notice not only of Russian authoritarianism, but also their own domestic version that could spring up. Where does this threat come from?

We must have a sense of danger, otherwise it would be impossible to avoid it. Ukraine should be afraid of its own brand of indigenous authoritarianism that could rear its head. The Poles and Hungarians have an inclination for authoritarianism too. I'm not talking about external authoritarianism, but the type that is aimed at the internal environment. The seed of authoritarianism has sprouted in the minds of Eastern European peoples due to frustration with liberal democracy and difficulties in joining the economic order of the Western world. This system seems hostile to people who are used to a very poor existence, but one that guarantees security. Their rejection is built on a strong foundation. The fact is that these conditions are very difficult for the poor. In Poland, this is 15-20% of the population, and they support a populist party that is effectively post-Solidarity at elections. This is because wild capitalism, not based on state control, has led to a reduction in social security.

Neither Friend nor Foe Who Saved Europe

Leonidas Donskis

Immediately after Russia stepped in Syria, we understood that it is time to sum up the convoluted and long story about Ukraine and the EU – a story of pride and prejudice which has a chance to become a story of a new vision regained after self-inflicted blindness.

Ukraine was and continues to be perceived by the EU political class as a sort of grey zone with its immense potential and possibilities for the future, yet deeply embedded and trapped in No Man's Land with all of its troubled past, post-Soviet traumas, ambiguities, insecurities, corruption, social divisions, and despair. Why worry for what has yet to emerge as a new actor of world history in terms of nation-building, European identity, and deeper commitments to transparency and free market economy?

Right? Wrong. No matter how troubled Ukraine's economic and political reality could be, the country has already passed the point of no return. Even if Vladimir Putin retains his leverage of power to blackmail Ukraine and the West in terms of Ukraine's zero chances to accede to NATO due to the problems of territorial integrity, occupation and annexation of Crimea, and mayhem or a frozen conflict in the Donbas region, Ukraine will never return to Russia's zone of influence. It could be deprived of the chances to join NATO or the EU in the coming years or decades, yet there are no forces on earth to make present Ukraine part of the Eurasia project fostered by Putin.

It may take two generations of Ukrainians to rebuild and reorient the country, yet Ukraine won the historic and epic battle for the future. Ukraine has done something that is still difficult for us to assess; we need more time and academic detachment to realize that what happened before our eyes was a miracle of this heroic and fearless nation abandoned by the EU.

It is true that US President Barack Obama reacted to the war that Russia waged on Ukraine invading and annexing Crimea, and then destabilizing the Donbas with a proxy war supported by the Russian army. It is equally true that so did the EU, thanks to Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel. We have to agree that whereas the former President of the USA George W. Bush was stronger than his successor in terms of saber rattling (especially during the Russian-Georgian war), he has never come even closer to the sanctions for Russia, something that was achieved almost unanimously by the USA and the EU. Yet, the feeling "yes but" is still there…

The legendary Russian singer-songwriter, poet and actor Vladimir Vysotsky wrote a song for the 1967 film Vertical called "Song of a Friend," which became the song for soulful young Soviets who could play a few chords on an acoustic guitar (Imagine a Russian "Blowin' in the Wind"). The opening lyrics, in my rough translation, go something like this:

If your friend turned out not to be one
Neither friend nor foe but something in between
If you are unable to determine if he is a good man or a bad man
Take a risk, bring the man to the mountains and you will see who he is

These lyrics often came back to me as I tried to rethink the attitude of the West to Ukraine. Neither friend nor foe but something in between. A vague actor of modern history quite convenient for a variety of the orientalism-based discourse with its clichés and propensity to othering deeply entrenched in theWest, yet this time not with its former colonies but with Eastern Europe, a poor cousin with who you can do and talk prose.

Whatever the case, this kind of warned-out discourse is harmful for the West as it betrays self-inflicted moral and political blindness. Ukraine is critically important for the West and for the EU in particular. Without any romantic and sentimental approach, I have to stress the following. Firstly, it is deadly serious to put it black on white that Ukraine's resistance to Russia in the Donbas region stopped the war in Europe. Even if Putin decides to step back in Ukraine after his new geopolitical adventure in the Middle East, Ukraine will not be the same. Russia would risk a difficult and dangerous war, which would destabilize Russia itself in the long run.

