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# THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

Published by the Ukrainian National Association Inc., a fraternal non-profit association

Vol. XCII

No. 19

THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

SUNDAY, MAY 12, 2024

\$2.00

## *Ukraine says it thwarted Russian plan to kill Zelenskyy, top officials*

As Moscow continues to pound Ukraine’s energy infrastructure



Office of the President of Ukraine

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy meets with officers of the Security Service of Ukraine in March.

RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service

KYIV – The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) said it “thwarted” an assassination attempt against President Volodymyr Zelenskyy by a network of five Ukrainian agents linked to Russia’s Federal Security Service (FSB), the successor agency to the Soviet-era KGB.

Kyiv said on May 7 that the alleged agents, members of Ukraine’s state guard service, had also targeted SBU chief Vasyl Malyuk, military intelligence chief Kyrylo Budanov, and other high-ranking Ukrainian officials.

The developments come on the heels of

an announcement on May 4 by Russia’s Internal Affairs Ministry that it had opened a “criminal investigation” against Mr. Zelenskyy, ex-President Petro Poroshenko, and other Ukrainian government officials and placed them on its wanted list.

Messrs. Poroshenko and Zelenskyy, who has led his country through Russia’s full-scale invasion that began in February 2022, joined a long list of foreign officials placed under various Russian criminal warrants, including many others from Ukraine and leaders from Central and Eastern Europe.

(Continued on page 15)

## **Moscow destroys 50 percent of Ukraine’s energy infrastructure**

As Ukrainian attacks force Russia to import gasoline



Courtesy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

A Ukrainian soldier fires a grenade launcher somewhere near the frontline on May 9.

by Mark Raczkiewycz

CHICAGO – Russia’s largest oil company, state-owned Rosneft, started importing gasoline in March from neighboring Belarus amid ongoing Ukrainian drone attacks on oil refineries and other petroleum facilities.

Since October, at least 20 such oil facilities have been struck, including three times this week, a tally by a correspondent of The Ukrainian Weekly found.

Oil and gas are Russia’s main source of revenue and are used to pay for the Kremlin’s invasion of Ukraine. They also

provide crucial fuel for Russia’s armored vehicles and trucks.

“In April, the cost of gasoline hit a six-month high, up more than 20 percent from the start of the year,” Foreign Affairs magazine wrote this week. “Russia imported 3,000 tons of fuel from Belarus in the first half of March – up from zero in January – and the Kremlin has been forced to ask Kazakhstan to ready 100,000 tons of gasoline for supply in case of shortages.”

The analysts wrote that “Kyiv must win where possible, and the campaign to destroy Russian oil refining facilities brings benefits to Ukraine with limited risk.”

Kyiv has justified such strikes by arguing that sanctions on Russia, which were imposed when the invasion in 2014 began, have not been effective. Since that point, Russia has occupied about 18 percent of sovereign Ukrainian territory.

Three suspected Ukrainian strikes on Russian oil and gas facilities occurred this week. They include an oil depot in the occupied Luhansk region that was struck on May 7, based on satellite imagery provided by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

A railway fuel depot was struck overnight the following day in Yurovka in Krasnodar Krai.

Most recently, a drone believed to be controlled by Ukrainian forces was seen on reliable open-source intelligence sources to have struck an oil refinery in the Bashkortostan region, located some 870 miles from the nearest Ukrainian border.

Attacks on Russian territory using British weapons are permissible, said British Foreign Affairs Minister David

(Continued on page 15)

## **Deceased soldier’s petition sparks action as Ukraine implements measures to curb online gambling**

More than 2,500 illegal gambling sites blocked

by Roman Tymotsko

LVIV – Ukraine has blocked over 2,500 gambling websites, with the Prosecutor General’s Office investigating over 450 criminal offenses related to illegal gambling as of April.

The move comes after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy issued a decree on April 20 to counter the impacts of online gambling.

The issue gained significant traction in late March when a petition created by a Ukrainian soldier garnered enough signatures for consideration on the president’s website.

“Due to the recommendations sent by law enforcement officers to block illegal resources, more than 2,500 websites that provided gambling activities and hosted online casino resources without a license have been blocked,” the Prosecutor General’s Office said in a statement.

“Twenty-one people have been notified of suspicion. Indictments against 72 people were sent to the court, including 7 indictments against 68 members of criminal groups,” the Prosecutor General’s office said.

That office has opened proceedings against several major companies suspected of involvement in organizing and oper-

ating illegal online casinos. It is also pursuing criminal cases related to the laundering of funds from illegal online gambling, totaling 4.8 billion hryvnia (nearly \$120 million).

Additionally, a pre-trial investigation has been opened against a sanctioned entity alleged to have organized and conducted illegal betting activities using the resources of an international betting company under the control of Russian entities and citizens, the Prosecutor General’s office said.

Mr. Zelenskyy issued a decree on April (Continued on page 7)

## NEWS ANALYSIS

## Russian businesses maintain loyalty to Kremlin despite war-related losses

by Ksenia Kirillova  
Eurasia Daily Monitor

The beginning of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine was a serious blow to the Russian business sector. It did not, however, lead to a break in the private sector's relations with the Kremlin. Associate researcher Andrey Yakovlev at the Business Center of Harvard University offers several reasons for such behavior. First, in his words, business representatives are no different than the rest of Russian society, and therefore are affected by propaganda and feel the psychological need to justify the war to preserve their worldview. Besides this, the Russian business community has long been accustomed to depending on the government, which was significantly deepened during the COVID-19 pandemic. The basic motivation of entrepreneurs in Russia has been to save businesses from sanctions that Russian businessmen consider unfair. Against this background, the actions of the West were viewed as malicious and contributed to consolidation around the

Kremlin (Istories.media, April 22).

Analysts note that the vacuum left behind after the withdrawal of Western enterprises and growing consumer demand have led to increased profits for small and medium-sized businesses in Russia since the beginning of the war. In 2023, the total value of sales of small and medium-sized companies grew in nominal terms by almost 20 percent, or by more than 11 percent in real terms. According to economists, sanctions have opened new opportunities for business growth through participation in the restructuring of supply chains and the replacement of companies that have left the Russian market. Another factor was the growth of domestic demand and, in particular, the rising incidence of Russians choosing to vacation domestically. Due to restrictions caused by the war in Ukraine, a significant portion of funds that Russians would previously spend abroad have been used within Russia (Re-Russia, April 25).

The results of a survey of entrepreneurs

(Continued on page 6)

## Russia builds alternative to SWIFT as part of digital sovereignty push

by Luke Rodeheffer  
Eurasia Daily Monitor

Elvira Nabiullina, the director of the Central Bank of Russia, announced in early April that nearly 100 percent of all domestic financial operations are now being conducted using the System for Transfer of Financial Messages (Systema Peredachi Finansoviykh Soobshchenii, SPFS). The national bank created the system as an alternative to the commonly used Western financial messaging network SWIFT (IXBT, April 8). SPFS was first developed in 2014 as a reaction to Western financial institutions' effort to limit Russia's ability to participate in international financial transactions in reaction to Russia's annexation of Crimea and occupation of eastern Ukraine.

The announcement demonstrates that Russian financial institutions have successfully fulfilled the March 2023 directives from the Central Bank that required them to transition to only using domestic services and technologies to conduct transactions (Vedomosti, March 20, 2023). The Russian Central Bank announced in January that 557 financial institutions and firms in 20 countries had connected successfully to SPFS (Logirus, January 18).

This alternative payment ecosystem includes payment cards for regular users. The Russian Central Bank issued a card under the name "Mir" in 2015 that is now used in 50 percent of payment card transactions in Russia, filling in the role previously served by Western electronic payment systems that exited the Russian market in 2022. The card is now fully accepted in Venezuela, Cuba, Belarus, the breakaway republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and at some banks in other former Soviet republics and Vietnam. Several countries in the Middle East and Africa have expressed interest in joining the payment system, despite U.S. sanctions targeting the issuing authority (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, December 13, 2022, January 11, February 12; Vedomosti, February 26).

Increasing trade with Iran that began

after the invasion of Ukraine has led to meetings between the Central Banks of Iran and Russia and plans to combine the SPFS and its Iranian analog, SEPAM (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, December 13, 2022, January 11; Rossiiskaya Gazeta, January 19, 2023). Iran claims that the connection between the two countries is functional, allowing the central banks to perform direct transactions with each other in their national currencies (Life.ru, January 8). Iran was cut off from the SWIFT system as part of targeted sanctions in 2012 and again in 2018 due to Tehran's continuing pursuit of a nuclear program. Turkey is also pursuing similar agreements with SPFS to conduct financial operations with Russia in light of pressure from the United States and Europe to comply with sanctions (Izvestiya, February 12).

The proposal fits into a broader desire for greater independence from Western-dominated institutions that have been espoused at BRICS summits. This includes a shift away from the use of the U.S. dollar as a transaction currency and the development of alternative internet infrastructure. This project of financial sovereignty currently has a greater chance of succeeding than the construction of an alternative "BRICSNET" transnational internet.

These efforts are also part of a broader goal of achieving technological sovereignty and control over the domestic information space on behalf of the Russian Federation, a shift that has accelerated over the past two years. This includes the testing of a sovereign RUNET, or domestic internet, the development of domestic SSL certificates, the banning of virtual private network (VPN) technologies, and the end of using foreign messaging systems, such as Viber, Microsoft Teams, Skype and Snapchat, for communications with government services (Vedomosti, March 2, 2023; see Eurasia Daily Monitor, February 15).

The development of alternative payment systems also reflects anxieties from

(Continued on page 15)

## NEWSBRIEFS

### Kremlin denied it planned to kill Zelenskyy

Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman declined to comment on May 8 on an assertion by Ukrainian intelligence officials a day earlier that they had "thwarted" an assassination plot against Ukraine's president involving Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB). Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was quoted by Reuters as saying only that the Ukrainian accusation was likely to be inaccurate information. Ukraine's SBU security service alleged on May 7 that five Ukrainian agents linked to the FSB had targeted Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, SBU chief Vasyl Malyuk, military intelligence chief Kyrylo Budanov, and other high-ranking Ukrainian officials. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service)

### Bill to allow prisoners to serve in military

The Ukrainian parliament has approved a bill that would allow some categories of prisoners to serve in the country's armed forces as it defends itself against a full-scale Russian invasion. Ukraine's parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, adopted the law after its second reading on May 8 with 279 members of the 450-member parliament voting in favor. The bill will require the signature of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who has supported the idea. The Russian military has also recruited in the country's prisons for potential soldiers to serve in Ukraine in exchange for a release from their sentences. Reports have surfaced in Russia of returning former prisoners terrorizing residents of regional cities and committing major crimes. Olena Shulyak, the head of Mr. Zelenskyy's party, said in a Facebook post that the "draft law opens the possibility for certain categories of prisoners who expressed a desire to defend their country to join the defense forces." She said service would be voluntary and some prisoners would be excluded, including those convicted of certain offenses, such as crimes against the foundations of Ukraine's national security, the intentional murder of two or more people, sexual violence, attempts to kill law enforcement officers and particularly serious corruption violations. Ms. Shulyak said it will also not apply to convicts who previously held a position of responsibility regardless of the crime they committed (e.g. ministers, deputies,

their deputies and assistants, etc.). More than two years after Russia's full-scale invasion, Ukraine has struggled to maintain its defenses in the face of shortages of manpower and ammunition. Kyiv has pleaded with Western partners for additional deliveries of weapons but has not requested the deployment of foreign troops. In April, the Verkhovna Rada passed a law on military mobilization that looks to boost the number of its troops. The law expands the powers of Ukrainian authorities to issue draft notices, including through an electronic system, a change that is expected to help limit evasion. A provision on the demobilization of those currently serving in the armed forces was scrapped from the law – a move likely to be met with anger by Ukrainian troops and their families. A provision also required all men between the ages of 18 and 60 to update their draft data with military conscription centers across the country. An unknown number of Ukrainian men fled the country after Russia launched its ongoing unprovoked invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, despite Kyiv's move to ban men of conscription age from leaving the country. In April, Ukraine also lowered the draft mobilization age from 27 to 25, with 60 being the maximum age. Russia also imposed strict measures aimed at preventing avoidance of military service after thousands of young men fled the country in the early days following the invasion. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service)

### Deal to use proceeds from Russian assets

Ambassadors representing European Union states have reached a deal "in principle" to use the proceeds of Russian assets frozen in the European Union to finance military aid for Ukraine, the Belgian government said on May 8. "E.U. ambassadors agreed in principle on measures concerning extraordinary revenues stemming from Russia's immobilized assets," it wrote on X, formerly Twitter. "The money will serve to support Ukraine's recovery and military defense in the context of the Russian aggression." E.U. Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said that "there could be no stronger symbol and no greater use for that money than to make Ukraine and all of Europe a safer place to live." (RFE/RL)

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## THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

FOUNDED 1933

An English-language newspaper published by the Ukrainian National Association Inc., a non-profit association, at 2200 Route 10, P.O. Box 280, Parsippany, NJ 07054.

Yearly subscription rate: \$90; for UNA members — \$80.

Periodicals postage paid at Caldwell, NJ 07006 and additional mailing offices.  
(ISSN — 0273-9348)

The Weekly:  
Tel: (973) 292-9800; Fax: (973) 644-9510

Postmaster, send address changes to:  
The Ukrainian Weekly  
2200 Route 10  
P.O. Box 280  
Parsippany, NJ 07054

The Ukrainian Weekly Archive: [www.ukrweekly.com](http://www.ukrweekly.com)

The Ukrainian Weekly, May 12, 2024, No. 19, Vol. XCII  
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## ADMINISTRATION OF THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY AND SVOBODA

Walter Honcharyk, administrator  
and advertising manager

Subscription Department

(973) 292-9800, ext. 3040  
fax: (973) 644-9510  
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# Ukraine's Eurovision team makes finals, pledges to rebuild war-damaged school

by Yulia Ratsybarska, Yulia Kyzyk and RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service

DNIPRO, Ukraine and MALMO, Sweden – In their quest to bring Ukraine its second Eurovision crown in three years, singer-songwriters Alyona Alyona and Jerry Heil are performing a song about the strength of women. They're also on a mission that puts that message to the test: raising the equivalent of over \$250,000 to restore a war-damaged school in a southern region ravaged by Russian attacks.

"We want to rebuild it because we truly believe that by rebuilding the past you can build the future for Ukrainian children [who] will be rebuilding the country after this" war, Ms. Heil said at a press conference for the 10 contenders who made it through to the finals in the first of two semifinal rounds.

The Eurovision Song Contest, a televised extravaganza with an annual audience of over 150 million, is being held in Malmo this year after Sweden won in 2023. The final is on May 11.

More than 3,500 educational institutions in Ukraine have been damaged and nearly 400 destroyed since Russia launched its full-scale invasion in February 2022, according to official figures.

Blasted by Russian rockets and shells, the school the duo's fundraising will benefit, a K-12 institution of some 250 students in the village of Velyka Kostromka, in the Dnipropetrovsk region, has been closed for classes since March 2022.

Ukraine's government-run fundraising initiative, United24, set the goal of raising 10 million hryvnia (\$253,000) to rebuild the Velyka Kostromka school, including 6 million hryvnia during Eurovision. Funds for the reconstruction project, estimated to cost 70 million hryvnia (\$1.8 million) in total, will go to the Ministry of Education.

As of April 29, Alyona Alyona and Jerry Heil had raised about 4 million hryvnia (\$101,000) for the Velyka Kostromka school. They hope to raise the rest by May 25, one month after they launched the charity collection, the singers told RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service.

For 32-year-old Alyona Alyona, one of Ukraine's top rappers, known for her punchy, self-confident lyrics about being true to yourself, there's a personal motivation for the fundraising.

Born Alyona Savranenko, she worked for four years as a village kindergarten principal and teacher in the region that surrounds Kyiv before a whimsical amateur video of her rapping – a song called Rybki, or Little Fishes – went viral in 2018, propelling her into the entertainment



Courtesy photo via RFE/RL  
Tetyana Mahda, 53, is a special-education teaching assistant who has worked at the Velyka Kostromka school for over 15 years.



RFE/RL Graphics

Ukrainian singers Jerry Heil (left) and Alyona Alyona are collecting funds for the restoration of the Velyka Kostromka school in the Dnipropetrovsk region (seen in the top right image) that was destroyed as a result of Russian attacks.

world.

In the wake of Russia's full-scale invasion, she began collaborating with Jerry Heil (pronounced "Hail"), 28, a Spotify and YouTube star and former Kyiv region music student who finished third at Eurovision last year. Her real name is Yana Shemayeva.

Performed in Ukrainian and English, the lyrics of their Eurovision entry Teresa and Maria, a reference to Mother Teresa and the Virgin Mary, emphasize the strength of women who persevere, unite and triumph over difficulties.

