

## UKRAINIANS ABROAD: NEWS AND VIEWS #164

Compiled by Serge Cipko, Coordinator, Ukrainian Diaspora Studies Initiative, CIUS (Email: [scipko@ualberta.ca](mailto:scipko@ualberta.ca)).

14 November 2024

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11. Egypt. “Andrii Sybiha Met with the Ukrainian Diaspora in Egypt,” *M2 Presswire*, 27 October 2024.
12. Estonia. “Congress of Ukrainians in Estonia to Host Walk of Gratitude in Tallinn’s Old Town,” *Baltic Daily - Political/Social News*, 24 August 2024.

13. General. “Nearly 7 Million Ukrainians Have Left Ukraine,” *Odessa Journal*, 9 September 2024.
14. Hungary. “Hungary to Open First Ukrainian-Language School,” *New Voice of Ukraine*, 23 August 2024.
15. Malta “Ukrainian Community in Malta to Mark 33rd Independence Day,” *Newsbook.com.mt/en*, 23 August 2024.
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17. Paraguay. “Ucranianos en Paraguay rinden homenaje a sus raíces y celebran 33 años de independencia” [Ukrainians in Paraguay Pay Homage to Their Roots and Celebrate 33 Years of Independence], *Ultimahora.com*, 28 August 2024.
18. South Africa. “‘A Moral Shame’: Ukrainians Outraged by SA Hosting Russian Navy Ship in Cape Town Harbour,” *Daily Maverick*, 4 September 2024.
19. Spain. “La Comunidad Valenciana empadrona más ucranianos que todo el resto de España” [The Valencian Community Registers More Ukrainians Than the Rest of Spain], *La Vanguardia*, 31 July 2024.
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22. United Kingdom. “Ukrainian Community Celebrated by Provost,” *Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser*, 17 July 2024.
23. USA. “Ukrainian Americans in Swing State Pennsylvania Loudly Behind Harris, Quietly Back Trump,” *Kyiv Independent*, 30 October 2024.
24. USA. “Ukrainians Celebrate Their Independence Day by Running in Vyshyvankas,” *Nprillinois.org*, 27 August 2024.
25. USA. “War Shifts Political Views in Chicago’s Ukraine Diaspora,” *Washington Post*, 20 August 2024.
- 1. Argentina. “Fiesta Nacional del Inmigrante: La reina ucraniana y un especial homenaje al músico Rulo Grabovieski” [National Festival of the Immigrant: The Ukrainian Queen and a Special Tribute to the Musician Rulo Grabovieski], *El Territorio*, 9 September 2024.**

María Celeste Neuendorf, reina de la colectividad ucraniana, transita con mucha emoción estos días previos a la elección de la Reina Nacional del Inmigrante. La joven oriunda de San Vicente, en una entrevista realizada en el stand de El Territorio en el Parque de las Naciones de Oberá, dijo estar “muy feliz de representar a la colectividad, a mi familia”, y en ese plano destacó “los días lindos y cálidos” de Fiesta, que favorece la participación de las personas y eso “hace que todo sea muy emocional”.

La colectividad a la cual representa María Celeste es una de las más numerosas, y eso quedó expuesto en el desfile inaugural, con la participación de comitivas de descendientes de varios municipios de la zona centro e incluso de otros puntos de la provincia. “Es un honor ocupar este lugar dentro de la colectividad, más allá de que es una enorme responsabilidad. Siento mucho orgullo”, expresó la joven, quien más allá de ser integrante del ballet Barvinok y de incursionar en la cocina del país que representa, es profesora nacional de folklore y estudia ingeniería industrial en Oberá.

En la noche de este domingo, en el anfiteatro principal del Parque de las Naciones, se realizó la segunda presentación de reinas de las colectividades, y cada una de las chicas tuvo la posibilidad de expresarse bajo la temática “patrimonio cultural”. En ese punto, María Celeste se centró en la figura del músico misionero Rulo Grabovieski, declarado embajador cultural por la Legislatura de Misiones: “Un verdadero tesoro de nuestra comunidad, quien continúa escribiendo capítulos imborrables en su acordeón”, apuntó, y enfatizó que “desde hace 50 años lleva la música ucraniana a cada rincón del mundo, llenando nuestros corazones de alegría y orgullo. Su talento y simpatía acompaña cada año el desfile y enriquece las actuaciones del ballet Barvinok; y en reconocimiento a su dedicación, el escenario de nuestra colectividad lleva su nombre”. Cerró su presentación ante el público que colmó el anfiteatro, afirmando que “Rulo es el alma de nuestra historia viva, su legado seguirá latiendo en cada uno de nosotros”.

[Translation from Spanish into English follows – S.C.]:

María Celeste Neuendorf, the queen of the Ukrainian community, is very emotional in these days leading up to the election of the National Queen of the Immigrant. The young woman from San Vicente, in an interview at the *El Territorio* booth in the Parque de las Naciones in Oberá, Misiones, said she was “very happy to be representing the community, my family,” and in that regard she highlighted “the beautiful and warm days” of the Fiesta [Fiesta Nacional del Inmigrante/National Festival of the Immigrant], which is conducive to the participation of people and this “makes everything very affective.”

The community that María Celeste represents is one of the largest, and that was evident in the inaugural parade, with the participation of delegations of descendants from various municipalities of the central zone of Misiones and even from other parts of the province. “It is an honour to occupy this position within the community, beyond the fact that it is an enormous responsibility. I feel very proud,” said the young woman, who in addition to being a member of the Barvinok dance ensemble and venturing into the cuisine of the country she represents, is a national folklore teacher and studies industrial engineering in Oberá.

On Sunday night, in the main amphitheater of the Parque de las Naciones, the second presentation of queens of the communities was held, and each of the girls had the opportunity to express themselves under the theme “cultural heritage.” In her case, Maria Celeste focused on the example of the Misiones musician Rulo Grabovieski, declared cultural ambassador by the Legislature of Misiones. She described him as “A true treasure of our community, who continues to write indelible chapters on his accordion,” stressing that “for 50 years he has taken Ukrainian music to every corner of the world, filling our hearts with joy and pride. His talent and support accompany the parade every year and enrich the performances of the Barvinok ensemble; and in recognition of his dedication, the stage of our community bears his name.” She closed her presentation before the public that packed the amphitheater by affirming that “Rulo is the soul of our living history, and his legacy will continue to pulsate in each one of us.”

## **2. Argentina. “Fiesta de la comunidad cultural ucraniana Prosvita” [Celebration of the Ukrainian Cultural Community “Prosvita”], *Puntoseguido.com.ar*, 15 August 2024.**

Martha Wolff.

El sábado 10 de agosto se celebró el centenario de la creación del Centro Cultural Prosvita de la comunidad ucraniana en el Auditorio Belgrano. No fue una tarde cualquiera. Fue un canto a la pertenencia a un pueblo que emigró de su tierra por razones políticas en el tiempo entre el nazismo y el comunismo. Un pueblo que hoy vuelve a defender su libertad. Hay 20.000.000 ucranianos en ochenta y dos países entre emigrados y exiliados, uno de ellos la Argentina. Y hoy, haber estado en la puerta del teatro fue reconocer sus rostros eslavos, sus cabellos rubios, sus ojos transparentes y las mezclas dibujando la pertenencia azul y amarillo en sus solapa y pañuelos. Llegaban a la fiesta solidaria que se organizó para esta celebración en escala generacional. Los mayores que fueron, los que huyeron pasando fronteras y mares, hasta encontrar una tierra para radicarse, vivir y desarrollarse, llegaron con sus familias que formaron en este país. Y ahí entraban al auditorio entre canas, bastones y sus acompañantes. La presencia de jóvenes y niños era la expresión más cabal de su adaptación a la Argentina y su continuidad como ucranianos con sus descendientes para disfrutar de ambas identidades.

La fiesta Prosvita fue más que una fiesta, fue una invitación a recordar las raíces tratando de ser destruidas por invasiones y conservadas a pleno entre banderas y danzas. Sobre el escenario, el recorrido por la memoria estuvo a cargo de grupos de baile que danzaron lo que la guerra y el odio quisieron eliminar. Así se sintió que la herencia recibida permanece en el ADN de cada grupo humano con sus costumbres que no puede ser borrada.

La actualidad que vive Ucrania con la invasión rusa despótica ha vuelto a demostrar al mundo el espíritu de lucha de los ucranianos para defender su tierra. Sobre el escenario los grupos de bailes folklóricos de países europeos que se solidarizan con Ucrania, fueron la síntesis de dos grandes valores: la herencia y el rescate de una cultura que ha desafiado las dos dictaduras del siglo XX que quisieron destruirla. Los países que se sumaron con sus bailes fueron un abrazo de solidaridad ante el drama que se está viviendo allí. Las colectividades como la lituana, la polaca y la española se hicieron presentes. Y la italiana con su canción libertaria “Cia Bella Cia” con su música, baile y canto fue el mensaje de libertad al igual que los italianos cantaron al finalizar el

fascismo. Los otros grupos desplegaron un encanto nacional de músicas y vestuario como expresionismo de la pareja y emblema de armonía, amor y alegría.

La sala colmada de gente que ama Ucrania no paró de acompañar a todos los grupos con sus palmas, de cantar los himnos y aplaudir. Fue una fiesta con un alto grado de memoria y de esperanza para un país sometido a la guerra que no pidió ni provocó.

El vestuario le puso nacionalidad y épocas a la belleza del encuentro entre hombre y mujeres de pueblos diferentes de Europa. También estuvieron presentes representaciones internacionales y religiosas. El Auditorio de Belgrano fue una demostración de paz posible de convivencia y respeto para un mundo mejor. Además, hubo nostalgia y orgullo de las viejas y nuevas generaciones para mantener viva la continuidad de las culturas a pesar de la avasalladora modernidad. El final multitudinario de público y personalidades presentes cantando el himno nacional ucraniano hizo llorar a una audiencia entre la felicidad de la celebración y la pena y duelo por lo que pasa en Ucrania.

A la salida la fantasía se hizo realidad cuando todos los bailarines en el hall saludaban a sus familiares con sus ropas típicas de historia e identidad.

¡Feliz centenario Prosvita!

Invitada

Martha Wolff

Periodista y escritora

[Translation from Spanish into English follows – S.C.]:

On Saturday, 10 August 2024, the centenary of the creation of the Ukrainian community's organization Asociación Ucrania de Cultura "Prosvita" in the República Argentina was celebrated at the Belgrano Auditorium. This was not just any other afternoon. It was a ballad to the affinity to a people who emigrated from their land for political reasons in the time between Nazism and Communism. A people who again today defend their freedom. There are 20,000,000 Ukrainians, emigrants and exiles, in eighty-two countries, including Argentina. And today, at the door of the theatre one could see their Slavic faces, their blond hair, their clear eyes, and the mixtures drawing the blue and yellow colours of belonging on their lapels and scarves. They came to the solidarity event that was organized for this celebration which encompassed the generations. The elders, who fled across borders and seas until they found a land on which to settle, live, and prosper attended with the families that they formed in this country. Grey-haired and with canes they entered the auditorium with their companions. The presence of young people and children was the most complete expression of their adaptation to Argentina and their continuity as Ukrainians with their descendants enjoying both identities.

The Prosvita event was more than a party. It was an invitation to remember the roots vulnerable to being destroyed by invasions and fully preserved among the flags and dances. On stage, the journey through memory was led by ensembles who danced what war and hatred wanted to eliminate. And so it felt that the received heritage remains in the DNA of each human group with its customs that cannot be erased.

The current situation in Ukraine with the despotic Russian invasion has once again demonstrated to the world the fighting spirit of the Ukrainians for defending their land. On stage, the dance ensembles representing European countries that manifest solidarity with Ukraine were the synthesis of two great values: the heritage and the rescue of a culture that has defied the two dictatorships of the 20th century that wanted to destroy it. The countries who contributed with their dances presented an embrace of solidarity in the face of the drama that is being experienced there.

Communities such as the Lithuanian, Polish, and Spanish were present. And the Italian with their libertarian song “Cia Bella Cia” with its music, dance, and song imparted the message of freedom just as the Italians sang it at the end of fascism. The other groups displayed a national charm of music and costumes as an expression of the romantic couple and an emblem of harmony, love, and joy.

The hall, packed with people who love Ukraine, did not stop clapping, singing, and applauding all the groups. It was an event with a high degree of memory and hope for a country subjected to the war that it did not ask for or provoke.

The costumes gave nationality and eras to the beauty of the encounter between men and women from different peoples of Europe. International and religious representations were also present. The Belgrano Auditorium was a demonstration of peace, coexistence, and respect that is possible for a better world. There was also nostalgia and pride from the old and new generations to maintain alive the continuity of cultures despite the overwhelmingness of modernity. The finale, which included the singing of the Ukrainian national anthem, brought tears to attendees, a mixture of happiness at the celebration and the sorrow and pain for what is happening in Ukraine.

At the exit, fantasy turned into reality when all the dancers in the hall greeted their relatives in their traditional costumes of history and identity.

Happy centenary, Prosvita!