IT MAY TAKE TWO GENERATIONS OF UKRAINIANS TO REBUILD AND REORIENT THE COUNTRY, YET UKRAINE WON THE HISTORIC AND EPIC BATTLE FOR THE FUTURE

Secondly, if it had not been so tough in Ukraine, Putin may have been tempted to provoke NATO by destabilizing Latvia or Estonia. Any provocation in the Baltics would have brought us quite close to a military conflict between NATO and Russia with all consequences that we could possibly imagine.We in the Baltics owe a huge debt of gratitude to Ukraine for stopping war at our gate.

Therefore, Ukraine saved the EU from potential destabilization, far more dangerous and explosive than the refugee crisis, which is something difficult and challenging, yet which is heaven on earth compared to what Ukraine has been through. Last but not least, Ukraine with its talents, potential, idealism, and lack of cynicism so strong in the EU political classes, can save the EU as a project. Ukraine and the EU have to save each other from becoming a failed project.

The Gen-3 Mission: Beating the Holodomor effect

Iryna Reva, Researcher, Alex Pol Institute

How much time for Ukrainians to get over the post-genocide syndrome?

Not long ago, I was taking a walk with my son in our home town, Dnipropetrovsk, when we ran into an interesting 80-year-old woman who reacted with happy surprise that a five-year-old child could speak Ukrainian so well.

"People used to be ashamed to speak Ukrainian," she explained. "Now it's normal. Now they speak Ukrainian on TV and on the radio. Of course, I write better in Russian. Ukrainian's a bit hard for me."

"I guess you were taught in Russian at school," I ventured, "and all your documentation at work was in Russian." I definitely wanted to keep this conversation going.

It turned out she was the native daughter of the kozak settlement of Obukhivka in Dnipropetrovsk county and was eager to talk about her life. She complained, too, that her grandchildren spoke more in Russian, just like her children.

"Well, Ukrainian was always considered second class. You know, a photo correspondent friend of mine tells me that in the 1970s in Dnipropetrovsk, when people heard him speaking Ukrainian, some would start calling him a dirty bumpkin. The battle against 'nationalism' was ruthless..."

The minute she heard the word "nationalism," the elderly woman went into defensive mode, trying to persuade me that Ukrainians should speak both their own language and Russian. And although I support the principle, "the more languages, the better," I think that making English the second official language would offer far more opportunities for Ukraine. It became clear that the woman was trying to end our conversation. For a person who had grown up in soviet times, the subconscious terror of being accused of nationalism had not died.

THE HOLODOMOR EFFECT

Over 2003-2008, researchers at the Ukrainian Studies Institute at Shevchenko National University in Kyiv carried out a study in which they polled 1,000 Ukrainians who had been between the age of 1 and 7 in 1932-33. Half of these people had spent their childhood on territories hit by the Holodomor, the other half in territories where there had been no famine. The results showed significant differences in personality traits between the two groups. Those who had suffered in the Holodomor were unable to defend themselves in confrontations, were less ambitious, suffered from low self-esteem, felt less happy with their lives, and they were likely to suffer from depression, phobias and psychosomatic illnesses. But what was the strangest was that victims of the Holodomor were less likely to consider themselves Ukrainians and patriots.

Feelings of "estrangement from Ukraine and its national interests" were evident in 63% of the respondents who had survived the Holodomor, and in 7% of those in the control group. What's more, Ukrainophobic tendencies were almost as prevalent, at 63% in the main group and 3% in the control group. People who had survived the Holodomor were more likely to uphold soviet communist values such as "don't stand out," "be like all the others," and "don't be a nationalist," and to believe in the ideals of "proletarian internationalism." Why did these victims not condemn their aggressor but, instead, follow his example?

A SIGNAL IN THE FORM OF A "SMALL KINDNESS" MAKES THE VICTIM BEGIN TO FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE FEATURES OF THEIR TORTURER AND ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND THEIR SYSTEM OF VALUES AND NEEDS

It appears that a special relationship is established between a victim and their aggressor. This phenomenon has been studied by Americans such as psychiatrist Frank Ochberg, psychologists Dee Graham, Edna Rollings and Robert Rigsby, Polish psychiatrist Antoni Kepinski and Swedish criminologists Nils Bejerot, who gave this symbiotic relationship the name that western European psychologists and American journalists picked up on: the Stockholm syndrome.