"No matter what, no matter what, the world is on her shoulders," the song proclaims.

In the final, the pair will be up against 19 other viewer-chosen contestants as well as six "pre-qualified" finalists from France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom, the countries whose broadcasters "make the biggest financial contribution" to Eurovision, which is organized by the European Broadcasting Union.

Ukraine is the only three-time Eurovision winner in the 21st century, with victories in 2004, 2016 and 2022.

Alyona Alyona said that the pair chose to support a school in this year's contest because most Europeans "cannot imagine what it is like ... to scatter children from one class around the world, to take away their childhood."

Talking with Velyka Kostromka teachers showed how the destruction of the school, where some had worked for decades, "really hit them, their psyche," and "destroyed their lives," said Jerry Heil.

Still, the teachers at the school have persevered.

Attacks on Velyka Kostromka, a village of about 2,785 people, began in early March 2022, as Russian forces advanced and occupied part of the Kherson region a few miles away.

Over the next few months, some of the school's 250 students evacuated, but most of the staff stayed. Classes shifted online.

Yet the danger remained. On July 8, 2022, a Russian tank began firing at the school and an adjacent garden, recollected Tetyana Mahda, 53, a special-education teaching assistant who has worked there for over 15 years.

Along with some cleaning staff, Ms. Mahda rushed to take shelter in the school basement. With the basement's walls and ceiling shaking, the women counted 16 explosions over the next hour and a half.

"When we came out, we saw that the garden, trees, everything was shattered, [electrical] wires were hanging," Ms. Mahda recounted. "And the building ... They hit the second floor. Two classrooms collapsed immediately. There was a hole.

But the building stood."

A rocket that hit about 100 meters from the school blew out almost all the classroom windows and damaged the cafeteria and a storage space. Another rocket later hit a small park on school grounds just 30 meters from the building, causing further damage.

Intermittent attacks by heavy artillery and rockets continued until mid-October 2022, when Russian forces moved away from the village during a major Ukrainian counteroffensive, said principal Olha Dashko. Their parting shot was a rocket on the night of October 10-11 that destroyed the school's left wing, connected to the gym.

Though teachers had "lived in hope all the time" that the school would be rebuilt

after technical experts deemed it feasible, Ms. Dashko doubts that the funds would be raised without the promotional fundraising from Alyona Alyona and Jerry Heil's Eurovision appearance.

"[W]e never thought that we would be at the center of attention not only of all of Ukraine, but also of the world; that there would be such publicity," Ms. Dashko said.

The 200 largest donors will receive miniature copies of the giant key builders gave the school to mark its opening in 1977.

In celebrating their advance to the Eurovision final, both performers waved duplicates of that key to symbolize the school's rebuilding. They wore outfits accessorized by keys to Eurovision's May 5 opening ceremony.

Velyka Kostromka students drew 60 pictures about the school for the singers to take to Eurovision.

"We sincerely believe that the topic of reconstruction will be close to all countries" at Eurovision, Alyona Alyona said before the duo's semifinal performance. "Some of them are apolitical. But donating to rebuilding is such a good thing."

(Written and with additional reporting by Elizabeth Owen. Yulia Ratsybarska reported from Dnipro and Yulia Kyzyk from Malmo.)

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## Zaluzhniy officially becomes Ukraine's envoy to U.K.



Office of the President of Ukraine

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy (left) with Valery Zaluzhniy earlier this year.

RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy officially made Valeriy Zaluzhniy Kyiv's ambassador to the United Kingdom after the general was removed from his position as commander in chief of Ukraine's military earlier this year.

The removal of Mr. Zaluzhniy, 50, from his military post was part of Mr. Zelenskyy's announced "reboot" of Ukraine's government and military, his most consequential shake-up since Russia's February 2022 invasion.

According to a decree published on the

website of the Office of the President of Ukraine on May 9, Mr. Zaluzhniy is now officially the ambassador to the United Kingdom. A second decree from a day earlier dismissed him from military service on health grounds with the right to wear a military uniform.

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# U.S. weapons are coming to Ukraine. But Russian forces have the momentum.

by Mike Eckel and Todd Prince  
RFE/RL

At the end of April, Russian forces broke through Ukrainian lines in the village of Ocheretyne, building on momentum from the February capture of the industrial city of Avdiivka about 15 miles to the southeast. Ukrainian commanders quickly redeployed exhausted troops from another brigade that had been fighting in the area for more than a year.

About an hour's drive to the north, Russian troops, including elite paratrooper units, have slogged up to an important canal in Chasiv Yar, a height-of-land settlement that offers clearer lines for artillery fire targeting a critical railway supply line for Ukraine's forces.

Hundreds of miles to the southwest, meanwhile, Russian motorized rifle infantry pushed into part of Robotyne, a village that Ukrainian troops recaptured during last year's much-hyped counteroffensive that fell far short of its goals.

Ukraine's commander-in-chief didn't mince words.

"The situation at the front has worsened," Col. Gen. Oleksandr Syrskiy said in a post to Telegram on April 28. Russian forces, he said, were "actively attacking along the entire front line with tactical successes in some areas."

Beleaguered and outgunned, Ukrainian forces got a jolt of morale-boosting news when U.S. lawmakers finally pushed through a \$61 billion aid package dominated by weapons: anti-aircraft missiles; small-arms ammunition; 105 mm and 155 mm howitzer artillery; shells for high-precision HIMARS artillery systems, Bradley infantry fighting vehicles, and more. It came months after the last substantial deliveries were made.

But Ukraine's battlefield position is bleak.

Its forces are badly outnumbered. Despite the government finally passing a new mobilization law aimed at getting more men into the fight, it will be weeks, if not months, before new troops can be trained, equipped and able to make any substantive difference at the front.

And Russian commanders appear to have made a calculated decision to increase the tempo of operations, possibly aimed at high-profile victories to brag about before national Victory Day celebrations on May 9.

## Xi heads...

(Continued from page 4)

drones, semiconductors and other technology that Moscow in turn is using to produce weaponry for use in its war against Ukraine.

During a trip to Beijing in April, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said China was "overwhelmingly the No. 1 supplier" for Russia's military industry and that this support has had a "material effect" on the battlefield.

French officials have said that Mr. Macron intends to press the issue of Chinese dual-use goods when he meets with Mr. Xi. An E.U. official told RFE/RL that Mr. Macron plans to be "firmer" with Mr. Xi than in the past and the atmosphere is unlikely to be "super-friendly."

Chinese messaging around Ukraine is expected to be different when Mr. Xi travels to Belgrade and Budapest.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban has forged close relations with China and Russia while angering Brussels for refusing to join E.U. sanctions against Russia or

"In general, we are slowly losing territory," said Ivan Stupak, an analyst with the Ukrainian Institute for the Future, a Kyiv think tank, adding that Russia is focusing its rolling advance on a narrow sector of the battlefield in the Donetsk region.

"Russia's General Staff has deployed more manpower and equipment to Donetsk from other directions," he told RFE/RL. "So now Russia is slowly pushing back our defense lines."

"We have reached the point where the situation on the front line is the worst since March 2022," said Konrad Muzyka, a Polish-based defense analyst who travels regularly to Ukraine.

"The Russians' numerical superiority continues to grow, and so does the number of attacks," he said in a post to X, formerly Twitter. "Ukraine has not endured its darkest hour. It is yet to begin."

"Ukraine has no good options, even with the latest aid package. Many military analysts have already come to that conclusion privately but are unwilling to voice that sentiment," wrote Eugene Rumer, a former top Russia analyst at the U.S. National Intelligence Council.

### Grim outlook

Initiative on the battlefield has shifted several times since Russia launched its mass invasion in February 2022. Ukraine thwarted Russia's advance on the capital, Kyiv, but the invading forces seized swaths of territory in the southern Kherson and Zaporizhia regions and in the Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv regions in the east.

Ukraine surprised Russian troops with two localized counteroffensives in the fall of 2022, recapturing substantial amounts of land in the Kharkiv and Kherson regions.

Ukraine then spent much of the following months prepping, training and equipping nine new armored brigades, with Western armor and assistance from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Another four also received Western weaponry, and in June 2023 Kyiv launched a three-pronged counteroffensive.

It faltered, however, thwarted by extensive Russian defensive lines.

Russia's forces, for their part, ground into higher gear, bolstered by prison inmate brigades and a major mobilization ordered by President Vladimir Putin. Russia's sprawling industrial infrastructure retooled to supply seemingly endless streams of artillery, ammunitions and vehicles.

allowing, like other North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries, arms shipments to Ukraine.

Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic also has strong ties with Beijing and Moscow and will welcome Mr. Xi on May 7, the 25th anniversary of the NATO bombing of China's Embassy in Belgrade. A large Chinese cultural center has been built at the former site of the embassy, and Mr. Xi is expected to visit a memorial there in honor of Chinese diplomats killed during the accidental strike.

"[Mr.] Xi will be underscoring that there are different interpretations within Europe regarding the war in Ukraine and the economic relationship with China," said Janka Oertel, director of the European Council on Foreign Affairs' Asia program. "This will dilute the tough signaling that is to be expected in Paris."

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In February, Ukrainian troops were forced to withdraw from Avdiivka, an industrial city that had given Ukraine a vantage point over the regional capital of Donetsk. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy removed the country's popular commander-in-chief, Gen. Valeriy Zaluzhnyi, after Mr. Zaluzhnyi gave a publicly pessimistic assessment of the war's trajectory.

The tides have since turned further against Ukraine, in part because the flow of U.S. and other Western weaponry slowed to a trickle amid political infighting in Washington. Russia has taken advantage of the dearth of anti-aircraft defenses, using "glide bombs" – heavy-explosive "dumb" bombs retrofitted with wings and satellite navigation – to devastating effect.

"A difficult situation awaits us in the near future. But it will not be catastrophic, let's be clear," Kyrylo Budanov, Ukraine's military intelligence chief, told the BBC. "There will be no Armageddon, as many are saying. ... But there will be a difficult period. Mid-May, early June."

But critics say the Zelenskyy government also was slow to prioritize building its defensive lines across the 745-mile front line as it became clear that Russia's tactical strength was growing. And the government took months to push through new legislation aimed at getting more men to the front.

The lack of fresh fighters was "the most pressing issue" for Ukraine, a problem that was "exacerbated by the lack of weapons and ammunition," said Rob Lee, a former U.S. Marine and senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute.

"The relative manpower situation is likely the most important factor that will determine the war's trajectory, particularly if Russia can sustain recruiting 20-30k [people] a month," he said in a post on X.

Western estimates put Russia's casualties – killed and wounded – as high as 450,000, though a top U.S. Army general last month gave a lower figure: 315,000.

Ukraine's casualties are sizable as well. Mr. Zelenskyy in February made his first

official acknowledgment of combat losses, saying 31,000 troops had been killed in the previous two years. That number is widely seen as a major undercount.

Ukraine's brigades are currently operating at just 40 percent of their original capacity, in terms of personnel and vehicles, according to Frontelligence Insight, a Ukrainian open-source research organization run by a Ukrainian reserve officer.

"The situation on the front line is expected to stabilize with the arrival of new ammunition, weaponry and freshly mobilized but trained recruits," the group said. "Nevertheless, stabilization is not anticipated immediately, as it will take time to arm, train and prepare new recruits."

### 'Putin is in no mood to give up'

Ukrainian and Western analysts say Russia has deployed around 25,000 troops, including several elite paratrooper and motorized rifle brigades, in its push to take Chasiv Yar. Taking it would allow Russian artillery to threaten the railway junction town of Kostyantynivka, to the south, and some of the supply lines Ukrainian units in the district rely on.

That in turn could put at risk the larger cities of Kramatorsk and Slovyansk, about 19 miles farther to the north, which still have some industrial factories, larger populations and are more heavily fortified.

Ukrainian military and open-source analysts say Russian forces briefly crossed the canal on Chasiv Yar's eastern side at the end of April but haven't been able to hold it.

Ukrainian analysts also say Russia is relying on the tactic used in the capture of Bakhmut last year: World War I-style infantry wave assaults, with units comprised of poorly trained former prison inmates trailed by more elite units.

Russian forces have the upper hand, said Mick Ryan, a retired Australian Army major general, and they "will be pushing hard to make the most of their opportunity before U.S. military aid arrives in the coming weeks."

(Continued on page 6)

## Ukraine opens new embassy in Botswana

### Embassy of Ukraine in Mozambique

GABORONE, Botswana – Ukraine announced it opened a new embassy in the Republic of Botswana, the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced on April 17.

The official opening ceremony of the Embassy of Ukraine took place in-country on April 16.

The embassy was opened by Ukraine's Special Representative for the Middle East and Africa Maksym Subkh and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to Botswana Liubov Abravitova. Botswana's Foreign Affairs Minister Lemogang Kwape presided over the inauguration ceremony.

Representatives of the government of Botswana, members of the business community and the diplomatic corps accredited in Gaborone, as well as the Ukrainian community and local media were present at the ceremony.

"I strongly believe that the establishment of the Ukrainian diplomatic mission in Gaborone will allow seamless and effective interaction between our countries and coordinate our stances on significant initiatives at the U.N. [United Nations] and other international institu-

tions," Mr. Subkh said.

In her speech at the opening ceremony, Ms. Abravitova stressed the need to tighten relations between Ukraine and Botswana, though she noted there are numerous spheres of ongoing and prospective cooperation between the two countries.

Ms. Abravitova stressed that, with the new embassy opening, cooperation between international institutions will become more fruitful, effective and profitable for both countries.

Mr. Kwape stressed that the opening of a Ukrainian diplomatic mission in Botswana will give a new impetus to developing bilateral relations between the two countries in all areas of mutual interest.

Mr. Kwape also received a personal letter from Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Minister Dmytro Kuleba and an invitation to join the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's peace formula.

With the opening of Ukraine's embassy in Botswana, Kyiv now has 16 diplomatic missions on the African continent. Before the opening of the new embassy, the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of South Africa was in charge of relations with Botswana.

## THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

### Ukraine's 2024 Eurovision finalists

While Ukraine and its people continue to fight for their survival amid Russia's ongoing barbaric full-scale war, the country finds hope and resilience in unexpected places. This year, as Ukraine competes in the Eurovision Song Contest, singer-songwriters Alyona Alyona and Jerry Heil are not only vying for musical glory but also championing a cause that transcends borders: the restoration of a war-damaged school in a southern region ravaged by Russian attacks.

Their quest to bring Ukraine its second Eurovision crown in three years is accompanied by a powerful message of strength and solidarity, embodied in their song about the resilience of women. But their mission extends beyond the stage, as they endeavor to raise over \$250,000 to rebuild the Velyka Kostromka school, which has been closed since March 2022 due to damage inflicted by Russian rockets and shells.

The significance of their fundraising efforts cannot be overstated. In a country where more than 3,500 educational institutions have been damaged and nearly 400 destroyed since Russia's invasion in 2022, the restoration of the Velyka Kostromka school represents a beacon of hope for the future. It is a symbol of resilience in the face of adversity and a testament to the indomitable spirit of the Ukrainian people.

The Eurovision Song Contest, with its annual audience of over 150 million viewers, provides a global platform for Alyona Alyona and Jerry Heil to amplify their message and mobilize support for their noble cause. As they take the stage in Malmö, Sweden, they carry with them the hopes and aspirations of a nation grappling with the devastating impact of war.

Their song, "Teresa and Maria," celebrates the strength and perseverance of women who unite and triumph over adversity. It is a tribute to the countless women who have borne the brunt of conflict and hardship, yet continue to stand tall and resilient in the face of adversity.

But beyond the music and the lyrics, Alyona Alyona and Jerry Heil's commitment to rebuilding the Velyka Kostromka school speaks volumes about their dedication to making a tangible difference in the lives of ordinary Ukrainians. Through their fundraising efforts, they are not only restoring a physical structure but also revitalizing a community and instilling hope for a brighter future throughout Ukraine.

Their personal connections to the cause further underscore the sincerity of their efforts. For Alyona Alyona, who once worked as a kindergarten principal in the region surrounding Kyiv, the fundraising initiative holds personal significance. It is a chance to give back to the community that nurtured her and a testament to the power of music to inspire positive change.

As Ukraine competes against 19 other contestants in the Eurovision final, Alyona Alyona and Jerry Heil's performance serves as a reminder of the resilience and determination of the Ukrainian people. It is a call to action for the international community to stand in solidarity with Ukraine and support its efforts to rebuild and recover from the ravages of war.

In celebrating their advance to the Eurovision final, Alyona Alyona and Jerry Heil wield symbolic keys to represent the school's rebuilding – a gesture that encapsulates the spirit of hope and renewal that defines their mission. As they take center stage, they carry with them the dreams and aspirations of a nation, reminding the world that even in the darkest of times, music has the power to heal, inspire and unite.