\*\*\* Also of interest, an article and video on the marking of the centenary of Prosvita in Berisso, a city near the capital of the Province of Buenos Aires, La Plata:  
<https://www.eldia.com/nota/2024-8-31-1-42-13-los-ucranianos-cierran-su-fiesta-del-centenario-l-a-ciudad>

And another piece by Martha Wolff on Ukrainians in Argentina (2022):  
<https://puntoseguido.com.ar/invitado/martha-wolff-los-inmigrantes-ucranianos-tambien-hicieron-la-argentina/>

**3. Australia. “Joy Greets Cardinal Nod for Aussie-Based Ukrainian,” *Australian*, 8 October 2024.**

By Tricia Rivera, Dennis Shanahan

Australia's archbishops have rejoiced at Bishop Mykola Bychok's "unexpected" appointment as cardinal, and have also used the significant moment to commend the Melbourne-based priest's "dignity and strength" in the face of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Pope Francis appointed cardinal-elect Bychok, aged just 44, as the Eparchial Bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saints Peter and Paul of Melbourne in 2020.

Fast forward to this past weekend where the head of the Catholic Church in Rome named the Ukraine-born bishop one of the 21 new cardinals, in a move that has given Australia its first cardinal since the death of George Pell.

Bishop Bychok, a redemptorist priest born in Ukraine, is the youngest member of the latest intake of cardinals and will be formally appointed on December 8.

In his announcement on Sunday, the Pope also revealed that the number of the College of Cardinals will expand to 256, of those, 141 will be qualified to vote for the next pope.

They will include a new swath of cardinals from Japan, The Philippines, Africa, South America, Italy, Canada and Iran.

The Melbourne Catholic Archdiocese said the appointment highlights the significance of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church within the global Catholic communion, as well as Pope Francis' focus on reflecting the breadth of the church.

Melbourne's Archbishop Peter Comensoli on social media called the appointment "unexpected but wonderful news".

"Since first welcoming and installing him into Sts Peter and Paul in 2021, I have witnessed how closely Cardinal-designate Bychok lives after the heart of the Good Shepherd, working tirelessly among the lives of the faithful entrusted to his care," Archbishop Peter Comensoli said.

"To come to a new country and then to face into the devastation for his peoples that the war against Ukraine has brought has been an enormous challenge ... cardinal-designate Bychok has risen to this challenge with dignity and strength." Australian Catholic Bishops Conference president and Archbishop of Perth, Timothy Costelloe, spoke highly of the incoming cardinal and said that he had won the affection and admiration of the nation's bishops.

"As we congratulate him on this new appointment we are reminded again of the terrible suffering of the people of Ukraine," Archbishop Costelloe said.

"This appointment will bring great joy to Ukrainian Catholics here in Australia and indeed throughout the world." Sydney Archbishop Anthony Fisher also celebrated the appointment of the Australian-based bishop.

“It is my sincere wish that this appointment brings both great joy and hope for the people of Ukraine, and Ukrainians in Australia who pray for peace and the end to senseless violence in their homeland,” he said.

Bishop Bychok was born in the western Ukraine city of Ternopil and has taken his work across the globe, serving in the Ukrainian city of Lviv, Poland, and later in the Russian region of Siberia, the US and Canada.

The Ukraine Catholic of Australia, New Zealand and Oceania described the appointment as a “significant event”.

Australia has been without a cardinal since the death of Pell, after an operation in Rome in January 2023, at the age of 81, after years of a campaign to discredit and convict him of claims found to be false by the High Court. Pell had already retired as a “voting” cardinal because of his age and as the Vatican’s “treasurer” after successfully pursuing corruption within the Holy See which ultimately led to revelations and prosecutions of criminal activity within the Catholic Church.

Since Pell’s death there has been an expectation that Australia, with a population of 25 million people, would receive the papal recognition of a red cap – a cardinal’s appointment. But despite strong claims from Archbishop Fisher, Melbourne’s Comensoli and Hobart’s Julian Porteus, who has since resigned because of age restrictions – he turned 75 – there has been no announcement from the Vatican.

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#### **4. Brazil. “Clarice Lispector é tema de exposição no Memorial Ucrâniano de Curitiba,” *Bemparana.com.br*, 3 July 2024.**

Mostra da artista visual gaúcha Graça Craidy apresenta pinturas sobre a vida da escritora, que nasceu na Ucrânia, mas não conheceu o país

A escritora Clarice Lispector, finalmente, encontrará o povo originário da terra onde nasceu, a Ucrânia, e vice-versa, ainda que simbolicamente, depois de mais de 103 anos de seu nascimento, em 10 de dezembro de 1920, e de 46 de sua morte, em 9 de dezembro de 1977.

Por meio da arte, ela será acolhida no Memorial Ucrâniano, em Curitiba, que sediará a exposição “Clarices”, da artista visual gaúcha Graça Craidy. A abertura será na sexta-feira (05/07) e a mostra, de longa duração, ficará aberta à visitação até o final do ano, reunindo 20 pinturas em que a autora é retratada nas diversas facetas de sua vida.

Clarice nasceu em Tchechelnik, na Ucrânia, então pertencente à Rússia, quando sua mãe, Mania, o pai, Pinkhas, e suas irmãs, Elisa e Tania, fugiam da perseguição e ataques aos judeus. A família, com a bebê nos braços da mãe, alcançou a Romênia e a Alemanha, onde embarcou em navio para o Brasil.

Clarice nunca mais voltou à terra que a viu nascer e na qual nunca pisou, embora tenha vivido na Europa depois de casada. Ela naturalizou-se brasileira em 1943, no Rio de Janeiro.

O Paraná é o estado brasileiro que mais abriga ucranianos – entre 500 mil e 600 mil imigrantes e descendentes -, dos quais cerca de 70 mil radicados em Curitiba. O Memorial Ucraniano, dentro do Parque Tingüi, foi inaugurado em 1995 em homenagem ao centenário da chegada dos primeiros imigrantes ucranianos ao território paranaense. O memorial é aberto ao público em geral, com acesso gratuito.

Em 25 de agosto (domingo), o local promoverá festividades alusivas à data da independência da Ucrânia, assinalada no dia anterior, 24, como a leitura de textos de Clarices, considerada a maior escritora modernista brasileira, no espaço da exposição.

### *Contexto especial*

A montagem de “Clarices” no Memorial Ucraniano torna-se especial, na avaliação da artista visual Graça Craidy. “É como se ela estivesse voltando para o lugar onde nasceu, pois o memorial é uma espécie de ‘embaixada’ cultural da Ucrânia. Essa situação dá sentido à famosa frase que diz que ‘a arte existe porque a vida não basta’, do poeta Ferreira Gullar”, ressalta a artista visual. Ela deseja que a figura e a obra de Clarice sejam conhecidas pelos jovens. Na mostra alguns livros da escritora estão à disposição dos visitantes.

Graça apresenta Clarice em diferentes papéis: a escritora trabalhando em casa com a máquina de escrever no colo e o cigarro nos lábios; como esposa de diplomata que vivia no exterior dividida entre a vida conjugal e o desejo de autonomia; a mãe de dois filhos; a tutora do cão Ulisses, por exemplo.

A mostra já foi vista em Porto Alegre, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Niterói, Brasília e Florianópolis. “Embora Clarice Lispector tenha partido há 47 anos, sua prosa se faz muito necessária neste momento histórico de vazio existencial e valorização equivocada do aparente e do fútil”, avalia a artista.

### SERVIÇO

Exposição “Clarices”, da artista visual Graça Craidy

Local: Memorial Ucraniano

Endereço: Rua Dr. Mbá de Ferrante s/nº, Pilarzinho, Curitiba

Período: 5 de julho (abertura, às 14h) até o final do ano

Visitação: de terça a domingo, das 10h às 13h e das 14h às 18h

[Translation from Portuguese into English follows – S.C.]:

*Exhibition by the visual artist from Rio Grande do Sul, Graça Craidy, presents paintings about the life of the writer, who was born in Ukraine but never visited the country*

The writer Clarice Lispector will finally meet the people of the land where she was born, Ukraine, and vice versa, albeit symbolically, after more than 103 years since her birth, on 10 December 1920, and 46 years since her death, on 9 December 1977.

Through the medium of art, she will be introduced at the Memorial Ucrâniano in Curitiba, which will host the exhibition “Clarices,” by the visual artist from the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Graça Craidy. The opening will be on Friday (05/07) and the long-term exhibition, bringing together 20 paintings in which the author is portrayed in the various facets of her life, will be accessible to visitors until the end of the year.

Clarice was born in Chechelnyk [Vinnytsia Oblast], Ukraine, then part of [the Russian Empire], when her mother, Mania, her father, Pinkhas, and her sisters, Elisa and Tania, were fleeing persecution and attacks on Jews. The family, with the baby in her mother’s arms, reached Romania and Germany, where they boarded a ship bound for Brazil.

Clarice never returned to the land where she was born and where she never set foot, although she lived in Europe after she was married. She was naturalized a Brazilian in 1943, in Rio de Janeiro.

Paraná is the Brazilian state with the largest number of Ukrainians—between 500,000 and 600,000 immigrants and descendants—of whom around 70,000 live in Curitiba. The Memorial Ucrâniano, located in Tingüi Park, was inaugurated in 1995 on the occasion of the centennial of the arrival of the first Ukrainian immigrants to Paraná. The Memorial Ucrâniano is open to the general public, with free admission.

On 25 August (Sunday), events will be held connected to the date of Ukraine’s independence, commemorated the previous day on the 24<sup>th</sup>, such as the reading of texts by Clarice, who is considered the greatest Brazilian modernist writer, in the exhibition area.

### *Special context*

The “Clarices” exhibition at the Memorial Ucrâniano is special, according to visual artist Graça Craidy. “It is as if she were returning to the place where she was born, because the Memorial Ucrâniano is a kind of cultural ‘embassy’ of Ukraine. This situation gives meaning to the famous phrase that says ‘art exists because life is not enough’ by the poet Ferreira Gullar,” asserts the visual artist. She wants the biography and work of Clarice to be known by young people. Some of the writer’s books are available to visitors at the exhibition.

Graça presents Clarice in different roles: the writer working at home with a typewriter on her lap and a cigarette between her lips; as the wife of a diplomat who lived abroad, divided between her married life and her desire for autonomy; as the mother of two children, and as the owner of the dog Ulisses, for example.

The exhibition has already been viewed in Porto Alegre, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Niterói, Brasília, and Florianópolis. “Although Clarice Lispector passed away 47 years ago, her prose is very necessary at this historical moment of existential emptiness and the mistaken appreciation of the apparent and the futile,” says the artist.

Exhibition “Clarices,” by visual artist Graça Craidy

Location: Memorial Ucrainiano

Address: Rua Dr. Mbá de Ferrante s/nº, Pilarzinho, Curitiba

Duration: 5 July (opening at 2 p.m.) until the end of the year

Visiting hours: Tuesday to Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**5. Canada. “‘More People...Are Making Peace with Living Here’; Displaced by Unending War, Ukrainians in Calgary Eye a Permanent Life in the City,” *Calgary Herald*, 21 September 2024.**

By Bill Kaufmann

From her home near Kyiv, Kateryna Karpenko saw one of the first acts of a long, gruelling war - and likely won't return even after the guns fall silent.

She recalls seeing Russian helicopters descending on Hostomel Airport on Feb. 24, 2022, ferrying Russian commandos intending to pave the way for a swift capture of the Ukrainian capital.

“I was watching through my window, the black Russian helicopters, and heard explosions. ...I was hiding in my bathroom with my cat,” said the 36-year-old.

The airborne Russian coup de main failed but the war surged into her hometown of Irpin, north of Kyiv, where her apartment block became a battleground and a temporary refuge for the enemy. “My house was on the front lines and the Russians resided for a month there,” said Karpenko.

That trauma and fear for the future was enough to convince the woman to flee her country, first heading to Poland, then Germany.

But Karpenko said she'd read about Canada and sensed it was her destiny.

“In my hopes and dreams, I was already living in Canada,” she said.

She arrived in Regina in October 2022 - her passage aided by the Saskatchewan government and her settlement smoothed by federal benefits and visa policy. A year later, Karpenko moved to Calgary, where she found a job working remotely as a web developer.

When asked about her future plans, the woman muses about a peaceful future in Ukraine and the possibility of returning. But the longer the war drags on, the less likely that is, she said. And even if the war winds down, Karpenko added, a malevolent, vengeful Russia will remain on the country's doorstep.

“I've prepared a passport for my grandmother just in case something bad happens in (her part of) Ukraine,” said Karpenko.

“Now I have a lot of friends, a stable job and I'm thinking of getting permanent residency and bringing my parents here.”

It's a common sentiment among Ukrainian newcomers who now number nearly 250,000 in Canada - more than 70,000 of them coming to Alberta.

According to the province, 33,000 have come to Calgary since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine sparked a wider conflict now heading toward its fourth year, though the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) says not all of those have stayed.

They're not considered refugees or asylum seekers, but have been issued visas that allow them to work and stay in Canada for as long as the war persists, said Olysia Boychuk, president of the UCC's Alberta branch.

Anna Tselukhina, who came to Canada with her husband in October 2022, also said she's leaning toward seeking permanent residency.

The couple were living in China when Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, including into her native region of Luhansk in the country's east.

They'd soured on living in China, but with the war in her homeland, moving back to Ukraine wasn't an option, she said.