The name comes from an incident in Stockholm in which terrorists captured four bank employees and held them captive for several days while threatening to kill them. After being released, an unexpected phenomenon was observed: the victims announced that they were not afraid of their kidnappers who had "done nothing bad to them," but the police. They hired a lawyer at their own expense to defend the two perpetrators and later befriended their families. This phenomenon, where a victim begins to like the aggressor or even to identify with him has since been called the "Stockholm syndrome."

The FBI bulletin for 2007 reported on the results of more than 4,700 cases of hostage-taking. The Stockholm syndrome was evident in 27% of the victims, the rest of the American hostages proved resistant to the "charisma" of those who kidnapped them. The conclusion can be made that far from every individual is likely to become psychologically dependent on those who hold their life in their hands. A good deal depends on the determination of the person, and that depends very much on their previous life experiences: what kind of

Broken will. The difference between a pre-Bolshevik Ukrainian and a Soviet individual is the skill to be a master of his or her own life, and to believe that own actions and work can bring desired results

psychological trauma they have faced, especially in childhood; how mature they are; how capable they are of individual action and critical thinking, their physical condition, and the specific circumstances under which they were attacked.

PRE-SOVIET TRAUMAS IN UKRAINIAN SOCIETY

What do we know about earlier, pre-soviet trauma experienced by Ukrainian society? Some answers can be found by asking the director of the Alex Pol Institute for Economic and Social Studies, Volodymyr Panchenko, who is a specialist in economic history and a PhD in history.

"After the collapse of Kyivan Rus, a part of Ukraine's territory continued to belong to a Ukrainian state under the Halych-Volynhian Principality for more than 200 years," says Panchenko. "Then these lands became part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and later still, part of the Polish Kingdom. In the mid 17th century in the Dnipro Valley, the only state-like entity dominated by ethnic Ukrainians was Kozak Ukraine. There was neither nobility nor serfdom here, and kozak taxes on the farmers were not especially burdensome: they paid for the use of land and for protection against invaders."

After the Pereyaslav Council, tsarist Muscovy gradually expanded its territory to include the free kozaks. "Peter I instituted economic sanctions against Ukrainian merchants who had previously traded successfully with Poland, Germany and the Orient," Panchenko goes on. "In 1701, he prohibited them from shipping a slew of Ukrainian-made goods to Baltic ports—at that time Riga, Danzig and Königsberg, today Gdansk and Kaliningrad. The only way Ukrainians could now export was through Archangelsk,[1] which was thousands of kilometers away, and to which it was only possible to travel in winter, when the extensive northern swamps were frozen over."

At the same time, foreign-made stockings, gold and silver thread, expensive silk fabrics, sugar, paint, canvas, and tobacco could no longer be imported into Ukraine. "Russia had set up its own centralized factories to make such goods and all the markets were to be preserved for them," Panchenko notes. "This caused Ukraine's merchant class to be completely subordinated to Russia's, which had direct access to cheap, quality imports and now began to act as the middleman—very similar to the 1970s and 1980s in the Soviet Union, when Ukrainians traveled to Leningrad and Moscow to buy good quality items and goods that were not available at home. The Russian-Ukrainian border now raised additional customs duties to fill the Tsar's treasury... In fact, systematic redistribution from Ukraine's budget to Russia began already here, but there was no gas transit system yet and it was a lot harder to control Ukrainians back then."

Nor were Ukraine's farmers and peasants spared. "The fact that their ancestors had lived for an age on specific territories made no difference if the Polish lord, during Polish rule, or a Russian official, after the destruction of the Zaporizhzhian Sich, decided that some parcel of land appealed to him," says Panchenko. "'Where are the documents that prove that this is your land?' What documents could the kozak or farmer have, if freehold law had ruled since hundreds of years: whoever first settled a spot and paid taxes was the owner? Farmers began to lose their land and became peasants, while under Catherine II, they were turned into serfs. They had lived for hundreds of years without the support of a national state, without anyone to guarantee their rights and freedoms, and the only way to have a 'career' was through vassalry. None of this fostered the development of a stable national identity."

FOUR STEPS TO SELF-HATRED

The Stockholm syndrome is fostered by the same conditions as the brainwashing technologies favored by totalitarian sects. It starts with controlling access to information. On one hand, the victim becomes isolated from contact with other religious students and those with different views, even family and friends until such time as ›

[1] A port on the White Sea, 1,100 km north of Moscow.

the victim has "strengthened in the faith." On the other hand, concepts are imposed on the victim. Victims are the most receptive to the "right" information when they are in an altered state of mind: either they are afraid—say, of demons, tempters, death, the coming of the Apocalypse, or punishment for sins—, or are prevented from satisfying their basic needs: exhausting fasts, sleep deprivation through all-night prayer vigils, torture as 'penance for sins,' and forced sexual abstinence.