May  
15  
2022

### Turning the pages back...

Two years ago, on May 15, 2022, the Ukrainian folk-rap musical group Kalush Orchestra won the Eurovision song contest held in Turin, Italy. The group concluded their winning performance of "Stefania" with an appeal for aid for Ukrainian soldiers who had been stranded in the defense of Mariupol.

The winning song is an ode to a Ukrainian mother, the mother of the frontman for Kalush Orchestra, Oleh Psiuk, and the Ukrainian group mentioned the fighters at the Avzostal plant in Mariupol at the end of their performance. This was also the third time in Eurovision song contest history that a group from Ukraine won the contest.

The song contest rules prohibit contestants from making any political statements, but members of the group felt the situation deserved more international attention. Kalush Orchestra members said they were not afraid of being disqualified for the statement they made after their performance.

"Two hundred million people are watching the Eurovision song contest finals. I would blame myself much more if I didn't do that [call attention to the situation] than if I did and we were disqualified," said Mr. Psiuk. "The lives of Ukrainians are more important to us than a trophy or victory. It wouldn't be cool if we were disqualified, but Ukrainians would have supported our choice."

Contest organizers also saw the statement as humanitarian in nature and not political.

Notably, Kalush Orchestra was in fourth place following the vote of contest judges, but the popular vote by contest viewers pushed the Ukrainian band to first place, with 28 member countries giving Ukraine their maximum number of votes.

The band announced that their prize would be auctioned off to raise money to support the defense of Ukraine. Formed in 2019, the band is named after the town of Kalush in the Ivano-Frankivsk region of Ukraine, which is Mr. Psiuk's hometown.

Other wins for Ukraine since its debut in 2003 at Eurovision have included "Wild Dances" (2004, Ruslana), and "1944" (2016, Jamala). Ukraine also hosted Eurovision in 2005 and 2017, and was scheduled to host the contest in 2023. But because of the war, the contest took place in Liverpool, England.

Source: "Kalush Orchestra wins Eurovision song contest, calls for international community to help Ukraine," by Bohdan Sereda, *The Ukrainian Weekly*, May 22, 2022.

### Russian businesses...

(Continued from page 2)

conducted by the journal General Director show that, since the beginning of the war, general directors and business owners have been faced with a drop in revenue and demand, rising housing prices, problems with equipping products with equipment that was formerly imported, a shortage of personnel and working capital, etc. (Business.ru, May 23, 2023). An even more serious test for Russian business, however, may be the redistribution of property in favor of the security forces. This not only includes the "nationalization" of companies that previously belonged to Western owners, but also Russian enterprises.

In the summer of 2023, the Prosecutor General's Office of Russia filed about 20 lawsuits demanding that several companies be transferred to the state. In December, Russian President Vladimir Putin transferred the Russian-owned Rolf Group, the country's largest automotive dealer, under the temporary management of the Federal Property Management Agency. The Kremlin attributed this to "economic feasibility" and the presence of "various ownership schemes" for the company, which "required intervention." On March 28, the Prosecutor General's Office filed a claim with the Central District Court of Chelyabinsk to convert the shares of Russia's largest pasta manufacturer, Makfa JSC, into state income (RBC.ru, March 29). Simultaneously, companies associated with people close to Putin are collecting assets in the chemical industry utilizing the same nationalization mechanism (Forbes.ru, December 25). Putin utters assurances that there is no talk of revising the results of Russia's privatization drive in the 1990s yet. He also stated, however, that "the seizure of a business into state ownership is justified in cases where the actions or inactions of the owner harm the security of the state and national interests" (Meduza, April 25).

It has become easier for security officials to condemn businesses whose actions – or worse, lack thereof – may run counter to "government interests." "Patriotic" media outlets have long been outraged by the fact that the "super-rich do not help the front" and "care only about preserving their wealth." War correspondents and other "social activists" call for "coercive measures" to correct the situation and speed up nationalization (Svpressa.ru, January 25, 2023). Such calls are becoming amplified by the rising reach and number of pieces scrutinizing the behavior of Russia's elite. Once the sole province of the opposition, articles on this topic are now regularly published on radical patriotic platforms. For example, the far-right Tsargrad television channel voiced its outrage over the children of the Russian elite living in Dubai or

Bali, citing anti-corruption investigations by the Anti-Corruption Foundation (Tsargrad.tv, April 23).

Still, another risk for Russian businesses may be a new wave of mobilization. The government is actively trying to replenish its army with conscripts, forcing them to sign contracts, and to attract new volunteers, the number of which remains small. The outlet "Vazniye Istori," citing military experts, indicates that if the Russian Army continues to fight as it has in recent months, a mass mobilization will not be required. A mass mobilization could, however, happen should there be a major operation in a new direction, such as, for example, an attack on Kharkiv (Istories.media, April 22).

For the owners and employees of enterprises associated with the military-industrial complex, there is an added risk: the growing number of criminal cases for treason and the disclosure of state secrets. Over the past year, a total of 70 cases of "treason" and confidential cooperation with a foreign state were brought to trial, a record in post-Soviet Russia. Thirty-seven people have already been convicted. The accused are not only young people who wanted to join the Armed Forces of Ukraine, but also scientists completely loyal to the state. Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, for example, several employees of the Institute of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, as well as the head of the laboratory of quantum optical technologies of Novosibirsk State University, were accused of treason (Deutsche Welle, December 21).

Without exception, Russian enterprises have been unable to overcome the personnel shortage caused by the war, mobilization and emigration that followed, primarily of young people. For the second year in a row, the number of resumes posted on the largest Russian recruiting agencies' websites have been only a tenth of the number of vacancies posted (Re-Russia, April 12). As experts note, the very structure of the Russian market – "low unemployment benefits, low minimum wages and high redundancy costs" – makes it impossible to overcome this problem (Re-Russia, April 24).

This does not mean that businesses will revolt against the Kremlin if faced with worsening problems. Russian entrepreneurs will try to save at least part of their revenues, displaying maximum loyalty to the government while simultaneously being confined to Russia and unable to return to Western markets. However, discontent is brewing within Russian society, increasingly sharpening the contradictions between the "old" financial elite and the security forces (siloviki) who are displacing them.

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### U.S. weapons...

(Continued from page 5)

In Ocheretye, meanwhile, unconfirmed reports say the Russian breakthrough may have been due in part to a retreat, possibly unauthorized or premature, by the 115th Separate Mechanized Brigade. Another NATO-trained and -equipped unit that had been fighting for months in the region, the 47th Mechanized Brigade, was ordered back to the village's district, to stabilize defensive lines.

Military commanders are now reportedly investigating the unit's command, and Ukrainian forces have also had to pull back westward from three villages on Ocheretye's southern edges.

"The enemy has broken through and gained a foothold in part of" Ocheretye, Lt. Col. Nazar Voloshyn, a military spokesman, said in televised comments. "All measures are being taken to knock the enemy

out of there."

"Ukraine is waging a war against an enemy that shows no inclination to stop its aggression and negotiate in earnest," Mr. Rumer, who is now director of the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, wrote in his April 25 commentary.

"Having bet his entire presidency on this war, Putin is in no mood to give up. Ukraine's need for help, even with the adoption of a defensive strategy for the long run, is open-ended. Are Washington and Brussels ready for it?" Mr. Rumer asked.

(RFE/RL correspondent Mike Eckel reported from Prague; correspondent Todd Prince reported from Washington, D.C.)

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# Minsk confirms deployment of Russian tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus

by Alexander Taranov  
Eurasia Daily Monitor

The new military doctrine of Belarus, which includes a provision on Russian nuclear weapons, was adopted by the All-Belarusian People's Assembly (ABPA) during its recent session on April 24 and 25 in Minsk (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, May 2). The text, however, did not clarify the role and status of tactical nuclear weapons. The document only declared what many already knew in advance (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, March 12). According to the new doctrine, the deployment of Russian nuclear weapons on Belarusian territory is considered an essential component of deterrence for Minsk. It is also a forced reaction to the failure of Western guarantor countries to comply with the terms of the Memorandum on Security Assurances in connection with the accession of the Republic of Belarus to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, also known as the Budapest Memorandum (Pravo.by, April 25).

Last year, Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka confirmed that he was discussing the deployment of Russian strategic nuclear weapons in Belarus with President Vladimir Putin and even started to prepare old Soviet launching pads for Topol-M mobile ground-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (President of Belarus, March 31, 2023; see Eurasia Daily Monitor, April 4, 2023; T.me/modmilby, April 22, 2023). At the ABPA, Mr. Lukashenka and Belarusian Minister of Defense Viktor Khrenin confirmed the deployment of Russian tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus. Against the backdrop of Putin's nuclear saber-rattling during his inauguration speech, the presence of Russian nukes on Belarusian territory has elevated fears of their possible use in Ukraine and/or the wider region (Kremlin.ru, May 7).

Mr. Khrenin argued that the deployment of Russian nuclear weapons is not blackmail or intimidation but an opportunity to protect the state and ensure peace for Belarusians. According to him, Belarus was one of the first countries that voluntarily renounced the deployment of nuclear weapons in exchange for international recognition of independence and sovereignty, as well as the non-use of economic coercion by outside powers. The defense minister, however, contends that the West broke its promises, and Minsk was forced to react. Mr. Khrenin emphasized that deploying tactical nuclear weapons is an effective response to the aggressive policy of unfriendly states and a way to prevent them from escalating the situation around Belarus. He concluded that, after receiving the tactical nuclear weapons, Belarus now has a full arsenal to inflict damage on a potential aggressor (Belta, April 25).

On the sidelines of the ABPA, Mr. Lukashenka told reporters that the mechanism for using nuclear weapons is not spelled out in the new military doctrine as it is the subject of consultations between him and Putin. He confirmed, however, the existence of a document that "describes the formula for the use of both tactical missile nuclear weapons and nuclear aerial bombs that are set up under the aircraft" (TASS, April 24).

During the ABPA, Mr. Lukashenka said that he did not understand the indignation of foreign politicians over the Russian tactical nuclear weapons deployed on Belarusian territory. According to him, these are the same weapons that the United States is actively modernizing and storing at the air bases of some European countries, including Belgium, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. Mr. Lukashenka clarified that there is a difference between tactical and strategic nuclear weapons. He claimed that, from the military perspective, tactical nuclear weapons have strike

and offensive capabilities, not defensive (YouTube, April 24). Mr. Lukashenka failed to mention that, in contrast to the United States and other North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members, Russia has been pre-deploying tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus at the repair and technical bases near NATO's eastern flank per the Soviet manuals (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, April 30). This could indicate preparations for offensive operations with the use of tactical nuclear weapons. Mr. Lukashenka believes that NATO's first strike would be on Belarus in the event of a military conflict with Russia. He links complaints from Western countries about the deployment of Russian tactical nuclear weapons as evidence of these intentions (President of Belarus, April 25).

Mr. Lukashenka believes that all of this indicates that the West considers Eastern Europe a potential theater of military operations, where the enemy – Russia and Belarus – has already been identified. The Belarusian ruler noted that Moscow has deployed several dozen nuclear warheads in Belarus and that Minsk is determined to oppose any aggressor and inflict damage. He emphasized that the West should understand that their capitals are a legitimate target for tactical nuclear strikes in the event of aggression against Belarus. Mr. Lukashenka added that he had learned well and mastered the lessons of the Great Patriotic War, especially the initial stage when the Soviet Union tried to appease Nazi Germany and again hinted at the preventive capabilities of tactical nuclear weapons (Eurasia Daily Monitor, March 13). The Russian and Belarusian militaries have already begun preparations for such a strike through command and staff exercises (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, March 13, April 30).

Even so, on May 7, Mr. Lukashenka disavowed his statements about the offensive and strike capabilities of Russian tactical

nuclear weapons. He once again repeated that the non-strategic nuclear weapons in Belarus are for deterrence and defense. Simultaneously, he stated that the world has never been as close to nuclear war as it is now, noting that the statements of Western politicians (including French President Emmanuel Macron) have escalated tensions not only in Europe but throughout the world (President of Belarus, May 7).

Mr. Lukashenka also announced his intentions to discuss with Putin the joint coordination and use of Russian-Belarusian regional troop groupings equipped with tactical nuclear weapons. He claimed a final decision on those procedures would be made during his visit to Moscow on May 8 (TASS, May 7). Thus, despite official statements, the new military doctrine, and Mr. Lukashenka's secret decrees on the use of tactical nuclear weapons carriers, the Belarusian military-political leadership still does not have a complete picture of their use.

Mr. Lukashenka's statement came after the announcement of a surprise inspection of non-strategic nuclear weapons carriers for the Belarusian Armed Forces. According to the State Secretary of the Belarusian Security Council Alexander Volfovich, this check was synchronized with the activities carried out by the Russian Armed Forces since May 6 on the use of non-strategic nuclear weapons (Belta.by May 7). The placement of Russian tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus demonstrates a readiness for escalation on the part of both Moscow and Minsk against the West in the case of a spilling over of hostilities from Ukraine or a NATO strike on either country.

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## Deceased...

(Continued from page 1)

implementing a decision by the National Security and Defense Council (NSDC) on "Counteracting the Negative Effects of Gambling on the Internet." The decree went into effect immediately.

According to the National Security and Defense Council, the decision on gambling was made to "protect the rights and legitimate interests of Ukrainian citizens, strengthen measures to counteract the negative effects of gambling on the internet, and prevent the use of the peculiarities of this area by the aggressor state [Russia]."

According to the NSDC decision, the government will steps to develop a procedure to restrict all forms of gambling advertising, including electronic communications; prohibit online casino organizers from allowing players to register multiple accounts, determine maximum daily participation times, introduce mandatory breaks and set weekly play limits; require online gambling organizers to establish spending limits for players before they begin playing, with the option to change this limit once a month; implement a state online monitoring system; conduct a national awareness campaign on the dangers of gambling; and task the National Commission for the State Regulation of Electronic Communications, Radio Frequency Spectrum, and Postal Services with deciding whether to block illegal gambling websites upon submission by the central executive body responsible for forming and implementing state policies on gambling and lotteries.

In addition, the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the leadership of other military units should immediately introduce a ban on service members' access to gambling facilities and/or participation in online gambling for the period of martial law, according to the new measure.

The Ministry of Health should ensure the adoption of a clinical protocol for the treatment of severe gambling addiction within three months and conduct appropriate training for medical professionals.

Additionally, the new measure tasks the Ministry of Social Policy with adopting the state standard for providing social services to help people with gambling addiction and conduct relevant training for social service providers. It tasks the Security Service of Ukraine with monitoring gambling organizers to ensure their compliance with Ukraine's sanctions legislation within two months.

It also noted that the Ministry of Digital Transformation should hold negotiations with Apple and Google within a month to ban the placement of gambling applications without a corresponding license in their Ukrainian app stores.

The discussion around regulating online gambling in Ukraine is not new. In July 2020, the Verkhovna Rada passed a law on state gambling regulation.

In September 2020, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted a resolution establishing the Commission for Regulation of Gambling and Lotteries (CRGL) that is responsible for implementing state policy on gambling.

In early May 2023, Digital Transformation Minister Mykhailo Fedorov reported

that the government supported the legislative initiative to liquidate the CRGL, and the document was sent to the Verkhovna Rada for consideration.

In February, Mr. Fedorov reported that the Parliamentary Committee on Finance, Taxation, and Customs Policy supported liquidating the CRGL and automating gambling licenses.

In March, Pavlo Petrychenko, an activist and a soldier in the 59th Brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, initiated a petition to restrict the operation of online casinos.

Mr. Zelenskyy responded to the petition and instructed the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), the State Special Communications Service, the Ministry of Digital Transformation, and the National Security and Defense Council to analyze the issue.

Mr. Petrychenko, speaking on national television on March 30, said restricting gambling in Ukraine resonates with the public. Gambling hurts not only Ukrainian soldiers but the broader civilian population, he said.

Regarding the cases of gambling addicts who spend their entire allowance on games and take out microloans to repay their debts, he said that he "does not have statistics for the entire army."

"But from my own experience, this is a huge problem. As I say in the petition, the service members are in stressful conditions and in difficult situations – war, shelling, fighting. And the phone becomes the only solace. [It provides] quick access to entertainment that can be addictive. I'm a sergeant. I work with my personnel. I don't have this problem in my unit, but I am con-

cerned about this issue at the national level. We are monitoring this, working with people, understanding what is on their minds and [their] psychological state," Mr. Petrychenko said.

But there are many examples in other units, he said, when large sums of money are lost by soldiers betting in online casinos, from half a million to a million hryvnia (some \$12,500-\$25,000).

"A military man might lose everything he earns in a year and go into debt. Many families face this problem. For example, a soldier who serves in the army and receives a high salary can still have no money. So, a family sends money to the army. This is the first sign for the family that the person could be gambling. We cannot control everyone. It's up to the family and relatives to monitor this," Mr. Petrychenko said.