Her hometown of Sievierodonetsk had been held by Kyiv's forces during the more limited conflict that began there in 2014, which saw Russia supporting separatist militias in the Donbas region. But in the spring of 2022, the city was besieged by Russian troops and eventually engulfed in vicious street fighting that ended in its occupation by Kremlin forces. “My mom perished in the beginning - volunteers couldn't evacuate her because of the shelling ... only a few months later we found out she'd already died,” said the 47-year-old.

“Eighty per cent of the buildings were damaged or destroyed and only 15,000 of the population of 200,000 people stayed.”

With little reason to move back, Tselukhina and her husband have settled into a life in Calgary that includes jobs as cooks at a café in the Foothills Medical Centre.

They cherish the peace, freedom and safety of Canada, she said, but the agony of their homeland is ever-present.

“Calgary is a wonderful city, we really like it here, but Ukraine's in your heart,” she said. “From the outside, it looks like a normal life, you're smiling, but in the inside there are all of those thoughts.”

Homesickness is common among Ukrainian newcomers who carefully monitor the progress of the war for signs they could possibly return, said Tselukhina, who sees little reason for hope.

Last year's Ukrainian counteroffensive failed and Kyiv's invasion of Russia's Kursk region last summer has so far had little apparent effect on the wider conflict, she said.

"Many people are still homesick and are hoping the war will be over, but it doesn't look like (the Kursk incursion) will work," she said.

Those realities have propelled Tselukhina to join the Ukrainian Canadian Congress to serve as an organizer of public rallies pushing for more Canadian support for her homeland, the most recent protest demanding western weapons supplied to Kyiv be allowed to hit targets deep inside Russia.

Even so, while some friends appreciate their decision to emigrate, others back home question their love for their homeland, she said.

"Most of my friends I worked together with for a long time understand it's a choice for everybody, but some say, 'you're in Canada, your life is wonderful,'" said Tselukhina. "They say, 'you've left, you're not really Ukrainian, you're not patriotic.'"

For weeks at the war's start, Anzhelika Teterych and her boyfriend were trapped in Mariupol, a port city in southeastern Ukraine that was one of Russia's first war objectives and is now under its control. They survived a furious Russian onslaught that reduced much of the city to rubble before embarking on a harrowing journey that would take them to Kremlin-occupied Crimea, through Russia and finally to eastern Europe and Calgary where the couple wed in late 2022. Here, they managed to continue careers they'd started in Ukraine - she in physical training and he in the solar energy business.

"We've found good jobs where we can use our skills, and it's safe," said Teterych, 27. Like other countrymen, the woman watches the war in Ukraine grind on as a third difficult winter approaches under Russian missile bombardment.

"We're not planning to go back to Ukraine," she said.

"It's impossible to live in an occupied territory – there's no future there," she said.

Help from not only governments but the province's pre-war ethnic Ukrainian population of nearly 400,000 has eased the way for the newcomers, said the UCC's Boychuk.

Given their large numbers and the trauma of their exodus, "it's a miracle they've been able to get through it, get settled," she said.

"As we did 130 years ago when we settled this land, we continue to carry on and contribute." Calgary agencies working to settle those fleeing the Ukraine war say their flow into the city is continuing, though it's slowed and could further abate once Ottawa's special visa for them expires at the end of next March.

Local school enrolment also suggests that influx is falling. The Calgary Board of Education says not counting those who've transferred or graduated, it now counts 3,093 war-displaced Ukrainians among its student body. That enrolment has slowed to a relative trickle, with 346 newly registered for this school year compared with 1,903 in 2022-23, says the CBE.

Most of the Ukrainian newcomers, as with the influx from other national groups, seem to be faring reasonably well, said Ricardo Morales, director of community development and integration services with the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS).

But given the city's housing shortage and the large numbers of people moving to the city from around the world, some of the war-displaced are forced to turn to emergency shelters, he said. And the end on Aug. 31 of a provincial program housing Ukrainians for up to 14 days at hotels has added another challenge to finding them accommodation, said Morales.

"We're working with landlords willing to accept Ukrainians under certain conditions - some are receptive, some aren't," he said. Calgary settlement agencies say the influx of newcomers to the city has placed a huge strain on their resources, with Morales saying the solution to one source of them is obvious.

"We need the war to end," he said.

"When you have these numbers of people coming in a short amount of time, we're tapped out."

One alternative is a CCIS program that pairs Ukrainian newcomers with employers in rural areas or smaller centres, easing the pressure on cities such as Calgary, he said.

Since the beginning of the year, about 60 Ukrainians have relocated to rural areas that often badly need a human infusion, said Morales.

"We knew space was becoming a challenge in urban centres and I would love to see rural Alberta benefit from immigration to help sustain these communities," he said, adding the program has enlisted 80 employers and is processing more than 150 newcomer applications.

As with other immigrants, one of the main barriers for displaced Ukrainians is language, with increasingly lengthy wait times for courses that are now nine to 12 months, said Kelly Ernst, chief program officer with the Calgary Centre for Newcomers.

"There are more than 7,000 people on waiting lists. Even in ours, it's 1,000 people and that's a real problem," said Ernst.

Generally, he said, newcomers in Calgary - including Ukrainians - are adapting well because they're driven to do so, but the challenges can't be ignored.

"First and foremost is the affordability issue, and people aren't necessarily getting the housing they expected, they're cramming into smaller places," said Ernst. "But the vast majority we see (to offer assistance) are very short-term."

He noted federal government immigration supports for Ukrainians expire on March 31 of next year - an expected progression in a country facing successive waves of crisis newcomers.

“It’s starting to wind down, it changes our focus to provide services to a broader range of newcomers,” said Ernst.

A small sampling of how recent Ukrainian arrivals see themselves faring in Canada was provided by Calgary expat Bruce Callow, whose efforts have provided dozens of them with airline tickets to reach their new home.

Of seven respondents, just over half stated they were dissatisfied with their life in Canada, though nearly all of them said they were adapting either easily or “neutrally,” with finding a job and the language barrier the main challenges. They were nearly unanimous in saying they plan to stay in Canada permanently.

Mariana Sirko said that while she “really loves Calgary so far,” it’s tough to make a decision on where she’ll spend the rest of her life.

“I can’t say I want to stay in Canada forever,” said the 26-year-old, who arrived last March and lives in Brentwood with her mother.

But she said a lingering, “permanent anxiety” felt by many Ukrainians over the dangers of a war with no end in sight was enough for her to leave her country.

The woman, who fled Kyiv at the war’s start, said she hasn’t yet found a job in her preferred field - museums - but volunteers at the Confluence Historic Site and Parkland. “It’s a similar situation for many Ukrainians who haven’t found jobs related to their experience,” said Sirko. It’s one reason some have returned to Ukraine, she said. “Or they’re homesick.”

Kateryna Zarvii returned to Ukraine earlier this year for a 10-day visit to see family and friends but said, if anything, it solidified her decision to continue making a life in Canada.

“I would definitely go back to visit but I see the future of my life here,” said Zarvii. “It’s really hard to start your life over again and I do like how my life is here.”

Since arriving in Canada in the spring of 2022, the woman’s been helping immigrants at the Calgary Centre for Newcomers and now teaches English on the side.

While the cost of living is high in larger Canadian cities, it’s fast become far worse in a Ukraine stressed by war and shortages, said Zarvii.

“I can’t imagine how people are making it there,” said the 28-yearold who hails from Kremenchuk. “It’s hard for them to hear about a life (like mine) that’s got a predictable future.”

Ukrainian newcomers, she said, are gradually getting better jobs as their English improves, and are making more friends.

“It warms my heart to see people adjusting,” said Zarvii. “It was really hard to predict two years ago - many had never left their hometowns and many people had to start from zero.”

She knows of some who’ve returned to Ukraine but that number is small, said Zarvii.

“More and more people I’m coming across are making peace with living here, getting their permanent residency status.”

While new Calgarian Anna Tselukhina is grateful to live in relative peace, she shares a yearning for some kind of closure with, and salvation for, her homeland.

In her case, it’s to properly grieve by reconciling the death of her mother in her hometown of Sievierodonesk, now occupied. “I would go to visit friends and I would love to visit to see if my mom’s apartment is still there, if any of her pictures are there,” said Tselukhina.

“Who knows if it will happen.”

## **6. Canada. “First Ukrainian Heritage Day to Be Celebrated in Prince Albert,” *Prince Alberta Daily Herald*, 6 September 2024.**

By Michael Oleksyn

Sept. 7 marks the first day that Ukrainian immigrants arrived in Canada, and Veselka, and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress of Saskatchewan (UCC Saskatchewan) will celebrate that feat with the first Ukrainian Heritage Day.

The festivities will run on Saturday at St. George’s Ukrainian Catholic Parish. This is the first time this event will be commemorated in Saskatchewan.

Veselka president Charlene Tebbutt said a few other provinces recognize Ukrainian Heritage Day on Sept. 7, and they’re excited to do the same thing in Prince Albert.

“It’s a significant day,” she said. “Ukrainians, for generations, have been coming to Canada, making Canada their home, and contributing in many ways to the fabric of our country. (They’ve) excelled in many areas in the arts and culture, and many traditions have been brought from Ukraine,” Tebbutt said.

She explained that the UCC Saskatchewan and Veselka were excited to take a lead on the celebration.

The Province of Saskatchewan and the City of Prince Albert have declared Sept. 7 as Ukrainian Heritage Day.

Tebbutt said the commemoration event will feature many celebrations of Ukrainian culture.

“We’re going to have the Veselka Choir is coming to sing. We’re going to talk a little bit about Ukrainian movement and contributions to our province and to our community, so we’ll have a bit of a history lesson almost,” Tebbutt said.

Coun. Dennis Ogrodnick will speak about the history of settlement in the province along with other speakers such as Mayor Greg Dionne.

“It’s just a chance to kind of gather and celebrate our Ukrainian heritage and then we’ll have some Ukrainian dainties that we can share,” she said.

People will be greeted at the door with the traditional bread and salt.

According to the UCC, the first Ukrainian settlers to Canada, Ivan Pylypiw and Vasyl Eleniak, arrived on September 7, 1891. Both 33 years of age, these men were the first of thousands to settle in Canada as part of the first wave of Ukrainian immigration to our country. Between 1891 and 1914, approximately 150,000 Ukrainians arrived in Canada, with the majority settling in the prairie regions of Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Manitoba.

“It will be it’ll be just kind of an afternoon, really, of fellowship. It’s the first time we’re doing this, so hopefully it’ll kind of grow and build. Our Ukrainian Club is very active, very energetic and we were excited to kind of plan a celebration around this day.

Today, more than 1.3 million Canadians identify as being of Ukrainian descent with more than 250,000 newcomers from Ukraine arriving since the full-scale Russian invasion in February 2022 as part of emergency support measures through the federal government.

Tebbutt said that the struggles in Ukraine remain in people’s minds.

“We’re very aware that there’s a lot of devastation and there’s a lot of trauma and sadness and fear around what’s happening in Ukraine, and so we want to celebrate our heritage,” Tebbutt said.

“As always, (we’re) just trying to support those who are coming to Prince Albert and trying to build a new life here in Canada. (We’re) trying to be there for them and recognizing that in many ways, we all have this shared sense of loss and sadness around the war in Ukraine and the invasion by Russia,” she added.

Ukrainian Heritage Day will be celebrated at St. George’s Ukrainian Catholic Church and begin at 2:30 p.m.

**7. Canada. “Canora’s Ukrainian Community Marks Independence Day,” *Preeceville Progress*, 31 August 2024.**

By Devan C. Tasa

CANORA - A bittersweet ceremony marked the recognition of Ukraine's 33rd independence day in Canora.

The event, hosted by the Canora branch of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Catholic Church, was held at the Ukrainian Orthodox Heritage Church on Aug. 24.

The ceremony began with a moleben service, a thanksgiving service that Fr. Ivan Simko of the Ukrainian Catholic Church described as joyful. After that was done, there was a panakhyda, a part of a funeral service where the departed are commemorated and God is asked for mercy on their behalf.

Meanwhile Ukraine is still fighting against a full-scale invasion by Russia that began two-and-a-half years ago.

"It's comforting that we can do this and to recognize where our family came from," said Dorothy Korol, the president of the Canora Ukrainian Canadian Congress. "And there's sadness, of course, that our country is again at war."

Fr. Yuriy Obukh of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church immigrated to Canada from Ukraine.

"It's a special day for me, probably for all Ukrainians today."

He said it was hard to put into words what the ceremony meant to him.

"We're in Canada, but Ukraine is still our home country. It's a part of my life and part of my heart."

Obukh said he was pleased to see people join in prayer.

"You can feel the support for our community."

Simko said his parents left what was then Yugoslavia when he was six weeks old to escape from the conflicts that would break up the country. Between that and the fact his wife has distant relatives in Ukraine, he said he empathizes.

"I've seen my parents, how they struggled. Every time I go back to visit my family in Yugoslavia, my cousins and that, I see the hurt that kind of lingers because of war and destruction," he said.

"War is destructive. We don't sometimes appreciate the depth of the destruction of society through war and the destruction of hope especially."

Simko said the main message of the joint service between the two churches is that there is hope in Christ.