During the Holodomor years, a great swath of the population was in a state of restricted awareness because their bodies were exhausted and they were subject to physical agonies due to famine: swollen guts and extremities, splitting and cracking skin, stomach acid consuming internal organs, and so on. The only thing people in the countryside could think of under these circumstances was food, yet any information related to produce—about "nests of nationalists" in the farm sector or about "kurkuls" who were hiding bread, aroused their interest. Those who were on the edge of starvation had no spiritual strength left to connect these ideological "transfusions" with the bizarre events taking place in their own lives.

One of the key factors to bringing out the Stockholm syndrome is the victim's hope for an opportunity to negotiate with their aggressor, to find a point of compromise with them. "A person who receives goodness from someone they expected to get evil from feels more obligated to their 'benefactor,'" Niccolo Machiavelli once observed. If a wrongdoer suddenly shows a drop of goodness—gives you a glass of water and doesn't shoot when he promised to kill you—, this deed takes on immense proportions in the mind of the victim and becomes a straw that they very much want to grasp. A small kindness from an aggressor when your life is in that person's hands is accepted with excessive gratitude because it offers the hope of survival.

"LEARNED HELPLESSNESS" IS HOW WE DESCRIBE THE BEHAVIOR OF A PERSON WHO, AS THE RESULT OF TRAUMATIC CHANGES TO THEIR WORLDVIEW, STOPS SEEING ANY REAL PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESSFUL ACTIONS AND SELF-REALIZATION

The psychodynamic of how victims absorb the "logic" of their aggressors looks like this. When they get a signal in the form of a "small kindness," the victim begins to focus on the positive features of their torturer and attempt to understand their system of values and needs. When the person's life is in danger, the impulse to do so is enormous and fear limits the person's capacity for rational assessment. And so the transfusion of foreign values takes place very quickly, without critical evaluation, and barely noticed by the victim. Soon, the victim begins to "understand" why the evil-doer hates the police or the person's relatives—the very people who are trying to get that person out of the hands of their abuser.

As the victim begins to see the world—and themselves in it—through the eyes of the perpetrator, they begin to believe that they "deserve" any abuse they are subjected to, that it is all their fault and they direct their anger at themselves. There have been cases where, even after the criminal has been imprisoned or killed, the victims continued to espouse the abuser's system of values or elements of it.

Put together, there are four conditions that contemporary researchers write much about and that make it more likely that a victim will develop Stockholm syndrome:

1. a threat to physical or psychological survival;
2. small kindnesses on the part of the perpetrator;
3. isolation of the victim, such as through physical isolation by the presence of armed squads circling the villages suffering from famine, and lack of access to information;
4. seeing reality through the eyes of the aggressor, that is, accepting the "correct" information that the aggressor is broadcasting.

SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY

Sometimes researchers have expressed amazement that people who survived the horrors of 1932-33 went on to fight "for Stalin" and died heroes on the front. And when Stalin died, Ukrainians, including those who suffered from the artificial famine that he had organized, cried and couldn't imagine how they would continue to live after Stalin. As a classic example, one young historian was astounded to analyze the story of her grandmother, Tetiana Maksymenko, whose maiden name was Skubiy and who was born in 1922 in the village of Burimka, Semenkiv County in Poltava Oblast. Maksymenko had related how her parents, two brothers and eight sisters all died during the Holodomor. She ended up being raised in a state orphanage, where the walls in her room had portraits of Comrades Lenin and Stalin, who supposedly were looking over her. By seeing the "goodness" in the aggressor, the woman was thankful to the soviet government all her life and took the death of the "Great Leader" as a personal loss.

This was true, not only of the famine of 1933. There are the copies of the diary of a teacher by the name of Oleksandr Soloniy, born in 1911 in the village of Krynychky in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. In the famine of 1921, Soloniy lost his father, mother and older brother Fedir. In his diary, he wrote baldly about his childish joy and gratitude to the government that his basic human need for food had finally been satisfied:

"Under Lenin, the state rescued thousands of people from starvation. We ate at a cafeteria that was opened for us hungry children... the word 'Hurray' has already deeply penetrated our childish souls and hearts, and our memories. All the children of the village of Krynychky, as children of the soviet people, were given sweet rice kasha and aromatic sweet coffee in the state cafeteria. And white, white bread. Each of us holds on tightly to our bread and happily gobbles it down to the very last crumb. Lenin is feeding us, saving us from a terrible death... And we have made our childish vow to always be dedicated to our Communist Party, government, Lenin and the people for caring."