On March 29, the petition "Restrictions on online casinos" was posted on the website of the Office of the President of Ukraine calling for gambling restrictions. Within a few hours after its publication, it got 25,000 signatures, the number needed for consideration by the president.

Later that evening, Mr. Zelenskyy responded to the petition by instructing the SBU, the State Special Communications Service, the Ministry of Digital Transformation and the National Security and Defense Council to look into the issue.

Before the full-scale war, Mr. Petrychenko was a project manager and a famous activist. In March 2022, he helped develop a volunteer center for famed Ukrainian activist Serhiy Prytula. He joined Ukraine's Armed Forces in April 2022, and he died in battle on April 15.



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## BOOK REVIEW

### “Essays on the History of Ukraine” shatters Putin propaganda on Russo-Ukrainian fraternity

*“Essays on the History of Ukraine,”*  
Ihor Smeshko. Samit Knyha, 2023. 104 pp.  
ISBN: 978-9669866073 (paperback), \$14.99.

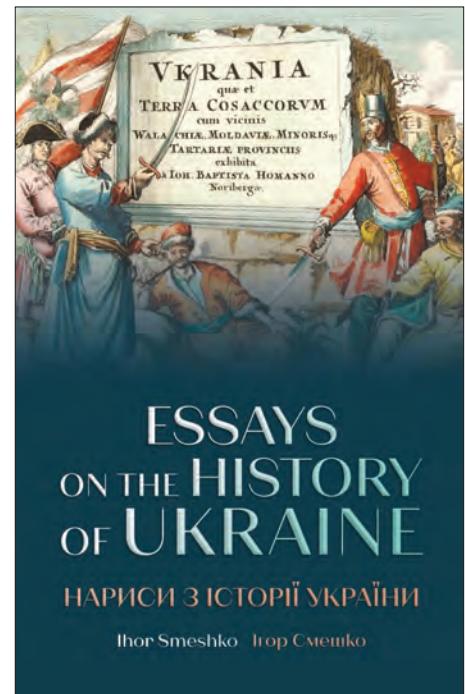
by George Woloshyn

Despite Putin's insistence that there is no Ukraine and Kirill's (not that subtle) blasphemous “triune” analogy of “one people” with three subsets, the fact is that more and more excellent books and historical treatises are emerging that demonstrate the futility of their efforts.

There is one book, however, that belies every claim made by Putin and his propagandists. That book, Col.-Gen. Ihor Smeshko's “Essays on the History of Ukraine” should be on every Ukrainian family's coffee table and bookshelf. It has been my privilege to review it alongside a review by Archduke Karl Habsburg-Lotharingen, who is (fittingly) the grandson of the last Austro-Hungarian emperor.

This short (100-page) book takes the reader on Ukraine's fascinating and largely unknown journey from the dawn of European civilization to the present day. It shatters the myth of Ukrainian-Russian “fraternity” and “common history” and has evoked frantic responses and denunciations from “historians” on Russia's most popular television programs.

In a series of essays on key periods, events and personalities in Ukrainian history, Mr. Smeshko validates his thesis that Ukraine, unlike Russia, was not merely a very early beneficiary of European civilization but also one of its contributors and



builders. Were it not for what Russia (then known as Vladimir-Suzdal) had looted and learned from Kyiv-Rus' as early as the 12th century and continued doing so at various times, Russia would be seen, more appropriately, as the primary antagonist to that civilization. Putin and his many predecessors in power to this day continuously inveigh against it and are committed to its destruction and replacement with “Ruskiy Mir” (the Russian world).

(Continued on page 19)

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# Demographic research provides data on fifth wave of Ukrainian immigration

by Oleh Wolowyna

NEW YORK – The number of persons of Ukrainian ancestry in the U.S. has been growing since 1987 due to a steady influx of immigrants from Ukraine, known as the Fourth Wave. Recent estimates show that there were 1.025 million Ukrainians in 2010, 1.104 million in 2015 and 1.331 million in 2022. Russia's war on Ukraine, which started with the invasion of Crimea in February 2014 and the invasion of eastern Ukraine in April 2014 and was followed by the full-fledged invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, triggered large numbers of refugees, with many of them ending up in the U.S. Demographic analysis shows that these migrants are different from the Fourth Wave immigrants and that they mark the beginning of a Fifth Wave of migration from Ukraine to the U.S.

If the Fifth Wave is defined as migrants born in Ukraine who arrived in the U.S. after 2013, the updated definition of the Fourth Wave is limited to the period between 1987 and 2013. According to these definitions, the Fourth Wave numbered 275,000 immigrants in 2022, and the Fifth Wave, from 2014 to 2022, numbered 124,400 migrants. The Fourth Wave accounts for 20.7 percent of all persons of Ukrainian ancestry in 2022 and the Fifth Wave accounts for 9.3 percent, for a total of 30 percent. This means that both waves make up almost one-third of all Ukrainians in the U.S.

Data on these migrants are from the yearly American Community Survey (ACS), which provides detailed information on a

representative sample of the total U.S. population and includes data on persons of Ukrainian ancestry. The actual number of Fifth Wave migrants is certainly larger, as the 2022 survey did not fully capture the surge in migration triggered by the 2022 full-scale invasion, and a large number of migrants arrived in 2023. Data on these migrants and a more complete count of the 2022 migrants will be available later this year when the 2023 ACS survey results are released.

Two examples of differences between the Fourth and Fifth waves of migration are the percentage of Ukrainian speakers and the level of education. Data from the 2022 ACS survey show that, even after many years of residence in the U.S., only 37 percent of Fourth Wave immigrants speak Ukrainian at home. By contrast, 57 percent of all migrants born in Ukraine who arrived in the U.S. between 2014 and 2022 speak Ukrainian at home.

When estimating the level of education, the data was restricted to persons 25 years old or older to maximize the number of persons who completed their education. As of 2022, 54 percent of Fourth Wave immigrants had university-level education (four or more years of college), while the percentage for Fifth Wave migrants is 61.

Figure 1 presents the yearly number of migrants between 2014 and 2022. It shows the effect of the 2014 Russian invasion and the full-scale war in 2022, as reflected in the number of migrants after each event. The number of migrants increased in 2015 and 2016 following the 2014 invasion. The

Figure 1. Number of immigrants born in Ukraine by year of immigration: 2014–2022 (in thousands)

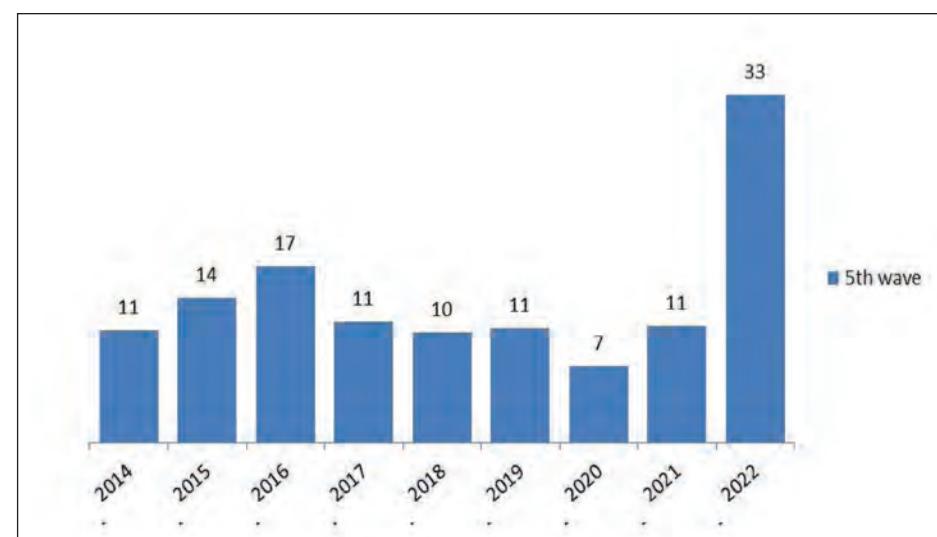


Table 1. Percent distribution by language spoken at home and period of immigration: Immigrants born in Ukraine, 2014–2021 and 2022

Years	percent language spoken				Sum
	English	Russian	Ukrainian	Other	
2014–2021	11	32	53	4	100
2022	5	25	67	3	100

number of migrants experienced an extraordinary increase between 2021 and 2022, the year of the full-scale war, from 11,000 in 2021 to 33,000 in 2022 (The number of migrants in 2020 is unrealistically low because the 2020 ACS survey had technical problems due to the COVID-19 epidemic, and the data is unreliable).

An analysis of the 2022 migrants shows that they have different characteristics than migrants from previous years. These differences are explored further by comparing migrants from 2014 to 2021 and 2022.

Table 1 shows the language composition of these two groups of migrants. The 2014–2021 migrants have 32 percent Russian and 53 percent Ukrainian speakers, while the respective percentages for the 2022 migrants are 25 and 67. As the first group has a higher percentage of English speakers than the second group, this difference is controlled for by considering only Ukrainian and Russian speakers. The 2014–2021 migrants have 67 percent Ukrainian speakers, while the 2022 migrants have 73 percent. Thus, there are relatively more Ukrainian speakers among the 2022 migrants than among migrants in previous years.

Figure 2 presents the age structure of the two groups of migrants separately for males and females. There are three main differences in the age compositions of males from the years 2014–2021 and 2022 male migrants. There is a higher percentage of 2022 than 2014–2021 migrants in the 5–17 age group and the opposite relationship for the 25–44 and 45–64 age groups. The lower percentages of 2022 migrants in the 25–44 and 45–64 age groups are likely due to at least two factors: first, a prohibition of traveling abroad for males of military conscription age (at that time, the minimum recruitment age was 27); and, second, there are high war casualties in these two age groups. The 23 percent difference in the 5–17 age group compensates for the differences in the 25–44 and 45–64 age groups.

Two differences in the age structure of females are the higher percentages in the 18–24 age group for 2022 than for 2014–2021 migrants and the opposite relationship for the 25–44 age group. The percentage of female 2022 migrants in the 25–44 age group may be because 70 percent of the women in this group are married and some wives may have been reluctant to

travel to the U.S. without their husbands. The 11 percent difference in the 18–24 age group compensates for the 25–44 age group differential.

The new conditions created in Ukraine by the Russian war are further reflected in the household structures of 2014–2021 and 2022 migrants (see Table 2). The household structures are fairly similar for both groups of migrants, with one exception. The percentage of households with the wife as head of household and no husband present is twice as large for 2022 than for 2014–2021 migrants. This is another consequence of the restriction placed on males in military conscription ages from traveling abroad.

Table 3 presents the education level for the two groups of Fifth Wave immigrants by sex. The data is restricted to migrants 25 years of age and over, to include mostly persons with complete education. There is little difference in the education level of female migrants in the two groups of migrants. An important point is that more than 60 percent of all Fifth Wave female migrants have university-level degrees.

On the other hand, there is a significant difference in education levels between male migrants from 2014–2021 and those arriving in the U.S. in 2022. There are some differences in the less than high school (< H.S.) and high school (H.S.) categories, but the critical difference is in the greater than four years of college (4+ yrs. college) category. A much higher proportion of 2022 male migrants have university-level degrees than do migrants in previous years, 70 and 53 percent, respectively.

The proportion of migrants with university-level education has progressively increased, from 54 percent for the Fourth Wave to 61 percent for Fifth Wave migrants. Within Fifth Wave migrants, there is no difference between 2014–2021 and 2022 migrants among females, but a large increase for males, from 58 to 70 percent.

Differences can also be seen in the occupation structure between 2014–2021 and 2022 for male and female migrants. Occupations are divided into five categories: a) service occupations; b) laborers and operatives; c) craft, repair and precision occupations; d) sales and administration; e) professionals and managers. As in

Figure 2. Percent distribution of 2014–2021 and 2022 immigrants born in Ukraine by age and sex

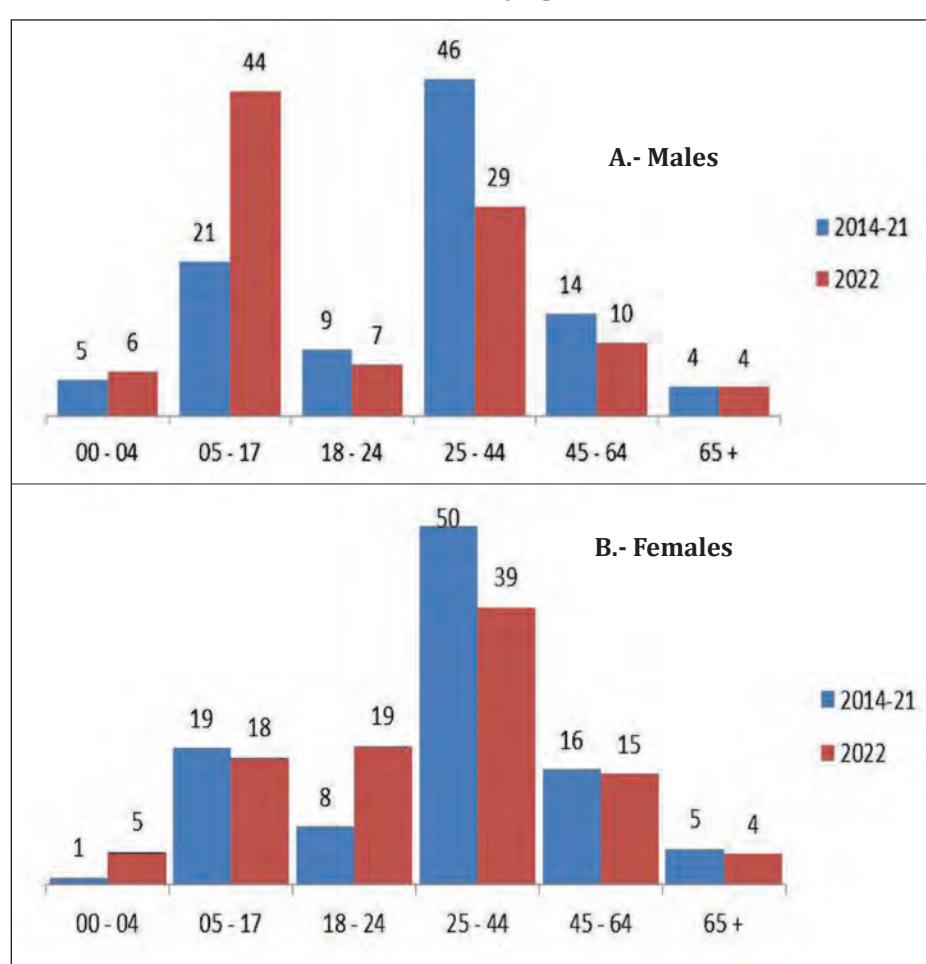


Table 2. Percent distribution by type of household and period of immigration: Immigrants born in Ukraine: 2014–2021 and 2022

Household Type	percent	
	2014–2021	2022
Married-couple family household	81	74
Male householder, no wife present	3	4
Female householder, no husband present	7	15
Male or female living alone	6	5
Other	4	2
<b>Sum</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

(Continued on page 14)

## Documentary film 'Porcelain War' emphasizes humanity over warmongering

by Mark Raczkiewycz

CHICAGO – There is a saying that in times of war good people become better, but bad people become worse.

"Porcelain War," a documentary film about three artisans affected by the Russo-Ukrainian war, tells a story of humanity, the disruption of civilian lives and the people who decided to take up arms and defend their beleaguered nation.

Screened at Doc10 on May 4 in Chicago – the city's premier yearly documentary film festival – the movie features a couple and their close family friend whose hobby is to mold and paint porcelain, and judging from the forms, they prefer molding birds and other fauna.

Co-director Stanislav Leontyev of Kharkiv, together with his friend Andriy – a displaced person from Russian-occupied Crimea – join Ukraine's Saigon special operation forces soon after Russia launched a full-scale war on their homeland in February 2022.

Known as "Slava," Mr. Leontyev became a rifleman, while his wife, Anya Stasenko,

"just stopped" painting porcelain models after the all-out invasion. The film illustrates the trauma of war.

When he was home on leave, Mr. Leontyev would still resume molding the figurines, which included owls and miniature dragons. Still, in one scene viewers see his wife painting a war drone for use against Russian forces.

Now residing in Kharkiv, their friend Andriy filmed their story and features in the documentary. By doing so, he offers a closer look at the war from both an internal and external perspective.

"We are ordinary people in an extraordinary situation," Andriy, whose surname wasn't given, says in the film. "Civilians become warriors versus the assailants."

They take respite from the terrors of war by making porcelain figures.

"We use art to fight back," says Mr. Leontyev.