“The war with Russia has brought pain and suffering to our people, but has also revealed in us an unbreakable faith, strength and unity,” he said in a speech. “In these difficult times, we must remember the Lord’s words: ‘Do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul.’ We know that evil cannot prevail, for God is with us.”

The priest said the service was not just about praying for peace in Ukraine, but in Canada and everywhere else in the world.

“We also pray that our people remain united and steadfast, that we do not lose hope or trust in God’s providence. We believe that with God’s help we will overcome all trials and restore peace and justice to our land.”

After the services, lunch was served by the Rainbow Hall.

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress held events across the country to recognise Ukraine’s independence.

“This year, with Russia’s ongoing genocidal war against Ukraine, it is especially important for Ukrainians in Canada to mark this day,” the Congress said on their website. “This is a time to pay tribute to the courage and valour of the Ukrainian people in defence of their freedom.”

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## **8. Canada. “Victoria’s ‘Ukrainian Village’ to Close, But Support Will Not End,” *Victoria News*, 1 August 2024.**

By Ben Fenlon

For two years, refugees displaced by war have been welcomed at the ‘Ukrainian Village’ in Victoria, but next month the facility will be closing its doors. However, support in the community for those affected is going nowhere.

According to the Ukrainian-Canadian Cultural Society of Vancouver Island, refugees living on the Island still need help with accessing affordable housing, employment, language classes, food and as the war continues, there has been a “significant increase” in the number of people needing mental health support.

“We’ve gone from page one on the storyboard to page 25, this is not over,” said Alec Rossa, vice-president of Ukrainian-Canadian Cultural Society of Vancouver Island and president of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church. “It doesn’t stop here just because the village is closing, the support is still needed and it still continues.”

Officially known as Kiwanis Village Society’s Heatherington House, located on Cook Street, the Ukrainian Village has helped 131 people escape the war and start a new life on Vancouver Island since August 2022.

According to Rossa, roughly 100 people have remained on Vancouver Island, with some moving to other parts of the country. About a dozen people have returned to Ukraine after struggling to adjust to the culture and learn English. The village is closing next month as the cultural society's lease is coming to an end. A steady decline in the number of refugees coming to the Island, caused by the end of Canada's emergency travel program for Ukrainians wrapping up in March, has also been cited as a reason for its closure.

Rossa describes the closure as "bittersweet", but says that he and his colleagues feel "very proud" about what they achieved.

"There was nothing like this in the entire country that I'm aware of," Rossa said. "The thing I was most proud about is that we created a one-stop shop – helping them with medical tests, social insurance numbers, health cards and driving licences. It was somewhere they could feel safe and speak their own language."

The remaining residents, around 10 people according to Rossa, will move out of the village by Aug. 15. Some have secured accommodation in the area, but others have found the search a struggle.

"There is still a need for affordable housing for these people," said Rossa. "Or sponsor families that could provide somewhere for them to stay until they can find something."

As village residents prepare to pack up and move on, the cultural society, alongside its partners at the Ukrainian Catholic Church and the Help Ukraine Vancouver Island Society, show no signs of winding down other means of support on offer.

Food share programs in Saanich, Courtenay, Comox and Nanaimo continue to collect do-nations and purchase groceries to distribute to Ukrainians in need. Spiritual guidance and support remains offered at the church, and the cultural society remains committed to organizing events that create a space for people to connect.

"We're also continuing to meet with and help newcomers that are coming here from other provinces," said Rossa.

But according to Rossa and the Vancouver Island Counselling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees, the most pressing need is for mental health support. The Victoria-based counselling centre has recently appealed for funding to help meet a "significant increase" in demand for their services, which has left their resources "stretched thin."

"Your support is a lifeline for those who are struggling to overcome the trauma of displacement and rebuild their lives in a new country," said Dr. Soraya Centeno, director of clinical services, in a letter to the community.

Rossa said that he and his colleagues intend to donate money and continue fundraising to help more Ukrainians access the support that they need.

“We hope to be able to help at least 30 people,” said Rossa, adding he hopes the community will also offer their support.

“From the beginning, the community at large has been incredibly supportive,” said Rossa praising local employers, benefactors and volunteers. “And I’m sure that won’t stop.”

To find out more about the Ukrainian-Canadian Cultural Society of Vancouver Island, visit: <https://uccsvi.ca/>. For more information about the Vancouver Island Counselling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees and their appeal, visit: [www.viccir.org](http://www.viccir.org).

## **9. Canada. “New Ukrainian Canadian Travelling Exhibit on Display at Richmond Museum,” *Richmond News*, 30 July 2024.**

By Valerie Leung

A new exhibit on the contributions of Ukrainian Canadians is on display at the Richmond Museum.

Titled Canada, Here We Are! is a travelling exhibit from the Royal BC Museum and will be on display at the museum inside the Richmond Cultural Centre until Jan. 22 next year.

The exhibit celebrates the more than 1.3 million Canadians who can trace their ancestry to Ukraine and/or Ukrainian Canadian history and culture.

It highlights the enduring impact Ukrainians have on life in Canada and includes displays of Ukrainian Easter eggs, textiles and a traditional bread and salt offering.

Some artifacts are also loaned by Richmond’s Ukrainian Community Society’s Ivan Franko.

This exhibit was created in partnership between the Royal BC Museum, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and the Honorary Consulate of Ukraine in Vancouver.

“This exhibit helps Canadians and newcomers to this great country to understand the most important steps of our community’s 131 years long journey in Canada and the most significant contributions made to enriching Canada’s multicultural landscape and strengthening its social, cultural and economic life,” said Natalie Jatskevich, vice president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress – National Council.

“This exhibit also presents a wonderful opportunity for Ukrainian Canadians to reflect on their rich heritage and culture and the ways of giving back to the land where they have made their homes.”

The exhibition first came to life in 2016 as Bread & Salt to celebrate the 125th anniversary of Ukrainians in Canada and was updated in 2022.

## **10. Canada. “Drobot Church Celebrates 115 Years of Faithfulness,” *Sasktoday.ca*, 22 July 2024.**

By Rocky Neufeld

*Each individual grave in the cemetery was blessed, with congregants singing the traditional Orthodox Lament Vichnaya Pamyat (Eternal Memory).*

BUCHANAN -Having been established in 1909, the St. Nicholas Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Drobot District, located north of Theodore near Buchanan, recently celebrated the 115th anniversary of the parish's establishment (Chram).

According to information provided by church members, the June 30 celebration took place, "with friends and family, some of whom are descendants of the pioneers who built the church and cemetery, and lie therein."

The Drobot church as well as other Canora and area community churches are currently served by Fr. Yuri Obukh who with his wife Liudmyla immigrated to Canada recently.

The traditional mass was led by Fr. Yuri Obukh with his wife Dobr. Liudmyla assisting in singing as well as altar server, Kevin Stewart, and cantor Zenovia Zuch. Fifth and sixth generation descendants of pioneers interred in the Drobot cemetery were present on this day of celebration and the traditional three kolachi (braided bread) and fruit graced the church.

With the congregation moving out of doors, Father Obukh blessed water in remembrance of Jesus' baptism and the revelation of the Holy Trinity as well as the Orthodox belief that creation is sanctified through Christ. The blessed water is used to bless the graves in the cemetery and can be taken home by the faithful to use to bless their homes or to drink in sickness.

This segment of the day's religious services was followed by a procession of the parishioners who walked a circle around their church singing hymns with the Fr. Obukh blessing the building with the newly sanctified water.

Parishioners and Fr. Obukh then gathered at the Drobot cemetery, described by Wikipedia as the largest rural cemetery in Saskatchewan with 350-plus graves. The three kolachi and a variety of bowls of fruit and sweet treats were placed on the crucify platform and blessed before Fr. Obukh with cantor Zenovia Zuch, altar server, Kevin Stewart and cross bearers Michael Makowski and Orville Drobot blessed each individual grave in the cemetery, with congregants singing the traditional Orthodox Lament *Vichnaya Pamyat* (Eternal Memory).

As Drobot Church experienced a fire in 1927, which destroyed the church records and the wooden crosses in the cemetery, metal crosses, with no names have been placed where it appears there may be a burial mound. These also were blessed.

A dinner followed complete with the traditional foods of the local Ukrainian community, including cabbage rolls, perogies, cornmeal, mashed beans, and a variety of salads and side dishes as well as meats to round out the meal, concluding the celebration.

The booklet published to mark the church's centennial in 2009, which used information found in Dr. Jennie Dutchak's *Mamornitz Revisted*, states that original settlers of the Drobot district were primarily from the Province of Bukovyna in Ukraine. Some of the villages they immigrated from were: Dobrynivtsi, Dorashivtsi, Horoshivtsi, Tovtry, Vaslov, Ivtsti and Vashkivtsi. These settlers endured many and extreme hardships. To be helped in these difficult times, the pioneers felt the strong need for spiritual support.

The founding fathers of the church were: Tanasko Drobot, Hryhoryi Dariichuk, Gregoryi Kereliuk, Dmytro Kerelchuk, Domentyi Hupka, Georgii Kozak, Dmytro Magas, Kost and Onufrii Maksymiuk, Diordi Pasichnyk, Nykolai and Vasyl Stinka, Petro Wasylovych, Dmetro Sas, Ivan Stinka and Ivan Zaharia.

St. Nicholas Ukrainian Orthodox church was established on Dec. 23, 1909. The four acres of land for the church site was donated by Gregoryi Kereliuk, a pioneer settler who came to Canada in 1902. On Dec. 23, 1909 the Certificate of Title to the land site was issued to the first trustees of St. Nicholas Church: Tanasko Drobot, Aleksander Wasylovych, Tanasko Darichuk, Georgi Pasichnyk and Domentyi Hupka.

The church was constructed of logs. The structure had an added porch and was topped with a "banya" (steeple) and a cross.

The Russian Orthodox Church had begun missionary work and its priests were the only priests available to serve the Ukrainian Orthodox churches. Rev. Ioan Zlobin was one of the first priests to serve the parish between 1909 and 1914.

In February of 1927, an accidental fire destroyed the church and most of its contents. Through the valiant effort of some parishioners, a few articles were saved. The rest of the contents and records were destroyed.

Construction of the new and bigger church began that same year on the original site and was completed on March 18, 1928. A cross, to mark the commemoration and consecration of the Feast Day of the Pentecost, was erected in 1930 by parishioners Vasyl and Paraska Stefanyshyn. The chandelier and the Royal Doors were carved by a Polish carpenter in 1933.

The four-acre churchyard also had on site a parish residence (built before 1914), a horse shed (which still exists), a bell tower with four bells (built by George and Teodor Halyk, and Dmytro Magas), and the large cemetery. The residence was in use until 1933, then it was sold. In 1947, the parish purchased a large mess hall in Yorkton from the Royal Canadian Air Force. The building was moved to the present site, across the road from the church. This facility was the site of many church dinners, concerts, weddings and Saturday night dances.

Many years ago, a fire ravaged the cemetery site. The wooden crosses marking gravesites were destroyed and other crosses had deteriorated beyond repair.

In the early 1990s, the members of the parish had metal Orthodox crosses made. These crosses were placed wherever there were burial mounds without a marker.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the St. Nicholas church and the forefathers who established the parish, a large cross was built, erected and donated by Rose (Magas) Popowich, and Jerry and Phyllis Viczko, descendants of the Magas family. This family was also instrumental in the construction and installation of the gates at the entrance to the churchyard. The membership of church has been steadily declining. But dedicated members and descendants of the pioneer families have diligently and tirelessly strived to preserve, maintain and enhance the church site.

The centennial booklet included a dedication “to the men and women who came to this country 100 years ago. They were greeted by a wilderness, severe climate conditions, a strange language and loneliness. They struggled through unimaginable difficulties. Sweat and tears flowed freely. They put their faith in God to carry them through and built for us everything that we see around us today. May God remember them in his kingdom.”

For the future, the congregation, supported by donations of family interred in the cemetery, plans two projects to maintain this historic church.

1). Cemetery restoration project: To facilitate ongoing upkeep of the cemetery, those grave covers which have sunk will be levelled with new topsoil brought in, grave covers which are broken or damaging to equipment will be removed and leaning markers will be straightened. Any family member who wishes to discuss this work is asked to call Chris Drobot at 306-543-7855 to make an appointment with the project team.

2). Church hall: The siding on the hall, purchased from the RCAF in 1947, will be replaced with materials yet to be confirmed.

“This congregation looks forward to many more years of worship and community in our church and hall,” concluded the information provided by church members.

## **11. Egypt. “Andrii Sybiha Met with the Ukrainian Diaspora in Egypt,” *M2 Presswire*, 27 October 2024.**

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Andrii Sybiha met in the framework of his official visit to the Arab Republic of Egypt with the local Ukrainian community.

The Minister noted the need to unite Ukrainians abroad, to preserve national traditions and culture, and to instill in the younger generation of Ukrainians love for their own country and national identity.

Andrii Sybiha expressed his gratitude to the Ukrainians of Egypt for their organization and active work. He separately emphasized the importance of promoting by diaspora the national interests of our state and strengthening its international reputation by means of public and cultural diplomacy.

The Minister especially welcomed the initiative of community activists to establish in 2022 a Ukrainian Saturday School in Cairo at the Embassy of Ukraine. This school in practice promotes the study of the Ukrainian language, literature and history, and the education of the Ukrainian generation of victory. The Ukrainian Foreign Minister also positively noted the activity of similar cultural and educational centers of Ukrainians in other cities of Egypt.