If not for the rapacious Leninist policy of "militant communism" launched after the Bolsheviks took over Ukraine, it would have been far easier to overcome the problems of the drought that year. And the number of victims would have been immensely reduced. But where could a 10 year-old in the Soviet Union have found out about this?

Access to information made a big difference, especially in families. If the parents were aware of the real reasons for the famine and told their children about this, warning them not to say anything about this outside the home,

The free generation. The key role on the Maidan was played by people from the generation that is the most distant from genocide

that child never developed any love for the Leader and the Communist Party. If the parents themselves believed in the innocence of their Leader or were terrified of persecution if their child were to babble their seditious ideas to someone... those children grew up isolated from information and saw the genocidal event through the eyes of the perpetrator.

A classic example is the ideological paradigms of communist historian Valeriy Soldatenko, who ran the Institute of National Memory under Viktor Yanukovych. In 1933, Soldatenko's mother was eight years old, as he told one interviewer. She lived with her parents in Vinnytsia. Her mother was the first to starve to death. Infected with dystrophy, thefather took his exhausted child to Donbas, where he had heard people were living better. Having fulfilled his last wish, he fell dead at the Kramatorsk station. His daughter, who could no longer stand on her own feet, was taken to an orphanage, where she survived. She survived thanks to the care of the same government that had destroyed her parents. The orphaned girl responded with gratitude towards the new regime.

"My mother always remembered 1933 with enormous grief, with unremitting pain, but never with anger, hatred—no matter how abstracted—to those responsible for her hard fate," the historian explained. "Among the lessons of humaneness that I learned throughout my life, those my mother taught me were not only chronologically first, but they were the most fundamental and the most definitive."

And so, we can see how a distorted historical memory and historical trauma is transmitted on a day-to-day basis from one generation to another.

THE SURVIVOR'S OFFSPRING: LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

Some consider the Khrushchev "thaw" of the 1960s and the 1970s under Leonid Brezhnev, when people continued to be arrested and imprisoned, but quietly, and there were no mass murders, as the years of a gradual humanization of the soviet totalitarian machine and a transition to democracy. And "if not for Gorbachev with his *perestroika*," the USSR would never have collapsed but would have slowly evolved into a civilized country with real rule of law and the cult of the free individual. They somehow assume that the "lull" of the sixties and seventies was the result of some form of harmonization in society, the resolution of social conflicts and flowering culture.

The truth about the unhealthy state of a society traumatized by the Holodomor and endless repressions could be seen in the widespread theft at state companies, starting with office supplies, a gram or two here and there of spirits intended to wipe down equipment, a packet of sugar or a piece of kovbasa, and ending with dump trucks full of grain, bricks, metal and so on. Nearly everyone felt the obligation to pilfer anything they could from the state, because "everything's collective, which means everything's mine." The logical extension of this phenomenon some researchers see in the corruption of the 1990s. This is the consequence of the trauma of de-kulakization and requisitioning of property that went on in the thirties, when people felt robbed and subconsciously wanted to venge themselves on the perpetrator—the state.

Among the sources of this day-to-day and administrative kleptomania was the experience of the Holodomor. In those terrible years, people's lives and the lives ›

of their children and nearest and dearest depended on the ability to cleverly hide food from the "red broom"—which is how the communist "requisitors" were called—, to snatch a corn cob from the kolhosp warehouse, or to simply take bread away from an innocent bystander who had earned it with honest work. These are survival habits that are deeply engraved in the subconscious and never vanish without a trace.

The other side of this problem was the fear among party elites of losing access to those who distributed specialized goods, to hospitals, sanatoria and other perks. *What if there was another Holodomor? I must remain in the Party at all costs, God bless it, and I'll just keep quiet about my native tongue and if something doesn't suit me, I'll also hold my tongue, but I'll be safe...*

In the seventies and eighties, domestic researchers recorded an epidemic of alcoholism, drug addiction and suicides such as had never been seen in traditional Ukrainian society. In fact, suicide statistics only became available to researchers in the 1980s, when it turned out that the suicide rate in the USSR was 29.7 per 100,000. The highest rate of suicide and alcoholism was observed in Eastern Ukraine, where the experiment of making the Soviet Man made further inroads than in the country's western region.