He said his unit is comprised mostly of "information technology specialists, graphic designers, financial analysts and other civilians" whom he met during the fight for Ukraine.

The film portrays humanity in its basic form, with the love of nature and hatred for weapons taking center stage. Mr. Leontyev was forced to take up arms to defend his family and land amid the Kremlin's goal of conquering the country.

"It's a film about what will happen to other people and countries if Russia continues onward and Ukraine's resources are dwindling," Mr. Leontyev added.

Mr. Leontyev's spouse currently lives in Germany as a war refugee, he said. Kharkiv, his hometown, is constantly shelled given its proximity to the Russian border. Andriy also now considers it his hometown.

As an example of the constant danger residents face, at least seven people were injured in Kharkiv overnight on May 7, regional Gov. Oleh Synihubov said. The Russian aerial attacks injured three boys who were playing soccer at a school soccer field.

More than 50 different Russian projectiles and drones targeted civilian areas in seven regions overnight on May 8, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said. Kyiv officials say that about 50 percent of Ukraine's power grid has been damaged from incessant Russian aerial attacks and have caused \$12.5 billion in damage.

The region's governor said that Russia is massing military forces north of the city, which is just miles away from the neighboring border with Russia.

The looming threat was thwarted by Ukraine's National Guard, according to the guard's chief Oleksandr Pivnenko, who said that Russia would "need years" to occupy the city amid a renewed attack that started two years ago.

### Mariupol short film

Before the film screening, Kyiv-based short filmmaker Sofia Melnyk showed an animated film about Russia's onslaught on Mariupol, an Azov Sea port city in the Donetsk region.

It specifically focused on the Russian bombing of the Donetsk Academic Regional Drama Theater on March 16, 2022. The venue served as the region's biggest hub and a shelter for refugees. It had the word "children" written in large letters on the ground outside of the building's front and rear exits.

About 600 civilians were killed on that day, making it the deadliest single Russian



Mark Raczkiewycz

"Porcelain War" co-directors Stanislav Leontyev (center) and Brendan Bellomo are seen at the Chicago Doc10 film festival in Chicago on May 4.

civilian attack since the war started in 2014 when Moscow covertly invaded the Crimean Peninsula and the two easternmost regions of Donetsk and Luhansk.

Some 8,000 people were killed "in fighting or war-related causes" during Russia's siege of Mariupol, Human Rights Watch reported in February.

The city was occupied by Russian forces on May 20, 2022.

More than 900 Ukrainian soldiers who defended the Azovstal steel plant in the city remain in Russian captivity, the commander of the Azov Brigade, Denys Propokh, said in February.

The documentary film also won the U.S. Grand Jury prize at this year's Sundance Film Festival, which takes place yearly in Utah. It is regarded as one of the most respected movie festivals in America.

For information about future screenings and to submit requests to have the documentary film screened in a new location, readers can visit the website <https://www.porcelainwar.com/screenings>. One of the film's producers said the crew is still shopping for a film distributor in North America.



A porcelain model of an owl is featured in the "Porcelain War" documentary film screened at the Doc10 film festival in Chicago on May 4.

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## NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 2)

### Warning of blackouts after Russian attack

Officials in Ukraine said on May 8 that a major overnight attack by more than 50 Russian missiles and 20 drones badly damaged infrastructure, including dams, across at least six regions as multiple waves of air alerts rang out for hours in areas including the capital, Kyiv. The national power company, Ukrenergo, told RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service that the attacks have caused a significant shortage of electricity in the power grid and that blackouts for consumers might be necessary if emergency electricity imports couldn't make up the gap. Ukrenergo head Volodymyr Kudrytskyi said the emergency imports from Europe had helped "stabilize and balance" the grid but that "this may not be enough." If consumption rose, he warned, "we will have to resort to disconnecting consumers as a last resort." He warned the risk was especially high during the peak evening hours between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. and urged Ukrainians to "try to avoid it or if you consume electricity [do it] sparingly and economically." Energy Minister Herman Halushchenko called it "another massive attack on our energy industry" that spanned six regions. He said power generation and transmission facilities had been attacked in the Poltava, Kirovohrad, Zapo-

rizhia, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Vinnytsia regions. Russia's Defense Ministry later said it had hit "military and energy" targets in Ukraine with smart weapons including its hypersonic Kinzhal missiles and drones. "In response to the Kyiv regime's attempt to damage Russian energy facilities, this morning the armed forces of the Russian Federation launched a group strike ... against energy facilities and enterprises of Ukraine's military-industrial complex," Moscow was quoted as saying. Ukrenergo said "Russians have launched a new massive attack on thermal and hydroelectric power plants." The military administration head in the central Poltava district, Filip Pronin, said a fire had broken out after a drone strike on a power infrastructure facility. The head of the military administration in the southern Zaporizhia region, which hosts Europe's largest nuclear plant, said the Russian bombardment there targeted "critical and civil infrastructure facilities." In Lviv, in western Ukraine, the governor said a Russian strike had hit critical energy infrastructure in the Stryi district and a power-generation plant in the Chervonohrad district. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said via Telegram that the Russian attacks had employed at least 50 missiles and 20 drones. He noted that they took place early on the Day of Remembrance and Reconciliation that the United Nations declared to honor those who lost their lives in World War II. "The whole world must clearly understand who is

who," Mr. Zelenskyy wrote, before equating Russian aggression against his country to Nazi Germany's actions to spark that war. Russia has frequently targeted power and energy infrastructure with air attacks since it launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. An attack in March marked one of the most intense of those bombardments since the war began, including a strike on Ukraine's largest hydroelectric power plant, DniproHEP in Zaporizhia that did serious damage. Russia's Defense Ministry also claimed on May 8 that its troops had captured two frontline villages in Ukraine - Kyslyivka in the Kharkiv region and Novokalynove in the Donetsk region - but there was no acknowledgement by the Ukrainian side and RFE/RL could not verify the claim. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service, with reporting by Reuters and AFP)

### Belarus checks readiness of its nuclear forces

The Belarusian Defense Ministry said on May 7 that it had started to check the preparedness of its tactical nuclear forces, a day after Russia announced a similar move. First Deputy Defense Minister Viktor Hulevich said some Belarusian armed forces and aircraft will be redeployed to a reserve airfield during the exercises. Belarusian Defense Minister Viktor Khrenin said the checks for preparedness of the carriers of the tactical nuclear weapons started at the order of authoritarian ruler Alyaksandr Lukashenka. "To carry out the task, a division of the operative-tactical Iskander missile complex and a utility squadron of SU-25 military planes have been allocated," Mr. Khrenin said. Mr. Lukashenka supported Russia's ongoing unprovoked invasion of Ukraine launched in February 2022 and allowed Russian armed forces to use Belarusian territory, military infrastructure and airspace during the invasion. A day before the announcement from Minsk, Russia's Defense Ministry announced drills involving tactical nuclear weapons for the

first time since it launched its aggression against Ukraine more than two years ago. Russia said it was running the military exercises because of "unprecedented" and "provocative" statements from Britain and France that Moscow said showed their growing involvement in the war in Ukraine. Last week, French President Emmanuel Macron repeated a statement that his country cannot rule out sending troops into Ukraine to help it in the war. Meanwhile, officials in the United Kingdom last week appeared to give Kyiv the green light to use long-range weapons sent to Ukraine to strike targets inside Russia. So far in the conflict, the U.K. has given guidance to Ukraine implying that long-range weapons should only be used within sovereign Ukrainian territory. Ukraine has been subjected to almost daily Russian missile and drone strikes that have caused huge damage to its civilian and energy infrastructure and killed and wounded numerous civilians, including children. In response, Kyiv has targeted energy infrastructure inside Russia, especially oil refining installations. (RFE/RL's Belarus Service)

### 4 arrested for 'luring' men to fight for Russia

Four people have been arrested in India accused of "trafficking" citizens to fight for the Russian Army in Ukraine, India's Central Bureau of Investigation said on May 8. The statement said one of the arrested was a translator who lived in Russia and was one of the key figures in the network for "luring" at least 35 fighters. It did not specify where he was arrested. The second suspect was arrested in Dubai. The final two lived in India and were directly involved in recruitment, the statement said. According to Reuters, India's Foreign Affairs Ministry said the matter has been "strongly taken up" with the Kremlin. Moscow has not commented. (RFE/RL's Russian Service)

(Continued on page 13)

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Sharing the sad news with family,  
friends and acquaintances, that on April 27, 2024,  
our dearest mother, grandmother and sister  
has passed away

### Ms. Vera Smulka Lashchyk

born on August 22, 1939  
in Tlusta, Ukraine

She is survived by:  
daughter - Sophia with her husband Andriy Tytla,  
and grandchildren Olenka and Dmytro  
son - Andriy with Maritsa Lopez  
sister - Oksana Kipa with husband Albert  
nephews - Marko Kipa with son Lesyk, Dmytro Kipa  
and immediate and extended family in America,  
England, Czechia and Ukraine.

May her memory be eternal!

Funeral Mass took place on 8 May  
2024, at St. Michael the Archangel  
Ukrainian Catholic Church in  
Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, and she  
was laid to rest at St. Andrew  
Cemetery in South Bound Brook, NJ

At the request of Ms. Vera Lashchyk, in  
lieu of flowers, please send  
donations to The Ukrainian Academy  
of Arts and Sciences in the U.S., Inc.  
(UVAN), 206 W. 100th Street, New  
York, NY 10025 for the scanning and  
preservation of Ukrainian archives.



## NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 12)

### Kolomoyskiy suspected in murder plot

Ukrainian prosecutors and police suggested on May 8 that jailed billionaire Ihor Kolomoyskiy has been informed that he is under suspicion of a crime in connection with an attempted contract killing two decades ago. Without naming Mr. Kolomoyskiy, the National Police said via Telegram that they have "indisputable evidence confirming the identity of the customer" who ordered the hit and described that suspect's circumstances. The Prosecutor-General's Office also avoided naming the suspect but accompanied its Telegram post with a pixelated image that appeared to be Mr. Kolomoyskiy, who supported Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's presidential bid in the 2019 election and is already in custody to face fraud and money-laundering charges. The police said the suspect has been in custody since September 2023. One of Ukraine's richest individuals, Mr. Kolomoyskiy has been in custody since September. He has already denied involvement in the attempted murder case, which could carry a life sentence if he is convicted. The National Police said the motive was "revenge on a lawyer for refusing to cooperate in an illegal arrangement." They said the unnamed suspect was notified of their suspicions on May 8.

Doctors managed to save the life of the lawyer at the center of the 2003 case after four men beat and stabbed him. The perpetrators were apprehended. More than a month after his detention in September, Mr. Kolomoyskiy transferred corporate rights over his 1+1 media group to the company's employees. A native of Dnipro, a major industrial city in southeastern Ukraine, Mr. Kolomoyskiy has owned banks, energy firms, metals companies, airlines and one of the nation's most influential television channels. In 2021, he was blacklisted by the U.S. State Department for alleged corruption and undermining democracy at home. His supporters say he is being wrongly prosecuted in an effort by Ukrainian officials to demonstrate to Western allies that they are serious about fighting corruption. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service)

### Pasechnik blames Kyiv for attack on oil refinery

Kremlin-installed leader Leonid Pasechnik said an oil depot has caught fire in the Russian-occupied eastern Ukrainian city of Luhansk, blaming the attack on Ukrainian shells. Mr. Pasechnik said employees of the Emergency Situations Ministry were working at the site early on May 8. Another Russia-installed official said Ukraine had used a U.S.-made Army Tactical Missile System, known as ATACMS, in the attack. Further information was not available, and Kyiv did not immediately comment. (RFE/RL's Russian Service)



With deep sorrow we announce that

### Dr. Michael (Mykhailo) Bilyk

a resident of Langhorne, PA, passed away on Tuesday, April 30, 2024. He was 98 years old.

Born in Svytlynyky, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine, he was the son of the late Stepan and Evdokia (Lytwyn) Bilyk and had three brothers – Alexander, Bohdan (who died in infancy), and Myron. At a young age, Mykhailo was separated from his family during WWII in Europe. He never saw his father or younger brother Myron again.

In 1951, he was awarded a scholarship to the University of Madrid in Spain, where he obtained a doctorate in economics. He immigrated to the United States in 1958 and settled in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, reuniting with his mother and older brother Alexander, who immigrated several years prior. Unfortunately, his father died in 1957, shortly before Mykhailo's arrival.

He met his beloved wife, Oksana Struk, on the steps of their church in Philadelphia. They married in 1961 and raised three children – Roman, Irena, and Marta. It was very important to them that their children be raised as proud, patriotic Ukrainians. They instilled in them a strong Ukrainian heritage, teaching them to speak their native language, appreciate their culture and traditions, and enriched their lives by encouraging their active participation in the Ukrainian community.

Tragically, in 1988, his wife Oksana suddenly and unexpectedly passed away. This was an immeasurable loss that would affect him and his children for the rest of their lives.

Mykhailo spoke several languages fluently and started his career working as a language instructor for Berlitz School of Languages in Philadelphia, PA. Until 1976, he coordinated and supervised multiple branches of Berlitz schools in Philadelphia, Bryn Mawr, and Abington. Subsequently, he continued working for Berlitz Financial Corporation in Princeton, New Jersey, as a Manager of Administrative Services. In 1999 (at the age of 73), he retired after 41 years of service.

He was an active member of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, the Ukrainian Educational and Cultural Center, and other Ukrainian organizations. For many years, he taught Ukrainian Culture at the Saturday school "Ridna Shkola". He tried to instill in his students the same love and appreciation he had for our rich heritage. Music and singing were also an important part of Mykhailo's life, and it brought him great joy to be a long-time original member of the Ukrainian male chorus "Prometheus". He was a vibrant man with a great sense of humor, who loved animals, Hershey Kisses, and Philadelphia sports teams, especially the Flyers.

Mykhailo is survived by his children Irena, Marta, and Roman. As the last remaining patriarch of the Bilyk family, he will be missed by the entire extended Bilyk/Shatynski family and his relatives in Ukraine.

Mykhailo was interred at St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Cemetery in Elkins Park, PA on May 7, 2024. Vichnaya Pamyat.

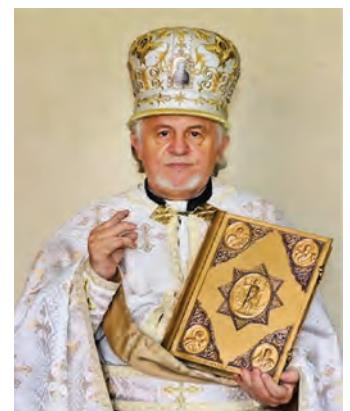


It is with great sorrow that we announce the passing on April 24, 2023, at the age of 73 and in the 48th year of priestly service, of

### Mitred Archpriest ROMAN OREST MIRCHUK

Rev. Roman passed away peacefully after a prolonged illness in the home for the elderly of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word, located in the village of Petrykiv near Ternopil, Ukraine.

Rev. Roman was born September 13, 1950, in Munich, Germany, into the family of Dr. Petro and Anisia Mirchuk, prominent activists of the Ukrainian liberation movement. In 1952, he immigrated with his family to the United States, where he grew up in Philadelphia. Here he received his education at St. Basil the Great Elementary School, Cardinal Dougherty High School, and La Salle College. Afterwards he studied at the Catholic University of America and St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Seminary in Washington, DC. He completed his theological and academic studies in 1975 with a Bachelor's degree in Theology and a Master's degree in Medieval Eastern European History. He acquired basic knowledge of Ukrainian studies at the Ridna Shkola school and the «Our Ukrainian School» of the CYM branch in Philadelphia. He also learned to play the piano well. He energized those around him with his love for music and particularly for Ukrainian songs. He loved the customs of traditional Ukrainian holidays, and wherever he pastored he organized communal celebrations of these holidays.



Rev. Roman was ordained a priest in 1976, and from then on his life was fervently devoted to pastoral service. In America, he pastored in the churches of the Philadelphia Archdiocese of the Ukrainian Catholic Church: St. Josaphat's and in the Roxborough section of Philadelphia, in the parishes of New Brunswick, Hillsborough, NJ., Jersey City, Bayonne, Wilmington, DE, and Whippany, NJ. Everywhere he gained the love and respect of his parishioners whom he inspired with his passionate care for maintaining a vibrant parish life, his pious service of church liturgies, and his profound sermons which were customarily sprinkled with good humor. He supervised the erection of new church edifices, all designed in modernized Ukrainian styles, in Hillsborough, Jersey City and Whippany, NJ., where he also helped build a Ukrainian cultural center. In each parish he took care to provide for a program of Ukrainian studies, and instructed children, youth and elders in religious and biblical learning.