Meeting participants exchanged views on the current state of the Ukrainian-Egyptian relations and ways to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the face of full-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine.

The meeting also discussed issues of institutionalization of the presence of the Ukrainian community in Egypt, preservation and support of ties with the historical Motherland, proposals for the popularization of the Ukrainian culture and traditions.

The Minister briefed the community on the priority tasks of Ukraine's policy regarding Ukrainians abroad and the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in this area. He assured of further support for the development of Ukrainian communities and support of their ties with Ukraine.

Distributed by APO Group on behalf of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.  
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## **12. Estonia. "Congress of Ukrainians in Estonia to Host Walk of Gratitude in Tallinn's Old Town," *Baltic Daily - Political/Social News*, 24 August 2024.**

TALLINN, Aug 24, BNS – The Congress of Ukrainians in Estonia invites everyone to participate in the traditional walk of gratitude, "Glory to Ukraine! Long Live Estonia!" which will take place on Saturday in celebration of Ukraine's Independence Day, starting at 1 p.m. The meeting point is the Ukrainian Cultural Center in the Old Town of Tallinn.

"We will walk through the streets of the Old Town to Freedom Square, where there will be a public meeting and a small concert by young performers. Let us celebrate together the most important day for the Ukrainian people -- the day of the restoration of statehood," the organization wrote on social media.

"We would also like to thank Estonia, which always supports Ukraine. Come everyone, with your children and friends -- Ukrainians, Estonians, people of other nationalities. So that everyone can say together: 'Glory to Ukraine! Long live Estonia!'"

Baltic News Service.

## **13. General. "Nearly 7 Million Ukrainians Have Left Ukraine," *Odessa Journal*, 9 September 2024.**

From January 1 to August 19, 2024, the number of Ukrainian migrants abroad increased by nearly 400,000 people, reaching 6.7 million. This was reported by the National Bank of Ukraine in its monthly macroeconomic and monetary review for September 2024.

The report lists the countries where the largest number of Ukrainian refugees have settled:

- Germany: 1.1 million people
- Poland: 976,000 people
- Czech Republic: 361,000 people

The National Bank noted that host countries are gradually tightening conditions for Ukrainian citizens.

In Poland, conditions are being created for transitioning from temporary protection to residency. As of July 2024, the one-time allowance of 300 zlotys for living and the 40 zlotys for living and food in private homes have been canceled for most.

In the Czech Republic, a limit is being introduced for residence in state humanitarian housing—no more than 150 days. After this period, standard rental conditions apply.

In Germany, the employment rate among Ukrainians is the lowest in the EU due to significant social benefits, which are planned to be reviewed. There will also be stricter responses to refusal to work.

Ukrainian authorities are openly interested in having Ukrainians return home: both to increase tax revenues and boost the state budget, and to mobilize for the army and support the labor market, which continues to face challenges.

“The shortage of workers, especially skilled ones, remains significant. After a slight decrease, likely caused by reduced demand due to business interruptions from energy supply issues, the Institute of Economic Research (IER) survey shows that the shortage of skilled workers has reached a new peak. According to the Razumkov Center survey, 60% of employers reported a shortage of staff in their companies,” the National Bank’s review states.

Additional points from the National Bank’s analysis include:

- Ukraine's budget needs in August were primarily financed through increased international aid. A total of \$8.4 billion was received, of which \$5.5 billion were grants.
- The growth of short-term hryvnia deposits by the population ceased in June, which officials attribute to increased devaluation expectations and rising household expenses on energy equipment.
- In August, the energy situation stabilized, notably due to the resumption of nuclear power plant operations and normalization of temperatures after record heat in July. As a result, business expectations improved and economic activity revived.
- Industrial inflation—the rise in producer prices—continued to increase, growing from 26.7% in June to 33.3% in July. This was mainly due to rising energy prices, explained by a shortage of electricity from lost generating capacities, higher electricity import prices, and increased costs for alternative energy sources.
- Food prices accelerated, particularly bread prices due to rising raw material and production costs, as well as meat and meat products due to higher procurement prices.

- New car sales rose by 34.7% month-over-month and 34.6% year-over-year—a record high since December 2021. This increase is driven by expectations of tax changes, including a 15% military levy on the purchase of vehicles upon initial registration in Ukraine.

#### **14. Hungary. “Hungary to Open First Ukrainian-Language School,” *New Voice of Ukraine*, 23 August 2024.**

Starting on Sept. 1, the first Ukrainian-language school in Budapest, Hungary, will enable students to study in both Hungarian and Ukrainian, Viktor Mykyta, Ukrainian governor of Zakarpattia Oblast announced on Aug. 23.

Ukrainian children living in Budapest will begin their education at the new school, with Hungarian taught as a second language.

“A historic event for Ukrainians in Hungary, the significance of which is hard to overstate,” said Mykyta.

“The first state-run Ukrainian-Hungarian bilingual secondary school and gymnasium has been officially registered in Budapest. A separate building, which meets all the current legal requirements, has already been prepared to facilitate the educational process.”

The funding for the school is being provided by Hungarian government.

On July 2, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced that he had discussed the opening of a Ukrainian school in Hungary with Hungarian PM Viktor Orban during his visit to Kyiv.

#### **15. Malta “Ukrainian Community in Malta to Mark 33rd Independence Day,” *Newsbook.com.mt/en*, 23 August 2024.**

By Jurgen Balzan

The Ukrainian community in Malta is set to commemorate the 33rd anniversary of Ukraine’s independence with a public event on Saturday 24 August.

This celebration is part of the global campaign “Stand With Ukraine – Help Defend Our Independence,” organised by the Ukrainian World Congress.

The event, supported by the Foundation for the Ukrainian Community of Malta, will take place at 6:30pm near the Triton Fountain in Valletta. It promises to be a vibrant showcase of Ukrainian culture, featuring performances of traditional songs, dances, and live music by community members.

Distinguished guests from various diplomatic missions, including the US Embassy, French Embassy, British High Commission, and the Embassy of Japan in Malta, are expected to attend.

The program will also include speeches from diplomatic representatives and international volunteers, highlighting the global support for Ukraine's sovereignty.

Olena Khylo, Policy Director of the GLOBSEC Ukraine and Eastern Europe Programme, reflected on the significance of this year's celebration: "This year, Ukrainian Independence Day simultaneously brings sadness and pride. Sadness for the lost lives of those who were part of the Ukrainian future. And pride for the determination and courage of the Ukrainian people to defend their freedom and future."

The timing of the event is particularly poignant, as it marks the third consecutive year that Ukraine's Independence Day has been observed under the shadow of ongoing conflict. Organizers emphasize that this holiday now resonates beyond Ukraine's borders, symbolizing a united stand for peace, justice, and the right to self-determination.

The Ukrainian community extended its invitation to both Malta's residents and visitors to join in this significant occasion, fostering solidarity and cultural exchange.

The event follows Ukraine's Flag Day on 23 August, which commemorates the first raising of the blue and yellow Ukrainian flag in Kyiv since 1920. The Independence Day celebration on August 24 marks the anniversary of the 1991 Act of Proclamation of Independence of Ukraine, a pivotal moment in the nation's history.

#### **16. Norway. "One Out of Two Ukrainians Living in Norway Are in Work," *Nordic Daily*, 13 September 2024.**

Oslo, Norway: As many as one in two Ukrainians who have lived in Norway for two years are in work, figures from Statistics Norway show. The government has taken several measures to get more people into work. We have made the introductory program more work-oriented, and we have made Norwegian training more flexible by making it easier to combine Norwegian training with work. I am therefore happy that this is yielding results. We will make demands on those who come here, but we will also stand up for them, says Minister for Employment and Inclusion Tonje Brenna.

The new figures from Statistics Norway show that in June this year approximately 32 percent of all Ukrainians in Norway were in work. The proportion is approximately 38 per cent for those who have lived in Norway for one year, and approximately 48 per cent for those who arrived two years ago. Most of the Ukrainians who have arrived after the outbreak of war work as cleaners, shop assistants, and kindergarten and school assistants. Since the start of the war at the beginning of 2022, we have settled close to 80,000 displaced people from Ukraine. Ukrainians in Norway now make up the largest refugee group in Norway, yet the figures from Statistics Norway show that they find work faster than other groups.

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#### **17. Paraguay. "Ucranianos en Paraguay rinden homenaje a sus raíces y celebran 33 años de independencia" [Ukrainians in Paraguay Pay Homage to Their Roots and Celebrate 33 Years of Independence], *Ultimahora.com*, 28 August 2024.**

*En un emotivo acto, la colectividad ucraniana que reside en el Sur del país celebró la declaración de independencia de Ucrania, en 1991. Recordaron a los caídos y abogaron por la paz en el mundo.*

Mediante una ceremonia y ofrenda floral frente al busto del poeta Tarás Shevchenko, en la Plaza de Armas de Encarnación, inmigrantes y descendientes ucranianos rindieron homenaje a sus raíces; recordaron a sus héroes y caídos y celebraron la independencia del país europeo. La celebración contó con la presencia del cónsul de Ucrania en Paraguay, Andrés Trociuk Lewko; el gobernador de Itapúa, Javier Pereira; el presidente de la Asociación Ucraniana Cultura Prosvita, Andrés Baranski y miembros de la colectividad ucraniana en Itapúa e invitados especiales.

#### *Una fecha para abogar por la paz*

Ucrania declaró su independencia de la extinta Unión Soviética un 24 de agosto de 1991. Durante el evento realizado, el cónsul indicó que celebran la independencia, “pero es una independencia por la cual se sigue luchando y que ha costado caro al país por las invasiones rusas a Ucrania desde el año 2014”, comentó.

También apuntó que al inicio de la guerra estaban convencidos de que Ucrania iba a resistir. “Esa convicción que siempre tuvimos de resistir y el heroísmo representa al pueblo ucraniano. Desde el inicio de la guerra, el pueblo ha resistido afrontando esa situación con mucho dolor, con una economía destruida, varios inviernos sin provisión de gas y energía eléctrica. Sin embargo sigue resistiendo por su soberanía y libertad, eso no tiene precio y no se negocia”, puntualizó.

El diplomático señaló que en el último año, “la guerra quedó estancada por las fortificaciones que han construido los rusos y porque han minado muchísimos territorios”. Agregó que “en estos últimos 15 días la guerra se trasladó al territorio ruso, que resultó ser desprotegido”.

Trociuk también recordó que son miles los daños, muertos y heridos entre soldados, la población civil de niños, mujeres, bombardeos indiscriminados a las ciudades, hospitales, escuelas, orfanatos, entre otras destrucciones. “Por eso ha sido emitida una orden de arresto contra Vladimir Putin (presidente de Rusia) y algunos ministros de su gabinete, debido a los crímenes de guerra”, agregó.

Por último, manifestó que es imposible pronosticar un pronto final de la guerra iniciada por el gobierno del dictador ruso. “Lamentablemente, tengo que decir que este conflicto está para rato, no creo que tenga una salida rápida porque Putin está engegucido por tomar toda Ucrania y que seamos rusos, algo que no va a ocurrir nunca”, expresó.

#### *Un segundo homenaje*

También realizaron una segunda conmemoración en la ciudad de Fram, departamento de Itapúa, en la plazoleta de la colectividad ucraniana, donde abogaron por la paz tanto en Ucrania como del mundo

[Translation from Spanish into English follows – S.C.]:

*In an emotional event, the Ukrainian community residing in the south of the country celebrated the declaration of independence of Ukraine in 1991. They remembered the fallen and advocated for peace in the world.*

Through a ceremony and floral offering in front of the bust of the poet Taras Shevchenko, in the Plaza de Armas of the city of Encarnación, in the Department of Itapúa, Ukrainian immigrants and descendants paid tribute to their roots; they remembered their heroes and fallen and celebrated the independence of the European country.

The event was attended by the [Honorary Consul] of Ukraine in Paraguay, Andrés Trociuk Lewko; the Governor of Itapúa, Javier Pereira; the President of the Asociación Ucraniana Cultura “Prosvita,” Andrés Baranski; members of the Ukrainian community in the Department of Itapúa, and special guests.

#### *A date to advocate for peace*

Ukraine declared its independence from the former Soviet Union on 24 August 1991. During the event, the [Honorary Consul] noted that they celebrate independence, “but it is an independence for which they continue to fight and that has cost the country dearly due to the Russian invasions of Ukraine since 2014,” he remarked.

He also pointed out that at the beginning of the war they were convinced that Ukraine would resist. “The conviction that we always had to resist and the heroism represent the Ukrainian people. Since the beginning of the war, the people have resisted, facing that situation with much pain, with a destroyed economy, several winters without gas and electricity. Yet they continue to resist for their sovereignty and freedom, which is priceless and unnegotiable,” he said.

The diplomat pointed out that in the last year “the war became stagnated by the fortifications that the Russians have built and because they have mined many territories.” He added that “in these last 15 days the war moved to Russian territory, which turned out to be unprotected.”

Trociuk also recalled that the damages, dead and wounded among the soldiers, the civilian population of children and women, the indiscriminate bombings of cities, hospitals, schools, orphanages, among other destructions, are legion. “That is why an arrest warrant has been issued for Vladimir Putin (President of Russia) and some ministers of his cabinet, due to war crimes,” he asserted.