How does the Ukrainian individual, such as a country dweller of the pre-soviet era differ from the soviet person? For one thing, in the ability to be master of your own life and faith in the effectiveness of your own actions. One witness of the Holodomor, Pavlo Mashovets from Kyiv describes how, with only a rake and a shovel at hand, his grandfather established a massive farmstead that was later destroyed by the Bolsheviks. The scale of the artificial famine killed people's faith that they could change things with their own actions. "The thought that I can't do anything, that millions of people are dying of hunger, and that this is a natural disaster drove me to complete despair," psychologist Liubov Nailionova quotes a Holodomor witness of those years as saying.

A typical situation in 1933 was a father watching his children die before his own eyes and he cannot do anything to stop it. How can he respect himself after this? "Learned helplessness" is how we describe the behavior of a person who, as the result of traumatic changes to their worldview, stops seeing any real prospects for successful actions and self-realization. Learned helplessness leads to corruption because the individual *a priori* feels unable to resist force. Learned helplessness also leads to unemployment and abuse on the part of management, because even when they are highly qualified, workers with a victim mentality don't believe that they will be able to find a new job on their own. Last but not least, learned helplessness leads to despair, alcoholism, drug addiction, and suicide...

THE GENERATION 3 MISSION

The fall of 2013 was very different. It was December. I had just left a presentation of my book, "Beyond Ourselves: The socio-psychological impact of the Holodomor and the Stalin terrors" and was walking along Khreshchatyk when I found myself walking through a crowd of people with blue and yellow ribbons and ribbons with the European Union stars. I had just told my audience, referring to professional studies, that the trauma of genocide takes three or four generations to gradually disappear and I was trying to believe this myself. Filled still with the echoes of my conversations with other professionals, I didn't even realize at that moment, that the people around me were doing what I had just been talking about in future tense...

In mid-March 2014, I ran a survey among demonstrators on the squares in Dnipropetrovsk* about whether people thought the events in Euromaidan had affected Ukrainians.[2] Most of the respondents mentioned a feeling of pride that they were Ukrainians, that collective self-worth was growing, that the once-disconnected Ukrainian society was now consolidating, that people were overcoming their fear of taking action, the fear of their own government and were awakening a desire to control it, and that attitudes towards Russia among people who once blindly supported their neighbor were changing.

Of course, this was no reason for the passing-the-buck kind of optimism that dominated after the Orange Revolution in 2004. Economic reforms are still far too slow. The ineptness of the current government is being felt in the wallets of ordinary Ukrainians and some snails have decided to hide their identities under their shells. But that's life. Two steps forward, one step back, three steps forward... The main thing is that, after the Euromaidan and now with the war with Russia, the ranks of conscious, active Ukrainians have grown. And most of them are indeed the third or fourth post-genocide generation.

Having gone through the Euromaidan—and here it's not just those who were directly involved in the armed confrontations, but also those who lived through the worst moments online, felt the pain and helped out—, these young people have overcome the grip of learned helplessness, they have vanquished ancestral fears, stopped being afraid to be who they are, they have demonstrated their abilities, felt themselves masters of their own fate, and recognized the joy of action and interaction, and of a just war and victory...

And now they have a mission. To make sure that justice is part of their lives. To learn to be successful and happy here and now, in their own, not someone else's future, lives. And to pass on the life story of a warrior-winner to their children. Only then will the curse of genocide have been properly overcome. And Ukraine's past will let go of Ukrainians.

*** The tiny pinpricks of hatred**

Interethnic relations were very murky during the seventies. The consequences of the russification policies of that decade can be seen today. A woman aged just over 60 asked me something recently with a shrug of the shoulders: "Oh, I don't understand Ukrainian," she said. "I just arrived from Russia." As it turned out, though, she's been living in Ukraine for 40 years... What is this strange inability of "Russkies" to learn?