Throughout his life he remained a staunch Ukrainian patriot and often participated in various patriotic Ukrainian functions and organized collections in aid of Ukraine. During the celebrations of the Millennium of the Baptism of Rus-Ukraine he engaged in extensive informational work among American church and civic groups on behalf of the persecuted Ukrainian churches, concomitantly enlightening them of Ukraine's rightful legacy of that epochal baptism.

He loved working with youth. He was an active member of CYM – Association of Ukrainian Youth, a caring and creative counselor and organizer. In his younger years he was a member of the CYM board of Philadelphia, the National Board of America, and the CYM World Board. For many years he was the educational and program director at CYM camps in the U.S. and Ukraine. Later, in Ukraine, he organized annual Christian camps for children. He financed and led trips for seminarians from Ukraine throughout Western Europe to provide them with the opportunity to acquaint themselves closer with the Western world. He served as a mentor for many young priests. He was accessible to everyone regardless of his great erudition, and liked to chat with everyone and everywhere, entertaining them with humorous stories.

In the 1990s, he moved to Ukraine, where from 1994 to 1999 he served as the academic vice-rector of the Lviv Theological Seminary of the Holy Spirit located in the village of Rudne near Lviv. Almost half a thousand seminarians studied under his fatherly care every year. After that, he came back for a short while to America, again returning to Ukraine in July 2015, this time to serve on the parish level in the city of Mykolaiv, and later in Odesa, where Ukrainian Greek Catholic church life was in its initial stages of organization. His lifelong dream of pastoring to God's flock in Ukraine came to realization and he remained determined never again to leave Ukraine calling it his real home.

He was predeceased by his older brother, Yarema George, and leaves behind his younger brother Ihor and distant relatives in Ukraine and the U.S.

Funeral services were held, following prefatory services in Ternopil and the UGCC Seminary in Rudne, in his father's native village Dobrilyany near Stryi, where a grave was dug for him next to the church. Altogether five hierarchs and over 200 priests of the UGC Church, most of whom were his former seminary students, prayed over him in the funeral services. On Sunday, June 2nd on the 40th day after his death, a memorial service will be held at Holy Ghost UCC Church in Easton, PA.

Until his death, Rev. Roman kept a vivid and warm memory of everyone with whom life fated him to meet and work with, and he prayed for everyone. May his ancestral land receive him paternally and serve him as a gentle resting place. Eternal memory to him! Vichnaya pamiat!

Donations in Fr. Roman's memory may be made to «Mission to Ukraine Fund» which he initiated for the construction of churches and spiritual centers in eastern and central Ukraine. Checks should be made payable to the Ukrainian Museum and Library, memo: in memory of Father Roman Mirchuk. Mail to: 161 Glenbrook Road, Stamford, CT 06902 ATTN: Msgr. Terlecky.

## Demographic...

(Continued from page 9)

the case of the age structure and level of education, males have different structures than do females.

There are significant differences in the occupational structures between male 2014-2021 and 2022 migrants. The first group has higher percentages in the laborers-operatives and technical-sales-administrative workers, while 2022 migrants have higher percentages in service occupations and the professionals-managers category.

The occupational structure of females is fairly similar for the two groups of migrants. As expected, females have high percentages in the service sector and low percentages in blue-collar occupations. About one-third of females in both migrant groups are in sales and administration occupations, and another third are in professional-managers occupations.

Finally, there are also findings on Fifth Wave migrant settlement patterns. Table 4 presents data for the 12 metropolitan areas with the most migrants between 2014 and 2021. Conclusions can be drawn from the numbers of migrants in metropolitan areas arriving in 2014-2021 and in 2022 to create respective rankings of the metropolitan areas.

Data in Table 4 show some surprising results. First, Philadelphia ranks 12th by number of 2014-2021 migrants, while it is second by total number of Ukrainians. Second, Charlotte, N.C., Houston, Texas, and Tampa, Fla., rank much higher by the number of 2014-2021 migrants than their total Ukrainian population. Third, Boise City, Idaho, ranks ninth with 2,296 migrants arriving during 2014-2021 and sixth with 1,321 migrants who came in 2022, while the total number of Ukrainians in 2022 was only 7,353.

Migrants who arrived after the start of the 2022 war did not always follow the 2014-2021 migrant settlement patterns.

For example, metropolitan areas such as New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Seattle have the same or similar rankings, but Charlotte, N.C., changed from seventh to 15th place and Philadelphia from 12th to seventh place. Portland, Ore., ranked sixth with 2014-2021 migrants, but no new migrants arrived in 2022. The Fifth Wave migrants did not necessarily settle in cities with large Ukrainian communities. Their place of residence, especially among 2022 migrants, was probably influenced by the place of residence of their sponsors.

The case of Boise, Idaho, is an extreme example of how Fifth Wave migrants can have a strong impact on very small Ukrainian communities and, in some cases, contribute to creating new communities. There were 1,568 Ukrainians in Boise, Idaho, in 2013, with 20 percent U.S.-born and 72 percent Fourth Wave immigrants. They made up 0.7 percent of the total population of the city. By 2021, the number of Ukrainians had grown to 6,649, reaching 7,363 by 2022. Ukrainian's share of the city's total population increased to 1.6 percent in 2022 and Fifth Wave migrants made up 49 percent of all Ukrainians. It is also noteworthy that all Fifth Wave immigrants speak Ukrainian.

More detailed data on the Fifth Wave Ukrainian immigration is posted on the website of the Center for Demographic and Socio-economic Research of Ukrainians in the U.S. at the Shevchenko Scientific Society, including complete lists of metropolitan areas with numbers of 2014-2021 and 2022 migrants. The website address is [www.inform-decisions.com/stat](http://www.inform-decisions.com/stat).

The Fourth Wave has played an important role in strengthening the Ukrainian community in the U.S. It has slowed down language assimilation, strengthened some communities and created new ones, started new businesses, provided human resources for Ukrainian schools and art ensembles, etc. The full extent of its contributions has not been documented yet.

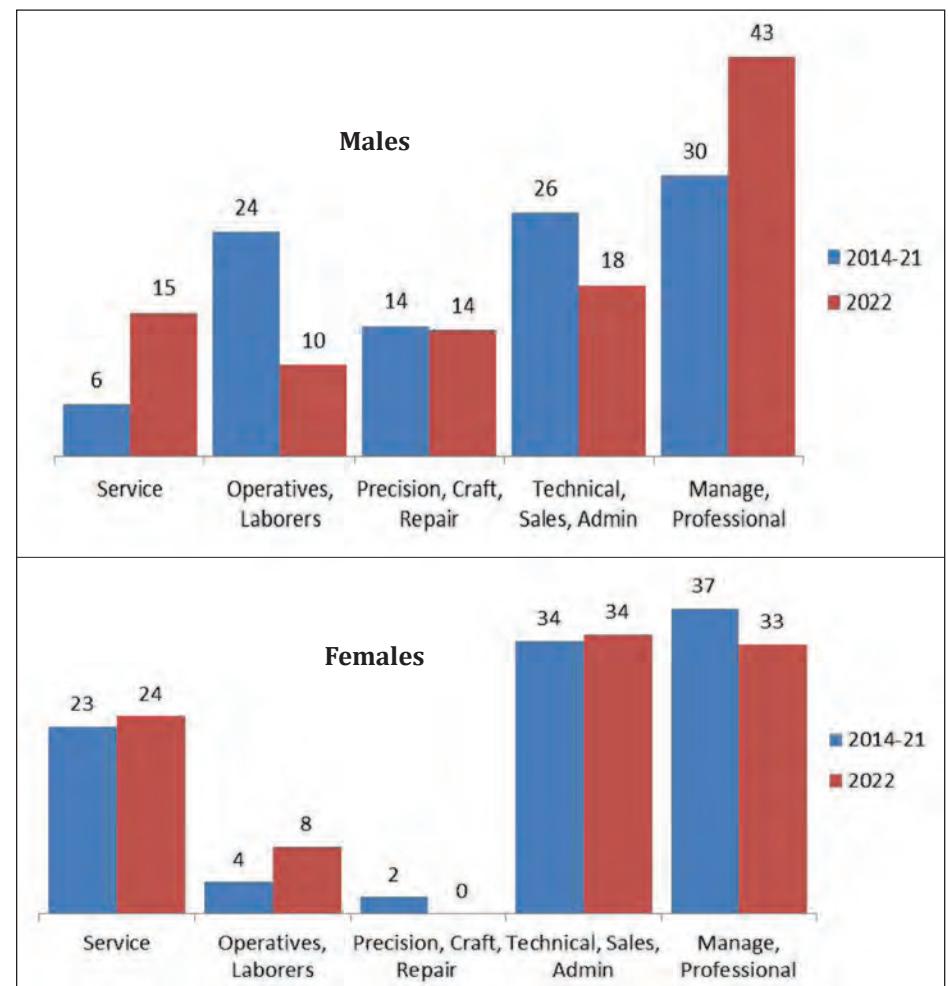
A pattern is detected in the differences

**Table 3. Percent distribution by education level\*, sex and immigration period: Immigrants born in Ukraine, 2014 - 2021 and 2022**

Education level	percent			
	males	2014-2021	2022	females
< H.S.	2	10	4	2
H.S.	28	12	19	20
some college	12	8	14	16
4+ yrs. college	58	70	63	62
Sum	100	100	100	100

\* 25 years or older

**Figure 3. Percent distribution of occupation categories of 2014-2021 and 2022 migrants born in Ukraine by sex, 2022**



**Table 4. Ranking of 12 metropolitan areas with the largest number of immigrants born in Ukraine and arriving during 2014-2021, by immigration period: 2014-2021 and 2022**

Metropolitan Area	year(s) of arrival		ranking	
	2014-2021	2022	2014-2021	2022
New York metro area, NY and NJ	13,272	4,175	1	1
Chicago, IL	9,283	3,138	2	2
Sacramento, CA	6,136	994	3	9
Seattle, WA	5,070	2,737	4	3
Los Angeles, CA	4,858	1,433	5	5
Portland, OR	3,350	none*	6	none
Charlotte, NC	2,485	555	7	15
San Francisco, CA	2,343	1,651	8	4
Boise City, ID	2,296	1,321	9	6
Houston, TX	2,260	1,018	10	8
Tampa metro area, FL	2,198	639	11	13
Philadelphia, PA	2,049	1,070	12	7
none*: no 5th wave migrants in 2014-2021				

## Rhetoric...

(Continued from page 4)

tegic force posture. ... Obviously, we'll continue to monitor [the situation]," he added.

The role of strategic nuclear weapons is to strike enemy targets far from the front line, while tactical nuclear weapons are designed to be used on battlefields.

The exercise is meant to increase the ability of Russia's military to "ensure the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Russian state in response to provocative statements and threats of individual Western officials against the Russian Federation," the statement said, without elaborating.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov, when asked by journalists what had prompted the announcement on nuclear readiness, said, "It's obvious we are talking about statements from Mr. Macron and statements from British representatives."

"This is a completely new round of escalating tensions. It is unprecedented and requires special measures," Mr. Peskov said.

Separately, the governor of Russia's Belgorod region bordering Ukraine said on Telegram that seven people were killed and 42 wounded by Ukrainian drones near Berezovka, in the Borisov district close to the Ukrainian border, when two buses carrying workers to a pig farm were struck by Ukrainian drones.

Ukraine has not commented on the claim, which could not be independently confirmed.

Ukraine has been subjected to almost daily Russian missile and drone strikes that have caused huge damage to its civilian and energy infrastructure and killed and wounded numerous civilians, including children.

In response, Kyiv has targeted energy infrastructure inside Russia, especially oil refining installations.

Russia on May 6 said that its forces had taken control of the settlements of Solovoye in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region and Kotlyarivka in the Kharkiv region.

Ukrainian authorities did not acknowledge the potential loss of the settlements,

less likely to return to Ukraine. Using the term "immigrant" for the Fourth Wave and "migrant" for the Fifth Wave is deliberate; immigrant is used for permanent moves, while migrant is used for temporary moves. Experience shows that, with time, temporary migrants become permanent migrants.

The changes detected in the 2022 migrants from Ukraine are preliminary. The 2023 ACS survey data will provide a more definitive picture of this new wave of migration.

*Oleh Wolowna is director of the Center for Demographic and Socio-economic Research of Ukrainians in the U.S. at the Shevchenko Scientific Society, and a research fellow at the Center for Slavic, Eurasian and Eastern European Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He can be reached via email at [olehw@aol.com](mailto:olehw@aol.com).*

but many Ukrainian bloggers appeared to confirm that both had been taken by Russia.

Earlier, the Ukrainian Air Force said it had downed 12 out of 13 drones launched by Russia at energy infrastructure targets in the Sumy region. The regional administration said the electricity supply was temporarily cut in Sumy, Romny and Okhtyrka.

(With reporting by Reuters and dpa)

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## Ukraine says...

(Continued from page 1)

It was not immediately clear if the developments were directly linked.

According to the SBU, two colonels from the administration of the State Guard of Ukraine (UDO), whose names were not disclosed, were charged with high treason committed during wartime and preparing a terrorist act.

The two men were arrested after their homes were searched. If found guilty, they face life in prison.

"Counterintelligence and SBU investigators thwarted the FSB's plans to eliminate the president of Ukraine and other representatives of the top military and political leadership," SBU said on Telegram.

"One of the tasks of the FSB agent network was to find performers among the military close to the president's protection who could take the head of state hostage and then kill him," it said.

Separately, Russia and Ukraine accused each other of using banned toxins on the battlefield, according to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

However, the OPCW said the accusations were "insufficiently substantiated." It added, though, that "the situation remains volatile and extremely concerning regarding the possible reemergence of use of toxic chemicals as weapons."

The Chemical Weapons Convention states that any toxic chemical used with the intention of causing harm is considered a chemical weapon.

Moscow and Kyiv have not formally asked the OPCW to investigate the allega-

tions, it said.

Meanwhile, on the battlefield, Russian shelling killed one civilian and wounded eight in several Ukrainian regions, officials reported early on May 7.

One man was killed in Petrivka in the Donetsk region, local administration head Vadym Filashkin said on Telegram, adding that four people were wounded in Kostyantynivka.

Kharkiv Gov. Oleh Synyehubov said three people – including a 16-year-old girl – were wounded when a guided aerial bomb struck the village of Borova in the Izyum district.

Kherson Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin reported that one person was wounded in his region, while in the Dnipropetrovsk region Russian troops shelled the city of Nikopol four times overnight, damaging a gas pipeline, according to regional head Serhiy Lysak.

Early on May 8, Kremlin-installed leader Leonid Pasechnik said an oil depot had caught fire in the Russia-occupied eastern Ukrainian city of Luhansk, blaming the attack on Ukrainian shells.

Another Russia-installed official claimed without providing evidence that Ukraine had used a U.S.-made Army Tactical Missile System, known as ATACMS, in the attack. Further information was not available, and Kyiv did not immediately comment.

Fresh Russian attacks on Ukrainian civilian and infrastructure targets overnight killed two people and caused serious damage to Ukraine's already battered energy infrastructure, regional officials and the military said on May 9.

Russian shelling killed a 62-year-old man and a 65-year-old woman in the southern city of Nikopol, wounding another

two and causing damage to houses and roads, Dnipropetrovsk regional chief Serhiy Lysak said on Telegram.

Russia has been frequently shelling Nikopol and other Ukrainian cities from across the Dnipro River, and starting from October 2022 it has systematically attacked Ukraine's energy infrastructure, causing serious damage and electricity shortages for civilian and industrial users.

Ukraine's Ukrhydroenergo operator said on May 9 that two hydropower plants have been severely damaged by Russian attacks and were taken out of operation, without naming the two units.

Before the war, Ukraine's 10 hydro power plants produced some 10 percent of its electricity. Russia last year blew up the gigantic Kakhovka hydro power plant. Currently, only seven hydro power plants are still in operation and have a largely diminished capacity.

"To date, all hydro power generating capacity has suffered devastating damage. Destroyed equipment requires considerable efforts to repair, restore and significant financial resources. Today, the support, help and decisive action of the international community are more important than ever," Ukrhydroenergo said in a statement on Telegram.

The Energy Ministry said it plans to double electricity imports on May 9 to make up for the losses caused by the latest wave of Russian attacks on its infrastructure.

The imports are expected to rise to 16,699 megawatt hours compared to 7,600 on May 8, the ministry said.

Ukraine's air force, meanwhile, said that Russia had launched 20 drones at targets in the southern region of Odesa, and 17 of those drones had been shot down by its air

defense systems.

Separately, an informed source who spoke on condition of anonymity told RFE/RL on May 9 that Ukrainian drones struck two oil depots in the village of Yurivka near the city of Anapa in Russia's Krasnodar region.

The claim could not be independently verified immediately.

Hours later, an informed security source, also speaking to RFE/RL on condition of anonymity on May 9, said that a Ukrainian attack drone had struck a Russian oil refining plant in the Russian region of Bashkortostan after flying a "record" distance of 932 miles in an operation conducted by the SBU security service.