Finally, he declared that it is impossible to predict that the war started by the Russian dictator’s government will end soon. “Unfortunately, I have to say that this conflict is here for a while. I do not think there will be a swift solution because Putin is blinded by the desire to take over all of Ukraine and make us Russian, something that will never happen,” he said.

#### *A second tribute*

A second commemoration was also held in the city of Fram, in the Department of Itapúa, at the square of the Ukrainian community, where they advocated for peace both in Ukraine and in the world.

## **18. South Africa. “‘A Moral Shame’: Ukrainians Outraged by SA Hosting Russian Navy Ship in Cape Town Harbour,” *Daily Maverick*, 4 September 2024.**

By Peter Fabricius

While the Smolny was in the Cape Town harbour, Russia killed scores of Ukrainians in missile attacks. Later this month, South Africa is expected to welcome a long-range Russian bomber at Africa’s largest air show.

The Ukrainian community in South Africa is outraged at South Africa hosting a Russian Navy ship in Cape Town while the Russian military killed scores of Ukrainians, including children, in a major spike in missile attacks over the past week.

The Russian naval training ship Smolny, part of the Baltic Fleet, quietly visited Cape Town harbour on 29 August. It left again on 1 September, according to unofficial naval sources. While in Cape Town its officers visited Simon’s Town to meet the senior command of the South African Navy, said the Russian consulate general in Cape Town in a post on X.

Today, “Smolny” training ship arrived in the port of Cape Town. The program of the visit includes the “Smolny”’s command meeting with colleagues from the SA Main Naval Base in Simon’s Town. The ship’s arrival is aimed at strengthening naval ties between Russia and South Africa. [pic.twitter.com/eqe06tfZG0](https://pic.twitter.com/eqe06tfZG0)

— ГК РФ в Кейптауне (@RusConsCapetown) August 29, 2024

“During the stop, the crew will replenish water, fuel and food supplies and perform technical inspection of the ship,” the Baltic Fleet’s spokesperson told the official Russian news agency Tass.

On 30.08, “Smolny” training ship’s crew held an open day for capetonians and guests of the city. It was followed by a solemn reception on board on behalf of the ship’s command aimed at strengthening bilateral naval ties. Rear Adm. M.Nkomonde became a guest of honour at the event. [pic.twitter.com/JqEbsqCdJj](https://pic.twitter.com/JqEbsqCdJj)

— ГК РФ в Кейптауне (@RusConsCapetown) August 30, 2024

He added that during the long-range sea voyage, the 300 cadets on board would practise communication and navigation skills.

Cape Town Mayor Geordin Hill-Lewis told Daily Maverick he did not know the Russian ship had visited.

“That seems to have been ‘under the radar’. It’s a great moral shame and stain on this government that they have given and are giving succour to Putin’s Russia,” he said.

The Ukrainian Association of South Africa said in a statement: “Embracing those who kill children is not neutrality! South Africa, STOP military cooperation with Russia!”

It said that during the ship's visit to Cape Town, in Ukraine, on "August 30 – a Russian guided bomb launched from a bomber hit a residential building and playground killing six people, including children, and over a hundred others were injured.

"September 3 – a Russian ballistic missile struck the Institute of Communication and a hospital in Poltava. Over 51 deaths have been confirmed, with more than 253 people injured.

"September 4 – Russia bombed the centre of Lviv, which is recognised as [a] Unesco heritage [site], destroying 50 civilian buildings including 2 schools and 2 hospitals. Among [those] killed – three children."

It added, "As of September 2024, over 19,546 Ukrainian children remained under Russian control after they were unlawfully and forcibly deported from Ukraine."

The association said new legislation allowed changes to the citizenship, names and birthdates of Ukrainian children without parental consent. Ukrainian children had been sent to 57 regions of Russia, with some already adopted into Russian families. Only 388 children had been returned in nearly three years.

Russia has claimed its forced adoption of Ukrainian children is, in fact, a humanitarian effort, an argument largely dismissed by international observers.

Daily Maverick asked the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and the South African Navy for comment. Initially, SANDF spokesperson Siphiwe Dlamini said he knew nothing about the visit. In a statement subsequent to publication, Dlamini said that the "Russian Navy Training Vessel" had arrived from Venezuela and visited the port of Cape Town between 29 August "for bunkering i.e. re-supply purposes". It departed on 1 September for Namibia.

*Russian bomber to participate in SA air show*

The Ukrainian Association of SA also condemned the reported upcoming visit to South Africa of a Russian Tupolev Tu-160 long-range bomber, "possibly the one responsible for killing Ukrainian children in Kharkiv".

It cited reports in military websites, including Bulgarianmilitary.com that the strategic bomber — "among the most sophisticated in Russia's arsenal" was flying to Pretoria to participate in Africa's largest air show, the Africa Aerospace and Defence 2024 exhibition later this month. The website said that ahead of the event, Russian military officers had visited an airport near Pretoria to plan the deployment of Tu-160 long-range bombers to the exhibition.

"These officers were warmly welcomed to the air base by the Chief of the South African Air Force."

It speculated that Russia's motive in sending the Tu-160 was to deepen its defence ties with South Africa and to demonstrate its ability to project power a long way from home.

The report quoted Captain Tebogo Augustus, a spokesperson for the South African Air Force, as saying that Russia and South Africa, as BRICS members, along with China, India and Brazil, shared “robust economic connections, political relations, and military cooperation agreements”. Daily Maverick asked the SA Air Force to comment, but it had not done so by the time of publication.

### *‘Non-alignment’*

The Ukrainian Association of SA also disputed the claim by a Dirco official, in an apparent reference to Minister Ronald Lamola’s spokesperson, Chrispin Phiri, on 26 August that South Africa had “an active non-alignment stance, which is not neutrality” on Russia’s war against Ukraine.

The Dirco official had added that SA’s “active non-alignment” was based on the Bandung principles of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The association said the core principles of the Bandung Conference were political self-determination, respect for universal human rights, mutual respect for sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs and sovereign equality.

“The Russian invasion of [a] sovereign country is an open violation of all principles declared in the Bandung Conference. It is also in violation of the UN Charter and in violation of hundreds of international agreements,” the association said.

It called on the government to “uphold the South African Constitution and the rules-based international order and to immediately stop any economic or military cooperation with the state that violates international legislation and kills children.

“Impose economic sanctions on Russian companies and individuals linked to the killings of civilians until the Russian military forces withdraw and Ukrainian borders are restored.

“Join the International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children.

“We urge the South African community to choose democracy over autocracy and to stand in solidarity with [a] rules-based order, to help defend Ukraine’s sovereignty, freedom, to protect its people, and pave the way for a just and long-lasting peace.”

Meanwhile, some Daily Maverick readers expressed concerns about the recent frequent visits to Waterkloof Air Force Base by Russian Ilyushin-IL-76TD cargo planes registered in Kyrgyzstan. However, military sources said these aircraft had been chartered by the SANDF to fly supplies to its soldiers attached to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo (SAMIDRC).

In the SANDF statement, Dlamini said there were currently 3 foreign vessels in South African waters, including a Ukrainian vessel, berthed in the Port of Cape Town since 8 May 2024, for repair purposes. “The RSA is a signatory to international maritime laws and conventions and as a

sovereign state, has a right and responsibility to accept the docking of foreign vessels as a maritime nation. This to allow ships and crew to have rest and recuperation, and most importantly, replenish their supplies before proceeding on their onward journey." DM  
This article was updated to include the SANDF response at 5.45pm on September 5, 2024.

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**19. Spain. “La Comunidad Valenciana empadrona más ucranianos que todo el resto de España” [The Valencian Community Registers More Ukrainians Than the Rest of Spain], *La Vanguardia*, 31 July 2024.**

Sólo en el último mes de junio se inscribieron en municipios valencianos más de mil nacidos en Ucrania de los 1.900 de todo el Estado

Enrique Bolland

Aunque el permanente carrusel de la actualidad informativa haya desplazado la invasión rusa de Ucrania de las primeras páginas y de la conversación, lo cierto es que la guerra prosigue y, con ella, el sufrimiento de la población ucraniana que en muchos casos se ha visto obligada a abandonar el país.

Las primeras hostilidades, a finales de febrero de 2022, ocasionaron una oleada de refugiados que, a su vez, desató una solidaridad sin precedentes cercana entre la población de buena parte de Europa, España incluida. Organizaciones no gubernamentales, e incluso particulares en un primer momento, organizaron caravanas de ayuda que incluían el rescate de miles de personas que trataban de abandonar el país.

*En los primeros seis meses de 2023 se empadronaron en Alicante 2.946 ucranianos y este año ya lo han hecho 3.505*

El hecho de que en algunas áreas de la Comunidad Valenciana, sobre todo en la provincia de Alicante, existiera una nutrida comunidad de ucranianos que en los últimos años habían adquirido ahí sus segundas residencias, hizo que muchos refugiados, tuvieran o no contactos previos en la zona, optaran por desplazarse a poblaciones como Torrevieja, además de a las ciudades de Alicante y València.

Dos años y medio más tarde, lo que en principio se planteó como una medida temporal, en la esperanza de que la guerra no se prolongara, se ha convertido en un exilio en toda regla, y esa población emigrada a la fuerza ha debido rehacer su vida lejos de su hogar. Para ello, para facilitar su integración en la sociedad que los acoge, los ucranianos han de registrarse en el padrón municipal, y los datos que el Instituto Nacional de Estadística confirman que la Comunidad Valenciana, y especialmente Alicante, se han convertido en la residencia de una amplia mayoría.

Solo en el último mes del que hay datos registrados, el pasado junio de este año, de los 1.910 ciudadanos ucranianos que se empadronaron en España, 1.005 lo hicieron en municipios

valencianos; 538 en la provincia de Alicante, 426 en la de Valencia y apenas 41 en la de Castellón.

En ese mismo mes, en el conjunto de Catalunya se empadronaron 301 ucranianos, de los cuales lo hicieron en la provincia de Barcelona, la cuarta de todo el Estado que más inscribió, por detrás de Málaga (173), pero por delante de Madrid, donde apenas se empadronaron 120.

Revisando los datos acumulados por el INE, en todos los meses desde el comienzo de la guerra ha sido Alicante la provincia española que más vecinos del país agredido por Vladimir Putin incorpora a su censo.

Y la tendencia no decae, al contrario: comparando los datos acumulados de 2024 con los de 2023, resulta que en los primeros seis meses de 2023 se empadronaron en localidades alicantinas 2.946 ucranianos y este año ya lo han hecho 3.505.

El INE ofrece, aunque no desagrega los datos por provincias, el sexo y edad de los empadronados, que ofrece un significativo cambio: si en los primeros meses de la guerra las mujeres y los niños eran clara mayoría, el árbol demográfico se ha ido equilibrando y, salvo en el caso de los jóvenes entre 20 y 24 años, en el que aún son clara mayoría las mujeres, con toda probabilidad debido a ser la franja de edad militar más numerosa.

#### *Permisos de residencia*

Por lo que respecta a los permisos de residencia, desde febrero de 2022 se han multiplicado por tres. Si en el momento en que Rusia lanzó la invasión disponían de él 95.954 ucranianos, en junio de 2024 ya lo tenían 301.140, de los cuales casi 180.000 eran mujeres. No hay datos por provincias.

Sí los hay en el caso de los afiliados a la Seguridad Social, que en Alicante han pasado de 3.273 a 31 de enero de 2022 a 6.922 a finales de junio de este año. La provincia es, sin embargo, la tercera en número de ucranianos inscritos en la Seguridad Social; Madrid suma 14.373 y Barcelona 8.901. Por detrás figuran Málaga (6.960), Valencia (5.988) y Murcia (3.943).

*Este curso las aulas valencianas acogían a 12.730 alumnos y alumnas de Ucrania, mientras en Madrid estudiaban 7.499*

Es en la escolarización donde la solidaridad valenciana gana por goleada: en febrero de 2024, último dato oficial disponible, las aulas de la Comunidad acogían a 12.730 alumnos y alumnas de Ucrania, mientras en Madrid estudiaban 7.499, en Catalunya 4.635 y en toda Andalucía había 4.000 escolares ucranianos.

[Translation from Spanish into English follows – S.C.]

*Just in the last month of June, more than a thousand Ukraine-born people were registered in Valencian municipalities out of the 1,900 in the entire State*

By Enrique Bolland

Although the permanent carousel of current information has displaced the Russian invasion of Ukraine from the front pages and from conversation, the fact of the matter is that the war continues and, with it, the suffering of the Ukrainian population that in many cases has been forced to leave the country.

The start of the hostilities, at the end of February 2022, caused a wave of refugees that, in turn, initiated unprecedented solidarity among the population of a good part of Europe, including Spain. Non-governmental organizations, and even individuals at first, organized aid caravans that included the rescue of thousands of people who attempted to leave the country.

*In the first six months of 2023, 2,946 Ukrainians were registered in Alicante, and this year, 3,505 have done so already*

The fact that in some areas of the Valencian Community, especially in the province of Alicante, a large community of Ukrainians existed who in recent years had acquired their second homes there, meant that many refugees, whether or not they had previous contacts in the area, chose to move to towns such as Torrevieja, in addition to the cities of Alicante and Valencia.