Another time, the trolleybus I'm riding on breaks down. I transfer to the next one and begin to look for my ticket because I have to show it to the new conductor. One of the pensioners sitting nearby half-jokingly tells the conductor, "Let the banderite pay double." She obviously expects the passengers to approve of her joke, but no one smiles. I wonder out loud, how it is that I'm a banderite. She responds: "What do you mean? My husband is from Vinnytsia, I recognize your dialect: gotta go, gotta work..." Now I'm quite surprised, because I never said anything like this and these turns of phrase are not my style of speech at all. But now I'm in for a real shock because the other passengers in the trolleybus rise to my defense. "Why did you marry him if you don't like banderites," another pensioner asks her. "Heck, we're all banderites here in Dnipro," a stocky, silver-haired man picks up the thread. This was in the spring of 2015, after Euromaidan.

[2] Ukrainians also rallied on the streets of Dnipropetrovsk and on March 2, there were at least 15,000 residents outside the Dnipropetrovsk State Administration to protest the occupation of Crimea.

Shaking the Stereotypes

Alla Lazareva, Paris

"I am disappointed," a colleague called me right after the screening. "But I imagine the rage of the latent Stalinists and the overt Russophiles. So, I don't exactly forgive to the film directors their gross errors in respect of Ukraine, but I accept as given the fact that the French-speaking historiography is still largely Moscow-centered."

This perception of the trilogy filmed by the couple of Paris-based producers, Isabelle Clarke and Daniel Costelle, is shared by many Ukrainians in France. Speaking about Stalin in a language of rare documentary evidences, the film touches only briefly upon the Ukrainian theme: the famine, the UPA and the Second World War on the Ukrainian territory are mentioned several times in various episodes. But in which way? "Ukrainians," the narrator tells us, "were mostly anti-Semites. This goes especially for the soldiers of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, the UPA. However, Stalin and Khrushchev concealed Ukrainian anti-Semitism from the world... After the war, Khrushchev, himself a Ukrainian, resettled Ukrainians in Jewish homes vacated after the Holocaust...".

Not quite so, would be the objection of anyone at least slightly familiar with the history of UPA, who knows that it was formed in October 1942, when the majority of the Jewish population of Ukraine had already been either evacuated, or executed by the Nazis, or sent to concentration camps. The persecution of the Jews occurred mostly in 1941. However, the negative stereotypes about the Ukrainian insurgents keep wandering from one piece of journalism to another, year after year... Nikita Khrushchev, whose Ukrainian descent is not confirmed, was not excessively concerned about Ukrainians. And there is no doubt that Stalin did not bother about the damage to Ukrainian collective reputation whatsoever. These are either mistakes or biases.

But on the whole, the film is not about Ukraine. It is about Stalin's personality, his entourage, his goals and methods, and his instigators and followers. It is about the atrocities of the repressions and the scale of Stalin's cult of personality. It is about Lenin, who is presented as a successful political manipulator. It is about Trotsky, a cold-blooded "armchair" murderer. The audiences with the extreme left-wing views, judging from the reviews placed in Libération and Mediapart, have responded to the trilogy *The Obsessed — The Red Man — The Lord of the World* rather nervously. This proves that the film, first of all, is rather well-timed, and secondly, is clearly insufficient to finally delete all Lenin Streets from the maps of the French cities.

"Stalin was a giant and, as often is the case in history, a villain of a gigantic scale... Of course, he was the greatest murderer of all times and nations. Still, we owe much to Stalin. For instance, the victory over Hitler," Libération wrote. "Our Left does not want to admit that Stalin was first and foremost the disciple of Lenin, and Lenin, in turn, only creatively interpreted the Marxist concept of the abolition of private property," says Michel, a history professor in a Paris college. "In its time, France somehow managed to condemn Stalin's personality. However, it is still reluctant to recognize the criminal nature of the Marxist-Leninist ideology as such. Using the language of documentary visuals, this film prompts the conclusion that totalitarianism had its origins not only in the nature of Bolshevism, but also of Marxism. Unfortunately, Lenin's activities are only shown in bits and pieces. However, both he and Trotsky are presented as cynical schemers and murderers, and the Russian October Revolution as nothing more than a coup d'état with tragic consequences."

The Stalin trilogy is the fourth grand project by Clarke and Costelle. The first two were dedicated to the First and Second World Wars, and the third one to Hitler. "The fact that Stalin logically follows Hitler is a landmark moment because, in essence, this puts both totalitarian leaders on a par," says sociologist Emmanuel Magny. "For the French, this would have meant sedition only yesterday." Emmanuel told how his 80-year-old relation, a former metro driver and a convinced communist, retold him on the phone an episode from the *Apocalypse* where someone called Vasiliy Nikolayev is put to jail, tortured and murdered, his only fault being that in 1936, at the congress of Soviets in Moscow, he was the first to stop clapping hands after Stalin's address. "I did not know this, I did not know!" the old communist swore, horror-stricken with what he had seen.