The claim also could not be verified independently.

In Kyiv, Ukraine's parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, voted on May 9 to dismiss Agriculture Minister Mykola Solskiy and the deputy prime minister for reconstruction, Oleksandr Kubrakov.

Last month, Mr. Solskiy was released on bail after being taken into custody over accusations that he had illegally acquired land worth about 291 million hryvnia (\$7 million).

He had subsequently tendered his resignation. Mr. Kubrakov leaves as the government looks to break apart his ministry, which currently oversees wartime reconstruction efforts amid Russia's full-scale invasion.

(With reporting by RFE/RL's Russian Service)

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## Russia builds...

(Continued from page 2)

Russian leadership that the country remains too dependent on Western technology. President Vladimir Putin has described Russia's dependence on Western technology as "humiliating" and "dangerous" (RBC, November 25, 2022). Other policymakers have gone further. At the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum held in the summer of 2023, Maria Zakharova, Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs for Information Policy, argued that "Washington has sanctioned processes whose logical conclusion is a global digital dictatorship" (ForumsPB, June 15, 2023).

Moscow can rely on the expertise of Russian entrepreneurs who were at the forefront of developing electronic payment systems, such as WebMoney, in the late 1990s. Online consumers at the time sought secure methods of transferring money, and demand spiked for foreign currency in the aftermath of Russia's 1998 financial crisis and the subsequent devaluation of the ruble in 1998.

The drive for import substitution to end dependence on the West is also reflected in a push to protect tech workers from Russia's mobilization efforts. Information technology (IT) workers have been exempted from the draft, and technology companies have been granted tax and preferential mortgage incentives to encourage import substitution of the services provided by Western tech firms before they left the market following Russia's reinvasion of Ukraine in 2022. To that point, there will be no taxes on profits generated by IT companies through 2024 (RBC, February 28, 2022). Russia initially scrambled to contain the outflow of IT talent after its full-scale invasion. The individuals created private information channels on Telegram and other digital platforms to assist one another in fleeing the country (Kommersant,

February 28, 2022).

Russian media outlets indicate that these measures have had some success and that Russian IT companies' service offerings increased by 22 percent in 2023 (Cnews, November 30, 2023). The Russian minister of digital development, Maksut Shadayev, has stated that he is "very optimistic about the future" and the further replacement of Western IT services going forward (Novosti IT Kanala, November 25, 2022).

The broader Russian technology sector faces an uphill battle, despite additional

government incentives. In 2022, Russia's Ministry of Trade released a policy plan for developing the microelectronics and hardware sector through 2030, acknowledging that domestic manufacturing was 10-15 years behind the rest of the world. The plan was nonetheless criticized by domestic manufacturers for not supplying sufficient financial resources to reach the goals outlined (Kommersant, September 13, 2022).

Total import substitution for foreign electronic technology is not a viable short-term goal for the Russian Federation. The

continuing development of alternative payment systems, along with the development of domestic IT solutions, however, is an area where Russia can rely on technical expertise and will likely serve as an example for other countries seeking to subvert sanctions and Western-dominated financial institutions.

The article above is reprinted from Eurasia Daily Monitor with permission from its publisher, the Jamestown Foundation, [www.jamestown.org](http://www.jamestown.org).

## MOSCOW...

(Continued from page 1)

Cameron during a visit to Kyiv on May 2. He said that the Ukrainian attacks on targets inside Russia are "just as" Moscow's attacks are throughout Ukraine.

A 100-year defense partnership was discussed with Ukraine during his visit, and he promised that \$3.7 billion in yearly military support to Ukraine would be provided for "as long as it takes."

Britain has pledged \$15.6 billion in support to Ukraine since February 2022, of which \$9.5 billion was for security assistance.

"We must all step up to ensure Ukraine has what it needs to win," Mr. Cameron said. "Through our multi-year military funding, weapons provision and vital support to protect and repair Ukraine's energy infrastructure, the U.K. is standing with Ukraine."

### Half of energy infrastructure damaged

Relentless Russian aerial bombardment of civilian areas and power stations this year has led to about 50 percent of the country's energy infrastructure being damaged. Rolling blackouts have again been reintroduced, as was the case with the previous wave of attacks last year.

Fifty-five projectiles and 21 drones on May 8 targeted six regions: Poltava, Kiro-

vohrad, Zaporizhia, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Vinnytsia, Energy Minister Herman Halushchenko said on his Telegram channel.

"We will hold Russia accountable for its illegal war," said U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Bridget Brink.

Russia has caused roughly \$12.5 billion in damage to energy infrastructure, with an additional \$1 billion inflicted over the last two weeks, said Andrii Herus, the committee chairman on energy and housing services in Ukraine's parliament.

The biggest aerial attacks occurred a day after Kremlin leader Vladimir Putin was inaugurated as president in what has been called a "sham" vote by Ukraine's Central Election Commission.

Unfair and forced voting took place in the four partially occupied Ukrainian regions of Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhia, the report said. Putin, 71, has been the de facto ruler of Russia since 2000.

### Russian vessel sunk

Meanwhile, a Russian naval speed boat was sunk by a Ukrainian surface drone over the past week in Crimea. Russia uses such vessels for patrolling waters, to fight saboteurs and for search-and-rescue missions. Military experts say that Ukraine has destroyed or damaged about one-third of Russia's Black Sea fleet.

### Another hit on Zelenskyy thwarted

Meanwhile, two colonels of Ukraine's security detail (UDO) that is also assigned to protect the president were arrested by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), the country's counterintelligence agency, this week.

They are accused of being part of a Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) network – the main successor agency to the Soviet-era KGB – and of plotting to assassinate President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, SBU chief Vasyl Malyuk, and Kyrylo Budanov, who heads the defense intelligence agency attached to the Defense Ministry.

The conspiracy network was comprised of five individuals, all of whom were unnamed, and included two colonels serving in the State Guard of Ukraine (UDO).

"One of the tasks of the FSB agent network was to find performers among the military close to the president's protection who could take the head of state hostage and then kill him," an SBU statement said.

Mr. Zelenskyy has told numerous Western journalists to whom he has given interviews that he "has lost count" of the many times Russia has tried to assassinate him since February 2022 when the full-scale invasion began.

The planned hits were supposed to commence before the Eastern rite Easter holiday and were to coincide with Putin's inauguration.

## Members of Scouts BSA from across New Jersey gather at Ukrainian church to pray for war victims

by Joe Shatynski

HILLSIDE, N.J. – Members of Scouts BSA (formerly known as the Boy Scouts of America), Sea Scouts and Cub Scouts from the Pioneer and Fishawack Districts of Patriot's Path Council in New Jersey joined members of Plast Ukrainian Scouting Organization in the United States as well as parishioners at Immaculate

Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church in Hillside, N.J., on March 10 to celebrate Divine Liturgy and pray for those affected by the war in Ukraine.

After singing "God Bless America," the scouts carried the following flags in procession: American (Brandon Banko), Ukrainian (Isaiah Mutyanda) and Vatican (Brianna Marecki). Attendees sang the American and Ukrainian national



Courtesy of Joe Shatynski

Following a church service, Orest Hrycak gave an informative presentation on Russia's war on Ukraine from 2014 until the present that included videos, photos and several maps of Ukraine.



Courtesy of Joe Shatynski

Members of the Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts and Cub Scouts take communion at Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church in Hillside, N.J., on March 10.



Courtesy of Joe Shatynski

Members of the Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts and Cub Scouts from the Pioneer and Fishawack Districts of Patriot's Path Council in New Jersey joined members of Plast Ukrainian Scouting Organization in the United States as well as parishioners at Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church in Hillside, N.J., on March 10 to celebrate Divine Liturgy and pray for those affected by the war in Ukraine.



Courtesy of Joe Shatynski

Scouts Brandon Banko (left), Isaiah Mutyanda (center) and Brianna Marecki hold the American, Ukrainian and Vatican flags, respectively, during a church service on March 10.

anthems.

Scouts Nicholas Shatynski read the Troparion and Kondakion, Natalia Arpino read the Prokimenon, Logan Shepherd read the Epistle in English and Paul

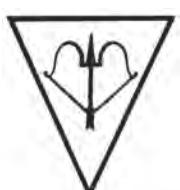
Hadzewycz read the Epistle in Ukrainian. Rev. Vasyl Vladyka, pastor of Immaculate Conception, gave a very informative and inspiring sermon that reflected on how the Scouts were truly living the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

During the Lenten Sorokousty Memorial Service, Rev. Vladyka mentioned, name by name, the deceased scouts' family members, the names of the dearly departed submitted by parishioners, those who sacrificed their lives in the current war in Ukraine, as well as deceased long time Hillside, N.J., resident and New York Yankees shortstop and announcer Phil Rizzuto, Oskar Schindler and the individual names of Hillside, N.J., resident family members who were murdered in the Holocaust/Shoah.

Afterward, in the church hall, Orest Hrycak gave an informative and captivating presentation, titled "Russia-Ukrainian War 2014-Present," supported by videos, photos and several maps of Ukraine.

Mr. Hrycak recently returned from a 6-month deployment in Europe assisting in the relief effort for Ukraine. The attendees thanked him for his dedication and sang Mnohaya Lita (Many Happy Years) and dedicated the luncheon to Mr. Hrycak.

Organizers of the event expressed a special thank you to BSA's Jim Agar, Troop 73 Religious Emblems Coordinator and member of the Newark Latin Archdiocese's Catholic Committee on Scouting; Orest Hrycak, BSA Troop 75 Scoutmaster; and Joe Shatynski, BSA Troop 173 Committee Member for organizing the spiritually uplifting special event.



### ПЛЕМ'Я ПЛАСТУНОК „ПЕРШІ СТЕЖІ“ влаштовує „ДЕННИЙ ТАБІР ПТАШАТ ПРИ ПЛАСТІ“

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(розуміють і розмовляють) українською мовою

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<https://forms.gle/1DwEtBbVx17HCtqSA>

Реченець зголосення: 15 травня 2024 р.

## Ukrainian pro sports update

by Ihor N. Stelmach

### Ukraine wins world hockey championships, advances to Division 1-A

Heading into the fifth and final matchup of the 2024 International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) Ice Hockey World Championship (Division 1-Group B) in Vilnius, Lithuania, on May 3, both Ukraine and host Lithuania realized what was at stake in the game. The winner would be promoted to 1-A, where there is tougher competition and much more prestige. Ukraine seemed to want it more, scoring in each period and claiming the top spot in the standings with a perfect 5-0 record and its first trip to 1-A since 2017.

Ukraine's Danil Trakht scored the first two goals of the game, including a power-play marker in the opening frame. Andri Denyshin made it 3-0 on a third period power-play after drawing a penalty on a dazzling breakout up the ice past three defenders. After a Lithuanian power-play answer late in the third period, Alexander Peresenko iced the victory with an empty net goal 40 seconds later.

Peresenko led all scorers in the tournament with five goals and six assists. Defenseman Igor Merezko was right behind him with nine points (four goals) and Ukraine's goaltending tandem of Bogdan Dyachenko and Eduard Zakharchenko combined for three shutouts and only two goals against in the five games.

Ukraine's other wins in the divisional championship, held from April 27 to May 3, were 8-0 over Estonia, a 4-0 defeat of the Netherlands, a 9-0 romp over China and a 6-1 drubbing of Spain.

The Ukrainian team demonstrated resil-



Facebook.com/WorldCurling

**Ukraine's women's team and the Slovenian men's team were bronze medalists at the European Curling Championships, C-Division, which took place in Dumfries, Scotland, on April 28 through May 4.**

ience simply by participating in the IIHF program with the war against Russia raging on at home. In 2023, Ukraine finished second to Japan, just missing out on promotion to 1-A. This year they were not to be denied.

#### **Ukrainian youngster wins world chess championship**

Oleksii Nakonechnyi won the FIDE U-10 World Cadet Rapid Chess Championship held on April 25-29 in Durres, Albania. The 10-year-old Ukrainian from Truskavets, Ukraine, defeated Russian champion

Roman Shogdzhiev, who competed in the tournament as a neutral player.

More than 300 participants from 43 countries took part in the competition, which was hosted by the International Chess Federation (FIDE).

Nakonechnyi played against 11 opponents, winning seven games and drawing four. Ihor Nakonechnyi, Oleksii's father, told Ukrainska Pravda that he and his son were discouraged from competing in the championship due to the Russian's presence. Instead of heeding suggestions of not attending, the elder Nakonechnyi reasoned

that Ukrainians had already given the Russians too much and it was time to take something back from them. Oleksii's victory kept the Russian player from winning and dropped him to second place.

Shogdzhiev, who played under the neutral FIDE flag, was the favorite to win the tournament according to Ihor Nakonechnyi. Father and son had been preparing for such a potential meeting psychologically and technically for some time. Both were confident that Oleksii would prevail in a showdown.

Young Oleksii has been playing professional chess since 2021, training with a coach online several times per week. The father, a former ballet dancer who works for the Lviv Opera, engages his son in chess matches daily.

The notion that children are weaker players than adults is false, says Ihor Nakonechnyi. He believes young players have little to nothing else on their mind except the game itself.

Oleksii Nakonechnyi entered the tournament in Albania rated seventh, challenged by opponents with different playing styles, and ended up first with no losses.

#### **Ukrainian women win bronze at European curling championships**

Ten women's teams competed in the European Curling Championships 2024 C-Division in Dumfries, Scotland, on April 28 to May 4. Based on their 6-3 record in

(Continued on page 19)

### Ukraine has lost more than 400 athletes during full-scale war

by Ihor N. Stelmach

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky estimated in late February that Ukraine has lost more than 100,000 lives as a result of Russia's full-scale unprovoked invasion that began in February 2022, including some 31,000 soldiers. A report issued around the same time by Ukraine's National Olympic Committee noted that it has lost some 443 athletes.

The Sports Committee of Ukraine, an organization focused on developing non-Olympic sports in Ukraine, created a requiem website titled "Sports Angels" to track athletes who have been killed in the two-year war.

Among the people on the committee's list were the following athletes who lost their lives as a result of Russian President Vladimir Putin's full-scale war on Ukraine.

#### **Daria Kurdel, dance**

A student at the National University of Odesa Law Academy. According to Ukrainska Pravda, the 20-year-old dance champion was killed in a Russian missile attack on Kryvyi Rih. A Facebook post by the university described her as a "responsible, intelligent and ambitious" young lady who was active in student activities and loved sports.

#### **Victoria Kotlyarova, soccer**

A soccer player who played in Ukraine's Women's League and was also a champion futsal player, Victoria, 27, was killed on December 29, 2023, with her mother in a

Russian attack on a Kyiv warehouse that killed a total of 32 people, according to the Kyiv Post. Reports say she had married a few days before her death.

#### **Dmytro Sydoruk, archery**

He first enlisted in the Ukrainian Armed Forces in 2014 after Russia annexed Crimea. After being injured on the frontline, he began pursuing archery, a sport he first took up as a youngster. He qualified for the Ukrainian national team and competed at the 2017 Invictus Games in Toronto, where he won a silver medal. He rose to the rank of junior sergeant in the Ukrainian military before dying in a battle in the Kherson region while serving with the 24th Separate Mechanized Brigade. He was 39.

#### **Serhii Balanchuk, soccer**

Balanchuk was a professional soccer player in the Israeli Premier League after graduating from Dynamo Kyiv's youth academy. After his retirement, he studied and pursued a career in law, according to the New Voice of Ukraine. He was killed by a Russian artillery barrage while defending his homeland in the devastated city of Bakhmut. According to press reports, the city of Haifa, Israel, is looking to honor Balanchuk by renaming the street on which the city's Russian consulate is located. He was 49.

#### **Serhii Pronevych, running**

The 30-year-old was a record-breaking

### Long retired from boxing, Vitali Klitschko fights for Ukraine's freedom



**Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko (left) shows a visiting delegation the aftermath of a Russian attack on the city in February.**

by Ihor N. Stelmach

Vitali Klitschko's last boxing match was at Moscow's Olympic Stadium on September 8, 2012, when at the age of 41 years and 51 days, he defeated Manuel Charr of Germany via TKO when the bout was stopped due to a cut Charr received from Klitschko's punches. On December 15, 2013, Klitschko stepped away from boxing.

However, he has not stopped fighting.

These days he is the mayor of Ukraine's capital city, Kyiv, and has played an integral role in defending Ukraine, the largest war on European soil since World War II. Since

Russia launched its full-scale war on Ukraine, his focus has been on fighting for his country's freedom.

His response to Vladimir Putin's "special military operation" was simple.

"We will never be part of Russia," he said. "We will fight our whole lives to be free."