Two and a half years later, what was initially intended as a temporary measure, in the hope that the war would not be prolonged, has become an exile, and this population that has been forced to emigrate has had to rebuild its life far from home. To do this, and to facilitate their integration into the society that has received them, Ukrainians must register in the municipal registry, and the data from the National Institute of Statistics (INE) confirm that the Valencian Community, and especially Alicante, have become the place of residence of a large majority.

In the last month alone, for which there are registered data, in June of this year of the 1,910 Ukrainian citizens who registered in Spain, 1,005 did so in Valencian municipalities; 538 in the province of Alicante, 426 in Valencia, and just 41 in Castellón.

In that same month, 301 Ukrainians registered in Catalonia as a whole, doing so in the province of Barcelona, which ranked fourth in the entire State that registered the most, behind Malaga (173), but ahead of Madrid, where just 120 were registered.

Reviewing the data accumulated by the INE, in all the months since the beginning of the war, Alicante has been the Spanish province with the most residents of the country attacked by Vladimir Putin recorded in its census.

And the trend is not decreasing, but on the contrary: comparing the accumulated data for 2024 with that of 2023, it turns out that in the first six months of 2023, 2,946 Ukrainians registered in Alicante localities, and this year, 3,505 have done so already.

The INE provides, although not breaking down the data by province, the sex and age of those registered, which shows a significant change: if in the first months of the war women and children were the clear majority, the demographic composition has been becoming balanced,

except in the case of young people between 20 and 24 years old, in which women are still clearly the majority, in all probability due to being the largest military age group.

### *Residence permits*

In regards to residence permits, these have tripled since February 2022. If at the time that Russia launched its invasion 95,954 Ukrainians had them, in June 2024 301,140 had obtained them already, among them almost 180,000 women. There's no data by province.

Yet there are data in the case of those affiliated to Social Security, who in Alicante have gone from 3,273 on 31 January 2022 to 6,922 at the end of June this year. The province is, however, third in terms of number of Ukrainians registered with Social Security; Madrid has 14,373 and Barcelona, 8,901. Behind them are Malaga (6,960), Valencia (5,988), and Murcia (3,943).

*This year, Valencian classrooms hosted 12,730 students from Ukraine, while in Madrid there were 7,499*

It is in the sector of schooling where Valencian solidarity wins decisively: in February 2024, the latest official data available, the classrooms of the Community received 12,730 students from Ukraine, while in Madrid there were 7,499, in Catalonia, 4,635, and in all of Andalusia there were 4,000 Ukrainian schoolchildren.

## **20. United Arab Emirates. "Spirit of Solidarity Unites Ukrainians in UAE," *National*, 25 August 2024.**

By Ramola Talwar Badam

Ukrainians in the UAE gathered in a show of solidarity and unity to observe their country's 33rd independence day.

About 250 Ukrainians met in Abu Dhabi on Saturday along with friends from several other countries to mark Ukraine's third independence day since Russia's invasion.

An exhibition of paintings by children in Ukraine, workshops, songs, the formation a human chain where participants linked arms in harmony, and a spread of traditional cuisine brought people together at The Bridge, a wellness space in the capital.

"The goal was to create an experience to remind everyone that the desire for peace and tolerance is universal and so everyone can witness the strength of the Ukrainian people and feel our connection to our home," Yevheniy Semenov, a Ukrainian software engineer and UAE resident for more than 10 years, told The National.

"Our hope was this event will inspire a deeper understanding of the importance of standing together.

"It was also a call to emphasise unity, our heritage, cultural traditions and express our national

identity. The human chain symbolised the strength of Ukrainians around the world.

“The presence of people from different nationalities was a symbol of solidarity and friendship.”

### *Trauma of war*

Mr Semenov, vice president of the Ukrainian World Congress in the region, a non-government organisation, also thanked UAE authorities for their mediation that facilitated an exchange of prisoners with Russia.

“There was a round of applause from all and a lot of gratitude to the UAE for their mediation that saw 115 Ukrainians return home,” he said. “There was thanks to the UAE for providing us this opportunity to gather in a safe and supportive environment to mark Ukraine’s Independence Day.”

Two hundred and thirty prisoners were released on Saturday in the exchange deal, making it the seventh mediation by the Emirates between the warring nations.

About 40 paintings were on display showing art created by Ukrainian children capturing their lives in bomb shelters and basements during the war. This is part of a digital museum, ‘Mom, I see war’, a project that publishes drawings of hope and despair by Ukrainian children between the ages of six to 17.

“You understand how deep the trauma is of children about the terrible war,” Mr Semenov said. “One of the paintings that deeply touched me was a family walking with a backpack that was in the shape of a house. With so many people forced to leave their homes, their backpack was their only home.

“We also displayed the children’s vision of a prosperous, peaceful Ukraine to show that despite everything hope lives on in their hearts.”

The gathering also featured traditional Ukrainian cuisine, including borscht, a distinctive sour meat and beetroot soup, varenyky or half-moon-shaped potato and onion dumplings, deruny or potato pancakes, and syrnyky or cheese pancakes.

The UAE’s Ukrainian residents said remembering family and friends at home was a crucial part of the day.

“This is a special day for me and my country,” said Viktoria Kostromtsova, a Ukrainian resident in the UAE for 14 years.

“It’s nice to know the UAE never forgets about Ukraine in any situation.”

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**21. United Kingdom. “Mayor Pays Visit to Bolton’s Ukrainian Centre to Honour Humanitarian Efforts,” *Bolton News*, 21 September 2024.**

By Leah Collins

The mayor of Bolton has paid a special visit to the town's Ukrainian centre to honour the organisation's humanitarian efforts.

Cllr Andy Morgan and his partner, Karen Holdsworth, paid a visit to the Ukrainian Culture Centre, which is on Castle Street and functions as the Bolton branch of the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (AUGB).

The organisation is the largest representative body for Ukrainians and those of Ukrainian descent in the UK.

Since the start of the Ukraine conflict, the centre has played a significant role in humanitarian efforts such as organising donation drives and sending medical supplies to Ukraine and its neighbouring countries.

The centre is a vital hub for the Ukrainian community in the area and supports the East European country's culture and provides a space for social gatherings, cultural events, and community services.

It also offers weekly conversational English classes for users, who are from all parts of Ukraine and gave a short presentation on their city and town to Cllr Morgan.

The speakers showed pictures of their beautiful towns and cities before the Russian invasion of Ukraine and destruction inflicted by the conflict.

Cllr Morgan said: "It was an inspiring visit where we heard from those that attended about their hometowns in Ukraine using English, they had learned at the sessions provided by the centre.

"I am so glad that those using the centre feel supported by the council and other agencies but would particularly like to thank Yaroslav and his team for all they do.

"Whether that's the English lessons, cultural support, the food bank at the centre and vital humanitarian supplies they collect and send to Ukraine."

The visiting party was also shown the ongoing work of the AUGB in an ongoing project to supply humanitarian aid to an orphanage in Kyryvi Rih, which is the birthplace of Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

**22. United Kingdom. "Ukrainian Community Celebrated by Provost," *Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser*, 17 July 2024.**

North Lanarkshire's provost attended a celebration for the Ukrainian community who have made Scotland their home since the outbreak of war in their homeland.

Ukrainians from across North Lanarkshire and Glasgow came together to mark Ukraine's Constitution Day at St Michael's Church, Glasgow.

The event, which took place on June 28, was a celebration of Ukrainian culture and heritage, featuring performances from the talented Ukrainian Kids' Club from Coatbridge.

The enthusiastic young performers brought the house down with their energetic dance routines and rousing songs, showcasing the rich cultural traditions of Ukraine.

Guests of honour at the event included Scottish politicians, community leaders, and members of the Ukrainian diaspora.

Among those in attendance were Scottish Government Minister for Equalities Kaukab Stewart, and Member of Scottish Parliament for Glasgow Shettleston John Mason.

Provost of North Lanarkshire Kenneth Duffy also attended the special event.

He said: "I was honoured to join the Ukrainian community in celebrating this special day.

"I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to all those who have made North Lanarkshire their home and have contributed so much to our community.

"We are grateful for the vibrant Ukrainian community in North Lanarkshire and the significant contributions they make to our region.

"It was a wonderful celebration of their culture and resilience.

"As we marked Ukraine Constitution Day, we also recognised the challenges faced by those who have been forced to leave their homes and start anew in our community.

"We are proud to provide a warm welcome and a sense of belonging to those who call North Lanarkshire home."

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### **23. USA. "Ukrainian Americans in Swing State Pennsylvania Loudly Behind Harris, Quietly Back Trump," *Kyiv Independent*, 30 October 2024.**

By Owen Racer

JENKINTOWN, Pennsylvania — Sophika Lashchyk-Tytla, an American of Ukrainian roots, says she can't understand why her brother plans to vote for Republican nominee Donald Trump, given his open hostility to continuing U.S. support for Ukraine.

Hours after unconvincing arguments with her brother, the Philadelphia native carried a kit of campaign information as she canvassed in the city's suburbs with fellow Ukrainians who've rallied around Democratic nominee Kamala Harris.

Just ten days before the election, nearly a dozen went door-knocking in Montgomery County, where one of the country's largest Ukrainian populations now has voter material available in Ukrainian for the first time. The county includes non-voting recent emigres from President Joe Biden's post-full-scale invasion Uniting for Ukraine parole program and thousands more with U.S. citizenship who arrived in the 1990s.

The door-to-door canvassing in the campaign's final days unfolded amid immense stakes for Ukraine's more than two-and-a-half-year fight against Russia's full-scale invasion. Pennsylvania is the swing state all paths to the White House seem to run through for both candidates.

"I feel like I'm trying to save Ukraine and our country and I can't listen to your (Trump) stuff," Lashchyk-Tytla told her brother as she departed for a weekend of rallying Ukrainian support for Harris.

"I don't think he's thinking (about) Ukraine, the Ukrainians that are voting for (Trump) have been listening to his double-speak, and more recently, he's been really clear that he's not supportive of Ukraine, so how can you say that 'Trump is going to help Ukraine' and say he is the only one who keeps (Russia) on their toes?"

In the final days of the campaign, Vice President Harris's team knows securing Montgomery County could lead to capturing the entire state demands support from Pennsylvania's large Eastern European population. Their numbers exceed the crucial margin of victory, with Biden winning by nearly 81,000 votes in the state in 2020 to prevent Trump's re-election to a second term.

The Harris campaign hopes that by going to traditionally conservative Ukrainian communities in Pennsylvania and reminding them of Trump's adversarial position to supporting Ukraine in its defense of Russia's full-scale war, the state's Polish and Lithuanian populations will also show up for Harris alongside their Ukrainian neighbors.

Andrew Lashchyk, Spohika's 57-year-old brother, says he's sent thousands of dollars to support Ukraine. He simultaneously wants a better U.S. economy and for Ukraine to not cede any of its land to Russia, which is why he'll vote for Trump. The war will end sooner under a Trump administration, he says.

"In terms of what Trump will do for Ukraine, it's kind of up in the air, I don't believe he will necessarily provide weapons and help so to speak, but what he will do is pressure (Russian President Vladimir Putin)," Lashchyk told the Kyiv Independent.

"I believe that Trump will negotiate some kind of end to the war, do I believe Ukraine will have to cede some of our ground in order for the killing to stop, probably, I'm totally not okay with that but I have no choice."

For Lashchyk, who considers himself extremely patriotic for Ukraine and America, Harris hasn't offered enough commitment to Ukraine in her campaign. "If (Harris) somehow was able to

guarantee me another \$30 billion that would be sent (to Ukraine) the day she won office, okay I might give up my American country for Ukraine.”

Russia’s war in Ukraine is one of the candidates’ most vividly contentious issues of the Nov. 5 election, with their respective positions in near complete opposition to each other.

“Donald Trump and his Project 2025 agenda will not only raise costs for Ukrainian-American families and strip them of their fundamental freedoms, it will also put the people of Ukraine in grave danger as he sidles up to Putin, threatens to cut off support for Ukraine, and abandons our allies,” Filip Jotevski, the Harris campaign’s national director of diaspora and ethnic engagement, wrote in a statement to the Kyiv Independent.

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After appearing alongside Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in September, Harris offered a glimpse into her stance on her support for Ukraine, saying in an October interview that Ukraine’s hope to join NATO is a question for the future but that she would not meet with Putin for peace talks without Ukraine’s presence.

In a highly anticipated Oct. 29 speech on the National Mall in the shadow of the White House, she added that Putin and North Korea are cheering for Trump to win.

Trump, who has a history of cozying up to Putin, has pledged — with minimal detail — to swiftly end the war and even blamed Zelensky for stoking Moscow’s invasion of his country. The vast divide between the two candidates’ positions on Ukraine is visible in the campaign’s final days. While both candidates are focused on Pennsylvania’s Latino and Black voters, Trump’s attention to the full-scale war and large voting diaspora are at a minimum. For Harris, her surrogates are ramping up outreach to Americans of Ukrainian roots in crucial swing states. After hiring Jotevski to lead national diaspora efforts in September and placing him in Pennsylvania for the race’s final stretch, Harris’s campaign is rallying Americans with Ukrainian roots to door-knock in Philadelphia’s suburbs. Nearly half of Pennsylvania’s Ukrainian diaspora of between 100,000 and 200,000 reside in that area.