THE STALIN TRILOGY IS THE FOURTH GRAND PROJECT BY CLARKE AND COSTELLE. THE FIRST TWO WERE DEDICATED TO THE FIRST AND SECOND WORLD WARS, AND THE THIRD ONE TO HITLER

"Why did so many honest intellectuals let themselves be enchanted with communism? Why, despite the sharp criticism since the first days of the emergence of the Soviet Union, so many people believed in communism as a chance for a better world?" Libération asks rhetorical questions and finds no answers. The film *Apocalypse: Stalin* also has too many missing dots and too many commas. As for Ukraine, it generally leaves only question marks. The series is only the beginning of the very important work to which France has never got around for real to this very day.

November 9-11, 7 p.m.

Ukrainian Art Photo-2015

M17 Contemporary Art Center
(102-104, vul. Antonovycha, Kyiv)

This year's exhibition of Ukrainian art photography presents the works by ten authors with different styles and philosophies united by the creative desire to show life through the lens of the camera. About 120 color photographs create a kaleidoscope of unforgettable impressions. Analog and digital photographs with both staged frames and spontaneously caught moments will give delight to the most demanding viewers. It is not by chance that the global art community has already noticed and acknowledged the talents of Ukrainian camera artists.

November 10, 7 p.m.

New Music Festival

Plivka, Oleksandr Dovzhenko Center
(1, vul. Velyka Vasylkivska, Kyiv)

The third day of the music festival will give fans a chance to hear one of the most famous works of American academic avant-garde, "Music for 18 Musicians." Composed by Steve Reich back in 1974-76, this work has changed the development of Western music. It is based on a cycle of eleven chords that sound together in the first part and alternate thereafter to merge again into a single sound at the finale of the work. The Ukrainian premiere will be presented by the Kyiv orchestra Armonia Ludus under the baton of Mikheil Menabde.

November 12, 7 p.m.

Best Shorts

Kyiv Cinema
(19, vul. Velyka Vasylkivska, Kyiv)

Best shorts, winners of the New Vision International Short Film Festival over the past five years, are coming to Kyiv shortly. Moviegoers will have a chance to see a 10-minute animation from Spain, plunge into the *Bird Flight* melodrama and visit a fantasy world called *Moritz and the Woodwose*. Besides, the guests of the festival will see a dark comedy from France, two experimental films, and two animations. All films will be screened in the original language with Ukrainian subtitles.

November 12, 7 p.m.

100 violins

Ukraina National Palace of Arts
(103, vul. Velyka Vasylkivska, Kyiv)

A true gift for the lovers of classical music: the world's largest Gypsy Symphony Orchestra performing at the stage of the National Palace of Arts. The virtuoso performance and the interesting repertoire made this Budapest orchestra famous all over the world. The band was created in 1985 to commemorate violinist Sándor Járóka. The musicians decided to play together, and their improvisation was so successful that it gave the impetus to the creation of the Gypsy Symphony Orchestra. The Gypsy Orchestra plays without scores and has no conductor in the conventional sense of the word.

November 15, 8 p.m.

MGZAVREBI

KINO Event Hall
(2, Chornovil Ave., Lviv)

The famous Georgian group will visit the glorious city of Lviv as part of its grand Ukrainian tour. Having conquered the hearts in their native Georgia back in 2006, the musicians keep winning the love of fans around the world. The name of the band translates from Georgian as "passengers" or "travelers." True to their name, these Georgian musicians have visited almost every country of the world with their gigs. In Ukraine, the band will also perform in a number of cities, including Poltava, Odesa, Zaporizhia, Dnipropetrovsk, Kyiv, and Kharkiv.

Starting November 26 –

New British Cinema 2015

Kyiv Cinema
(19, vul. Velyka Vasylkivska, Kyiv)

Traditionally, the festival presents to the audiences a series of premieres, special projects and press conferences dedicated to the best British films. This year, the event celebrates a small anniversary. The fifteenth festival will present five films: *45 Years*, a melodrama directed by Andrew Haigh, *Set Fire to the Stars*, a semi-biographical drama directed by Andy Goddard, *The Lady in the Van*, a comedy by Nicholas Hytner about a picturesque London babushka, *The Lobster*, and *Suffragette*.


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