As a former heavyweight champion of the world, Klitschko was extremely dangerous in the boxing ring. At 6-foot-7, 250 pounds, not only did he tower over his opponents, but his exemplary footwork

(Continued on page 18)

(Continued on page 19)

# Eight-year-old shares her Ukrainian culture with classmates

by Ihor N. Stelmach

SOUTH WINDSOR, Conn. – Lucynka Maksymiuk, an 8-year-old, third-generation Ukrainian American, wanted to add a little something to the curriculum in her music class, so she approached her teacher with an original idea that the class could experience a part of her Ukrainian culture. The music teacher pursued the idea with her school principal and a proposal turned into a plan.

With help from her father, Bohdan, Ms. Maksymiuk found videos of Ukrainian banduras and Zolotyj Promin Ukrainian Dance Ensemble performances and she put together a presentation to her class at Philip R. Smith Elementary School in South Windsor, Conn.

As a result, the second-grade class of American children was enthralled with their guest instructor who taught them about Ukrainian music and dance complete with videos. Ms. Maksymiuk even paired her fellow classmates up and taught them several dance steps.



Lucynka Maksymiuk, an 8-year-old, third-generation Ukrainian American, teaches her second-grade class at Philip R. Smith Elementary School in South Windsor, Conn., about her Ukrainian culture.

Apparently, doing the presentation once was not enough, and she did it again with a second class that featured Ukrainian music. The response from students and staff was so positive and the subject matter so

unique and interesting that the young lady was asked to give her presentation on Ukrainian culture to yet another class in the school.

Even more remarkable, however, was

that Ms. Maksymiuk came up with the idea of doing the presentation herself. She put together a lesson plan and executed it to near perfection. In doing so, she relied on her summer experience at the Ukrainian campground Bobriwka in Colebrook, Conn., where she attended bandura and dance camps last year.

Not content with being a well-rounded, young girl aware of her Ukrainian cultural traditions, she took the initiative to pass along some of her Ukrainian culture to her American classmates, who otherwise would not know about Ukraine. And, as an eight-year-old, she of course did it in a "fun way," she told this correspondent for The Ukrainian Weekly.

Her parents, Bohdan and Gosia Maksymiuk of South Windsor, Conn., spoke with pride of their daughter's remarkable achievement. Her inventiveness could serve as an excellent example for other Ukrainian-American schoolchildren. As her father Bohdan said, her daughter's effort could inspire others to do similar work in their schools.

## Long retired...

(Continued from page 17)

and long reach allowed him to hit from inconceivable angles and impose severe damage on his opponents. While he does not use his boxing prowess in his current position, various media have reported that he hits the punching bag every morning.

Klitschko, was born in the Soviet Union and recalls living under the Soviet regime, worked as a tour guide in Kyiv at age 17

and has much knowledge about his city and his country. But he prefers thinking of the future and describes Russia's unprovoked attack on his homeland as absolute terrorism that has killed thousands of Ukrainians and destroyed their cities.

While boxing and war differ, they share a decisive characteristic. Namely, endurance carries the day. Over the past 26 months, the Ukrainian people have endured immense hardships and yet they will not give in.

Klitschko comprehends the relevance of

being proactive, especially in a fight, and he is adamant that Russians should be banned from the 2024 Summer Olympics. He has said in previous interviews with the press that Russia's invasion of Ukraine must not be forgotten and it should make the same headlines as the Olympic Games.

Klitschko believes in the power of sport to gather the world's attention and he insists that athletes from all over the world should speak out about the ongoing devastation happening in Ukraine.

Despite serving as the mayor of Kyiv,

Klitschko still dedicates time to his favorite sport.

He insists he will always follow boxing news and be grateful for all the sport brought him in life. In the meantime, his priorities are protecting his homeland, fighting for its survival, supporting his country's soldiers and working toward a strong economy.

(Based on reporting by Sports Illustrated's Fan Nation.)

Ihor Stelmach may be reached at [ihorgenia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ihorgenia@sbcglobal.net).

You are cordially invited

**The Shevchenko Scientific Society in the Context of Ukrainian Intellectual History – 150th Anniversary Conference**

The conference features three panels with scholars from the United States, Ukraine, Canada, Germany, Czech Republic, Poland, and Austria discussing the history of the establishment of the Society, its activity, and its influence on Ukrainian intellectual and cultural life from its founding to the present day.

Conference Schedule and Registration: [www.shevchenko-society.org](http://www.shevchenko-society.org)

Sunday, May 19, 2024  
9:00 am to 7:00 pm  
Ukrainian Institute of America  
2 E 79th St, New York, NY

### The Shevchenko Scientific Society in the Context of Ukrainian Intellectual History: Conference Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Shevchenko Scientific Society

19 May 2024, Ukrainian Institute of America

#### CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

9:00 – 9:15

Welcome from Vitaly Chernetsky, conference organizer, First Vice President of the Shevchenko Scientific Society

9:15 – 11:00

Panel I: Nineteenth-Century Ukrainian Intellectual Life under Russian Imperial Rule  
Chair: Halyna Hryni (Shevchenko Scientific Society/Harvard University)

George Grabowicz (Harvard University): *Rethinking the Cyrilico-Methodian Brotherhood: Problems of Historiography and Some New and Old Aporias*

Serhiy Bilenky (Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta): *Before NTSh-A: Scholarship and Politics in 1870s Kyiv*

Fabian Bauman (University of Heidelberg): *Academic Ukrainianophilism and Ukrainian Politics in the Russian Empire under the Ems Ukaz*

Discussant: Susan Smith-Peter (College of Staten Island, City University of New York)

11:00 Coffee

11:15 – 1:15

Panel II: The Shevchenko Scientific Society and Its Impact, in Galicia and Beyond  
Chair: Oksana Kis (University of Richmond/National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine)

Martin Rohde (University of Vienna): *Shevchenko Scientific Society and the Making of Ukrainian "National Science", 1892–1939*

Tomasz Hen-Konarski (Polish Academy of Sciences): *The Sorcerer and His Apprentice: Kyrylo Studyn'skyi and Amvrosii Androkhovych as Historians of the Greek Catholic Clerical Education*

Jan Surman (Czech Academy of Sciences): *(Re)writing Ukrainian Academic Language from Habsburg Galicia to the Soviet Union*

Discussant: Frank Sysyn (University of Alberta)

1:15 – 2:30 Lunch Break

2:30 – 4:30

Panel III: Ukrainian Scholarship and Its Sociopolitical Contexts, from the Nineteenth Century to the Present  
Chair: Olena Nikolayenko (Fordham University)

Anton Kotenko (University of Düsseldorf): *"Scientific Society" or an "Institution of the Most Radical Ukrainianophile party"? NTSh in the Materials of the Romanov Imperial Censorship*

Maryna Palienko (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, New York University): *Ukrainian Diaspora Archives During and After World War II as a Target of Nazi and Soviet Security Services*

Steven Seegel (University of Texas, Austin): *The NTSh and Geography: On Some Challenges and Legacies in the Making of Modern Ukrainian Maps, from the 1860s to Stepan Rudnyts'kyi and The February 24th Archive Project*

Discussant: Vitaly Chernetsky (University of Kansas)

4:30 Coffee

4:45 Concluding Discussion

6:00 – 7:00

Closing Reception

# OUT & ABOUT

May 17 New York	35th season finale concert, with violist Danny Kim, cellist Jonah Ellsworth and cellist Heng-Jin Park, Ukrainian Institute of America, <a href="http://www.ukrainianinstitute.org">www.ukrainianinstitute.org</a>	May 29 Stanford, CA	Presentation by Ambassador Kristjan Prikk and Michael McFaul, "Russia's War in Ukraine and its Implication on European Security: Why Should America Care?" Stanford University, <a href="https://creees.stanford.edu">https://creees.stanford.edu</a>
May 17-19 New York	St. George Ukrainian Festival, St. George Ukrainian Catholic Church, 212-674-1615 or <a href="mailto:osbmnyc@gmail.com">osbmnyc@gmail.com</a>	June 8 Jamison, PA	47th annual golf outing, Ukrainian American Sports Center - Tryzub, The Bucks Club, <a href="http://www.tryzub.org">www.tryzub.org</a>
May 18 Jenkintown, PA	Presentation by Kalyna Procyk and Alex Kyj, "Wine, Wills and Wealth," Ukrainian Educational and Cultural Center, <a href="http://www.ueccphila.org">www.ueccphila.org</a>	June 11 Lancaster, PA	Performance, "Daniel," Ukrainian American Senior Citizens Association in Philadelphia, Sight and Sound Theater, 215-699-6068
May 19 Jenkintown, PA	Spring concert, Voloshky School of Dance, Ukrainian Educational and Cultural Center, <a href="http://www.voloshkyschool.com">www.voloshkyschool.com</a>	June 16 Horsham, PA	Father's Day Heritage Fest, featuring Ukrainian cultural program and soccer matches, Ukrainian American Sports Center - Tryzub, <a href="http://www.tryzub.org">www.tryzub.org</a> or 267-664-3857
May 19 Jenkintown, PA	Benefit banquet, celebrating the 50th anniversary of St. Sophia Religious Association of Ukrainian Catholics, Ukrainian Educational and Cultural Center, <a href="http://www.ueccphila.org">www.ueccphila.org</a>		
May 20 Stanford, CA	Presentation by Andriy Kohut, "Archives at War: The SBU Archives During the Russo-Ukrainian War," Stanford University, <a href="https://creees.stanford.edu">https://creees.stanford.edu</a>		

Entries in "Out and About" are listed free of charge. Priority is given to events advertised in *The Ukrainian Weekly*. However, we also welcome submissions from all our readers. Items will be published at the discretion of the editors and as space allows. Please send e-mail to [mdubas@ukrweekly.com](mailto:mdubas@ukrweekly.com).

## “Essays...”

(Continued from page 8)

Mr. Smeshko's background – he holds a doctoral degree in technical sciences and is a professor of system analyses – manifests itself in his analogy that civilizations, like architectural designs, are built on foundations in the form of pivotal periods in their history that he refers to as "pillars."

Europe's pillars consist of the Hellenic and Roman periods, followed by Christianity and the influence of the Renaissance and the French Revolution. He then traces the impact and interaction of each of these periods on the early residents of Ukraine, including the migratory tribes that settled in the area for various periods and left their mark before moving on to permanent

European "homes." According to Mr. Smeshko, "Ukrainians, more than most others, can readily claim to be descendants of the original multi-ethnic Europeans."

His essays are packed with little-known but very illustrative segments, such as one essay that addresses the reason why many European royal families adopted "Philip" as the preferred name of their progeny; why one of Karl Marx's books was banned in the USSR; the completely false historical claims Putin espouses in noting the "sacral significance" of Crimea for Russia; or the very first European constitution that not only recognized the rights of citizens but also introduced the principle of separation of power.

Although Symon Petliura is widely seen as the "hero" of Ukraine's early 20th-century republic, Mr. Smeshko explains why the real credit belongs to a largely forgotten

"hetman" who, during his brief eight-month tenure, succeeded in restoring his peoples' economy and stabilizing their financial system, introduced a national currency, reopened Ukrainian schools and universities, recreated the National Academy of Sciences, and founded the National Archives and Library.

Of more significant interest to those who follow current trends and research in the ethnic composites of nations would be to learn the identity of the Germanic nation that settled in Ukraine for centuries and then, in the 5th century, went on to found one of the two great Gothic kingdoms within the Western Roman Empire.

Given Mr. Smeshko's extraordinary and unique background, his vision for ensuring Ukraine's future as a powerful, democratic, prosperous and independent European state is particularly interesting. Having

traveled widely, observed various societies, engaged in discourse with some of the world's most respected historians and statesmen, and researched the many hidden corners of Ukraine's past, his insights and counsel – contained near the end of the book – are invaluable in designing Ukraine's own "architecture."

"Essays on the History of Ukraine" is now available through Amazon in Kindle, paperback and hardcover formats. It contains both the Ukrainian and English versions in one volume.

*George Woloshyn is a retired senior executive and Senate-confirmed presidential appointee in the Reagan Administration. He has served as head of government-wide civilian personnel security, national security emergency preparedness and as inspector general of a regulatory agency.*

## Ukrainian pro...

(Continued from page 17)

preliminary play, Ukraine qualified for the semifinal round where they lost to eventual tournament champion the Netherlands 8-7. In the third-place match, Ukraine prevailed over Slovakia, 9-8, after an extra end.

The bronze medalist Ukrainian women's team comprised skip and third Diana Moskalenko, fourth Yaroslava Kalinichenko, second Oleksandra Kononeko and lead Anastasiia Mosol, supported by coach Harry Gow.

### Fighter Potieria dealing with mental health issues caused by war

Ultimate fighting champion middle-weight Ihor Potieria has publicly shared that he has been dealing with mental health issues because of the war in his country. The Kyiv native was preparing to face Michel Pereira at UFC 301 on May 4.

Speaking with the press on May 1, Potieria mentioned he has lost many friends and battled conflicting thoughts in his mind ever since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. He described himself as often "crying inside."

He claims he's gotten better with time, feels stronger inside and understands fighters need to be indestructible both mentally and physically. The healthier approach should benefit him ahead of his bout with Pereira.

### Olympians asked to avoid contact with Russian and Belarusian athletes

On May 2, the National Olympic Commit-

tee of Ukraine and Ukraine's Ministry of Sport issued a formal list of recommendations to its Olympic athletes on preferred behavior in the presence of Russian and Belarusian athletes at the upcoming 2024 Paris Summer Olympics.

Both organizations are asking all members of the Ukrainian Olympic delegation to avoid all direct contact with Russians and Belarusians who are supporting Russian forces in the ongoing war against Ukraine. The recommendations also ask them not to take part in press conferences or interviews with athletes from the two aggressor nations and abstain from being photographed with Russian and Belarusian athletes at medal ceremonies.

Furthermore, Ukrainian athletes are advised to refrain from interacting with Russian and Belarusian athletes on social media to preclude the possibility of any contact leading to conflict or controversy. Ukrainians will be encouraged to report any violations of the neutrality principle by Russians and Belarusians.

### Mykolenko in danger of missing Euro 2024

Ukrainian national football team and Everton defender Vitaliy Mykolenko may miss Euro 2024 due to a suspected ankle ligament injury suffered in 2-0 win over Liverpool on April 24. The left-back landed awkwardly on his left ankle in first-half action, only to continue playing until half-time.

He was substituted during the break and sat out the 1-0 victory over Brentford on April 27.

Mykolenko's injury may mean bad news

for Ukraine's fortunes at Euro 2024 in Germany this summer. He saw action in all of Ukraine's qualifying matches in group play and their playoff wins against Bosnia and Herzegovina and Iceland to earn entry into the tournament.

Mykolenko signed with Everton during the January transfer window of the 2021-2022 season from Dynamo Kyiv. He has made 85 appearances for the English Premier League club, scoring three goals. He has started 28 of the club's fixtures this season (out of 35 matches) and has been called crucial to the team's defense. The

24-year-old has been one of the most improved players under head coach Sean Dyche.

Mykolenko was scheduled to see a specialist to decide if surgery will be required on the injury. If surgery is needed, he is likely to miss the Euros and would not return until next season.

(Based on reporting by IIHF, The Kyiv Independent, Cageside Press, Inside the Games and talkSport.)

*Ihor Stelmach may be reached at [ihorgenia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ihorgenia@sbcglobal.net).*

## Ukraine has lost...

(Continued from page 17)

marathon runner who completed a marathon in 4 hours and 36 minutes running dressed in full military gear in 2019. After Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, he enlisted in the military and was reportedly serving in a reconnaissance unit, mother said according to the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group (KHRP). He was likely tortured before he was killed, according to the KHRP.

### Ihor Boiko, American football

He played in the Ukrainian League of American Football (ULAF) for the Vinnytsia Wolves and the Kyiv Patriots. He passed away in June 2023 at the age of 44 during a military operation in the Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine. Boiko received a tribute on the ULAF's Facebook page for defending Ukraine's freedom and sacrificing his life

for it. He was described as a hero.

### Mykola Poliuliak, snowboarding

A snowboarding instructor, the 38-year-old was a volunteer in the Ukrainian Armed Forces who lost his life defending the city of Mariupol early in war. He was lauded by many for his ability to draw new snowboarders into the sport, both as a coach and mentor.

### Fedir Yepifanov, fencing

Yepifanov was a young, up-and-coming champion fencer who represented Ukraine at international competitions. At age 18, he temporarily walked away from fencing to join Ukraine's military effort. He lost his life on December 13, 2023, while fighting on the frontlines.

(Based on reporting by Business Insider.)

*Ihor Stelmach may be reached at [ihorgenia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ihorgenia@sbcglobal.net).*



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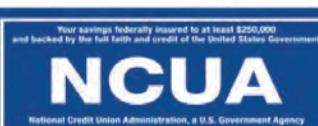
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