“While Donald Trump cozies up to dictators like Putin and idolizes fascists like Hitler, Vice President Kamala Harris will never waver in her defense of America’s security and ideals or the people of Ukraine,” Jotevski said.

But Harris-canvassing Ukrainians are disappointed by the diaspora’s small but passionate turnout for the Democratic nominee, citing concerns that many in their community are quietly voting for Trump over domestic issues like the economy.

“Maybe 30-40% (of Pennsylvania’s Ukrainian community) is for Harris, and the (rest), the majority is still for Trump,” said Marta Fedoriw, a prominent figure in the region’s Ukrainian diaspora community.

“We know that Ukrainian Americans were very Republican years ago, because of the Republican Party, (President Dwight D.) Eisenhower, (Ronald) Reagan, strong anti-Soviet Union (feelings), but since these last few elections they’ve turned the Ukrainian vote (silent), they’re still voting for Trump but they don’t want to talk about it.”

Fedoriw, who is the chair of the Return Ukraine’s Children initiative at the Ukrainian National Women’s League of America, has been rallying across Pennsylvania for the Ukrainian community to vote for Harris, including at an Oct. 26 event co-sponsored by the Harris campaign. She says it’s not that clear why so many in the state’s diaspora plan to vote for Trump. She hears Ukrainians say things like, ‘Trump is a businessman, we need a tough guy to deal with Putin,’ and ‘What has Biden done for Ukraine, he’s been slowly doling out support.’

Both Trump and Harris-supporting Ukrainians in Pennsylvania who spoke with the Kyiv Independent are frustrated by the Biden Administration’s slow drip of aid to Ukraine that has at times been delayed and repeated contradictions of previously stated red lines, such as the delivery of Western fighter jets.

Because of what she hears, Fedoriw knows the Harris campaign’s targeting of Eastern Europeans is needed, especially to reach the state’s 700,000 Polish Americans.

Despite widely shared fears in the state’s Polish community that Putin’s sights are set beyond Ukraine, Fedoriw says the population’s ties to the Roman Catholic Church are so deep that Harris’s stance on abortion rights is pushing many toward Trump.

Others disagree, such as Pennsylvania’s Polish American community leaders, who endorsed Harris after she gave the community recognition in the campaign’s only Harris-Trump debate. “Why don’t you (Trump) tell the 800,000 Polish Americans right here in Pennsylvania how quickly you would give up (Ukraine),” Harris said in the debate.

But no diaspora community is a monolith. The Harris campaign hosted a Polish American bus tour across Pennsylvania two weeks out from the election and took nearly a dozen Ukrainians canvassing on Oct. 26 after a rally to reach Ukrainian voters.

Speakers at the event included Victoria Nuland, the former U.S. Ambassador to NATO, and Alexander Vindman, the Ukraine-born former director for European Affairs for the U.S. National Security Council.

Two days later, the former Republican Congressman Adam Kinzinger and other Harris surrogates told Scranton, Pennsylvania voters that a vote for Harris and running mate Tim Walz is a vote for the continued support of NATO and Ukraine.

However, some of the few dozen passionate Ukrainians at the rally reserved feelings of fear that the Harris campaign's efforts aren't reaching swayable Ukrainians and may even be too little too late.

Fedoriw said the huge voting block has pockets of Ukrainian voters who still associate Democrats with communism and, despite their hopes for Ukraine's sovereignty, can't come around on voting for Harris.

"That really hit me, how few people were at the rally," Lashchyk-Tytla, the Ukrainian from Philadelphia's suburbs, said. "The turnout was horrible (given) the amount of Ukrainians we have here."

The Trump campaign is equally spending the final stretch in Pennsylvania but is more focused on reaching Black voters and relaying messages about "election integrity" than allocating resources to door-knocking.

If the Trump campaign is doing outreach to Pennsylvania's Eastern Europeans, the message isn't reaching Ukrainians around Philadelphia, according to multiple leaders in the Ukrainian community who spoke with the Kyiv Independent in the campaign's final days.

The Trump campaign did not respond to repeated requests for comment on their approach to reaching diaspora communities.

Just north of Philadelphia in Jenkintown, the heart of the Ukrainian community, attendees of the last Sunday service of October at the St. Michael the Archangel Ukrainian Catholic Church spilled into a dining hall for a nonpartisan town hall on the significance of the election for Ukraine. The county's Board of Elections Commissioner, Neil Makhija, who broadened the language accessibility of voter material, took questions from the nearly two dozen attendees. "This is an existential issue for Ukrainian American communities, they understand the contrast has never been more clear between the presidential candidates," Makhija told the Kyiv Independent.

"There's one who would essentially let Ukraine disappear and another who is backing the existence of the country."

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## **24. USA. "Ukrainians Celebrate Their Independence Day by Running in Vyshyvankas," *Nprillinois.org*, 27 August 2024.**

By Lilly Quiroz

Whether your family's traditional dress is a Mexican huipil, an Indian saree, or a Scottish kilt, where do you usually wear these clothes?

In Ukraine, the traditional attire is a vyshyvanka. Typically made of cotton or linen, these shirts feature embroidered patterns along the front, collar and sleeves.

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine began, Anzhela Prygozhyna has worn her traditional blue-and-yellow vyshyvanka almost every other day, including this past Saturday, when she went for a run along the Potomac River in Washington, D.C.

She was joined by dozens of others from the Ukrainian diaspora to celebrate Ukraine's 33rd Independence Day—a day that marks 33 years since Ukraine split from the former Soviet Union. This comes as Russia's full-scale invasion enters its third year.

“We are here, all dressed up in our vyshyvankas, to show people that the war continues,” said runner Roman Kachur. “Ukraine is suffering.”

Andriy Smolensky, a Ukrainian soldier who was wounded in southern Ukraine last year, came to the event with his wife, Alina. Although he is the runner of the two, this was his first vyshyvanka run.

“When we heard about it, we immediately grabbed our vyshyvankas from our backpack,” Andriy said, laughing. “That’s something every Ukrainian has in their backpack. I’m kidding, but the point is, we really just want to support the movement, and we like to run.”

Andriy just received his first week of treatment at Walter Reed Hospital.

“We’re really grateful that the American nation supported our country,” he said.

The vyshyvanka run raised funds for United Help Ukraine, with proceeds going to humanitarian aid, medical care, and mental health services for the Ukrainian people.

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## **25. USA. “War Shifts Political Views in Chicago’s Ukraine Diaspora,” *Washington Post*, 20 August 2024.**

By David Maraniss

CHICAGO - The Ukrainian Village, a neighborhood nestled only a mile north and slight jog west of the United Center, where Democrats are convening this week, is the heart of the Ukrainian diaspora in Chicago - a compact enclave of faith, hope, resilience, anxiety, fear and a notably transformed political sensibility shaped by old memories and the harsh reality of the Russian invasion of the homeland.

Reminders of that war are everywhere here, more than 5,000 miles from the battlefield. It might be the other war, the largely forgotten war, in much of America and the world, overshadowed by the bloody events in Gaza that are drawing all the noise and protest now, but to the people of Ukrainian Village, it is never far from mind.

The war in Ukraine torments Oksana Ambroz, a fashion designer whose bitter feelings about Russia go back to stories about her father. At age 2, starved and weakened by the Holodomor, the

Soviet-caused famine of 1932, he was thrown into a mass trench by Russian soldiers and left to die before his horrified mother pulled him to safety. The war haunts Slava Pillyuyko, a psychiatrist who each night calls his friends and family in the Ukrainian city of Khmelnytskyi, trying to help them deal with the trauma of constant shelling. If they drink, he said, they now drink more; if they had insomnia before, they now sleep even less, never knowing whether the next day will be their last.

Walk the streets of the Ukrainian Village and feel the sorrow of a distant war. “Stop Putin, Stop War” posters in storefront windows. Flower-bedecked memorial crosses in churchyards. Blue and yellow flags fluttering in the late summer breeze. Photo exhibits of wounded soldiers and uprooted families in the museum. Pockets of newly arrived refugees huddling outside a building that offers relocation assistance. And endless discussions in English and Ukrainian, about the war - what is happening from Kursk to Kyiv, what might happen next, and what the 2024 presidential tickets are doing and saying about it all.

Despair here over Republican diffidence, or outright dismissal, of Ukrainian pleas for support in fighting Russian aggression has rearranged the political landscape.

“This area used to be totally Republican,” said Marta Farion, vice president of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, who lives across the street from the Sts. Volodymyr and Olha Ukrainian Catholic Church and has visited Ukraine 55 times. The dominant viewpoint was conservative and staunchly anti-communist. “Ronald Reagan was revered here,” she said. “When he said ‘Tear down this wall!’ he was speaking for all of us who suffered under the Soviets.”

But even as Ukrainian Villagers remain culturally conservative and generally receptive to GOP positions on abortion and crime, they saw a vast distance between the old party of Reagan and the party that President Donald Trump has refashioned as more isolationist.

Many expressed dismay over Trump’s cozy relationship with Vladimir Putin and the way as Trump seemed to trust the autocrat’s propaganda more than the findings of U.S. intelligence services. They blamed recalcitrant Republicans in the House for delaying U.S. aid that Ukraine desperately needed.

“Each of those six months added hundreds more killed,” Pillyuyko lamented. And then came Trump’s new running mate, JD Vance, who once was quoted as saying, “I got to be honest with you, I don’t really care what happens to Ukraine one way or another.”

If Trump returns to the White House, Farion said, she feared that “he will sell Ukraine down the pike. He says he will end the war right away, but that only means he will make a deal with Putin. We know he is going to make a deal with Putin. ... The future of Ukraine is on the line in this election.”

Farion spoke while seated at a round table in the basement cafeteria of Sts. Volodymyr and Olha after a Sunday service, not far from a spread of Ukrainian pastries. Dozens of parishioners were drinking coffee and eating desserts at nearby tables. Seated next to Farion was Chrystya

Wereszczak, vice chair of the church council, who nodded her head in agreement, then said, “It will be the biggest desecration in U.S. history of the defense of freedom.”

Wereszczak was quick to add that the neighborhood still had many Republicans who came to the party because of its opposition to abortion and strong history of anti-communism. “But a lot say either they’re not going to vote or not vote for Trump.” Illinois has voted Democratic in every presidential election since 1992 and is expected to continue its streak this fall.

At the Ukrainian National Museum across the street from the church, Ambroz and Pillyuyko work as volunteer tour guides. Ambroz, who arrived in America penniless in 1997 and built her own design company from scratch, had just returned from a month’s visit to see her son and other relatives in Kyiv. She came away with a renewed sense of hope and deep admiration for her people. “I am so proud of Ukrainians as humans, and the very heroic way they’ve endured, these little acts that reveal the most about them.”

She talked about how the elevators in her nephew’s apartment had little boxes on the floor filled with water and crackers and anxiety medications in case people were trapped in them when Kyiv officials felt the need to turn the electricity off, which happened almost every day. When it did, she would walk up the 19 floors to the apartment just like everyone else. And she recalled the time when a missile exploded between two nearby buildings and blew out all the windows of the first-floor coffee shop. “It happened at 3 in the morning, and by 9, the people had cleaned out all the glass and replaced it with plastic so the shop could open again. Little things like that, acts of resilience every day.”

When Ambroz returned to the United States, she fell back into the habit of searching for news about Ukraine at all hours.

“I look before I go to bed at night. I wake up at 3 to try to get the latest. And then I look again when I wake up for good at 7. I can never get enough information.”

Generations of mistreatment shaped her antipathy toward Russia, she said. Her grandfather, an economist, spent eight years in a Soviet prison. Other relatives on her mother’s side disappeared into Siberia and were never heard from again. This family history shaped her politics. She became an American citizen 15 years ago and has voted in every election since.

“This country has always supported freedom and the soldiers of Ukraine are fighting for freedom,” Ambroz said. “I will vote for whoever will fight for freedom.”

Pillyuyko, the psychiatrist, who was also a national billiards champion in Ukraine, arrived in Chicago in 2022, only five days before the war started. His take on American politics was subtle and complicated. He said he was reluctant to criticize Trump and Vance because he was not yet a U.S. citizen, but added, “If they are elected, it will be more difficult.”

He appreciated the support that President Joe Biden has given his homeland, fearing that without it, the death toll would be in the millions, then added, “But none of this might have happened if Obama had responded more strongly when Putin seized Crimea 10 years ago, so it’s not perfect

on any side. But Ukrainians are grateful to the world anyway. Putin said he'd have Kyiv in three days. It's now getting near three years."

From his home in Chicago, after hearing harrowing stories in his phone calls to Ukraine, he tries to keep his mood in balance by listening to progressive rock, especially Jethro Tull and Genesis, and searching for humor on social media.

When he finds something good, he sends it back home. "I need it. They need it. We all need it," he said.

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Serge Cipko  
Coordinator  
Ukrainian Diaspora Studies Initiative  
Kule Ukrainian Canadian Studies Centre  
Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies  
4-30 Pembina Hall  
University of Alberta  
Edmonton, Alberta, CANADA T6G 2H8  
Email: [scipko@ualberta.ca](mailto:scipko@ualberta.ca)

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