

UKRAINIANS ABROAD: NEWS AND VIEWS #165

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27 March 2025

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21. United Kingdom. "United Kingdom: Ukrainian Cherub to Be Official Scotland Office Card," *ForeignAffairs.co.nz*, 18 December 2024.
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[*Landscapes of the Past. Stories and Images of a Working-Class Community.*]

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*** This book concerns the Argentine city of Berisso (population ca. 100,000), which is situated near the capital of the Province of Buenos Aires, La Plata. A large number of Ukrainians settled in Berisso before and after World War I. Many of the immigrants worked in local meat-packing plants (frigoríficos).

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Юліана Шинкарик. “Мовна політика української діаспори США в інформаційній підтримці українців у період російської агресії (2014-2024 рр).” *Гуманітарні студії: історія та педагогіка* no. 1 (2024): 52-69.

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2. Argentina/Brazil/Chile. “Roots across Continents: The Ukrainian Story in Latin America,” *Ukraineworld.org*, 2 December 2024.

Trace the journey of Ukrainians whose migration has woven unique threads into Latin America’s cultural and social fabric.

Ukrainians in Latin America present a little-known story shaped by generations of migration, resilience, and cultural exchange.

Since the late 19th century, they have left enduring marks on the social and economic fabric of countries like Brazil, Argentina, and Chile, contributing to agricultural innovation, professional achievements, and vibrant cultural traditions.

Brazil

Among all countries with Ukrainian communities worldwide, only in Brazil the term “Brazilian Ukraine” has been coined and widely used. It reflects the profound impact of one of the world’s oldest and largest Ukrainian diasporas, with over 500,000 people.

The story begins in the late 19th century during the “Brazilian Fever” when Ukrainians from Galicia and Bukovyna embarked on a perilous journey across the ocean. Settling primarily in Paraná state, these pioneers faced harsh conditions but proved instrumental in Brazil’s agricultural development.

They cleared tropical forests, established mills, introduced cooperative farming, and cultivated both familiar crops like wheat and rye alongside local staples such as coffee, black beans, and mint.

Immigration continued in distinct waves. Between 1907 and 1914, Ukrainians arrived to work on railroad construction, a perilous task, as it occasionally led to conflicts with the local Indigenous population.

The final significant wave came after World War II (1947-1951), bringing a new demographic of displaced intellectuals and professionals who would diversify the community’s contribution to Brazilian society.

While 70% of Ukrainian-Brazilians remained in agriculture, others integrated into urban life as entrepreneurs, industrial workers, and professionals.

Their impact is perhaps most visible in Prudentópolis, Paraná, also known as the capital of “Brazilian Ukraine,” where 75% of the population claims Ukrainian descent and Ukrainian holds official language status alongside Portuguese.

The Ukrainian-Brazilian community has produced many prominent figures across various fields,

enriching Brazil's professional and cultural landscapes. Among these notable individuals - from entrepreneurs Roberto and Rui Demeterko to medical and legal professionals such as Affonso Antonyuk and Taras Savytsky - filmmaker Guto Pasko* emerges as an important cultural icon.

As the former president of the Paraná State Association of Video and Cinematography and director of Brazil's Association of Documentary Cinema, Pasko has made substantial contributions to Brazilian cinema.

Beyond filmmaking, Pasko's influence extends to politics, where he served on Curitiba's Municipal Council for Cultural Affairs, helping to shape the city's cultural landscape.

Pasko grew up speaking only Ukrainian until the age of 11, embodying the community's strong cultural preservation. His journey from humble beginnings to becoming a prominent cultural leader, politician, and filmmaker exemplifies the dynamic evolution of the Ukrainian-Brazilian identity.

His documentary "Made in Ucraina" captures the enduring spirit of Ukrainians in Paraná, serving as a testament to their lasting influence on Brazilian society.

Argentina

The Ukrainian presence in Argentina mirrors Brazil's story in many ways, yet carries its own unique significance.

With over 350,000-500,000 members and their descendants, Argentina's Ukrainian community stands as the seventh largest Ukrainian diaspora globally and the second largest in Latin America, building its legacy for more than a century.

The first organised wave of Ukrainian migration to Argentina began in 1897, with settlers primarily from Galicia seeking opportunities in the challenging lands of Misiones province, particularly around Apóstoles.

These pioneers faced formidable obstacles - from subtropical forests to poisonous wildlife - but their perseverance transformed the wilderness into productive farmland. Their agricultural innovation was particularly notable in the cultivation of mate, tobacco, and rice - crops crucial to Argentina's economy.

Other major waves of immigration occurred between 1920 and 1939, from 1946 to 1960, and during the 1990s.

The Ukrainian influence extended beyond agriculture into industrial development. By the 1970s, Soviet Ukrainian-made energy equipment powered significant portions of Argentina's electrical grid, including major hydroelectric plants like Salto Grande, Piedra del Águila, and Yacretá, ultimately contributing to 37% of the country's electricity generation.

Ukrainian-Argentines have excelled across numerous fields: Gustavo Grobocopatel emerged as an agricultural mogul across multiple countries, Oscar Pablo Dudik serves in provincial

government.

The community has also produced notable artists such as folk musician “Chango” Spasiuk, while making marks in literature through poet Alejandra Pizarnik and writer César Tiempo, and in sports through Olympic medalist Pedro Stetsiuk and football coach José Néstor Pekerman.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable stories is that of Yuriy Poliansky, whose journey from World War II refugee to celebrated scientist exemplifies the Ukrainian-Argentine legacy of resilience and achievement. Arriving in Buenos Aires in 1947, Poliansky initially worked in mines despite holding a doctorate, before joining Argentina’s national geological survey.

His research in the Andes revealed crucial insights about glaciation processes and established that the mountain range had the world's highest snow line fluctuation. As a professor at the University of Buenos Aires, he authored the country's first geology textbook and mentored generations of geologists.

His contributions earned him membership in the National Academy of Sciences and the National Prize of Argentina in 1964, while his publications in Spanish and English ensured that his influence extended far beyond Argentina's borders until his death in 1975.

Chile

The Ukrainian presence in Chile tells a different story from its Latin American neighbours - smaller in scale but rich in impact. Unlike Brazil or Argentina, Chile’s limited agricultural prospects initially attracted few Ukrainian settlers.

Today’s community of around 1,000 people consists mainly of professionals, business owners, and families who arrived through various circumstances.

The first Ukrainian footprint in Chile was cultural rather than migratory - in 1897, renowned opera singer Solomiya Krushelnytska captivated Santiago audiences for five months with her performances in *Aida*, *The Masked Ball*, and *Faust*.

The first significant Ukrainian presence emerged in 1948-49 when approximately 300 refugees arrived from European camps, including former Ukrainian Insurgent Army soldiers and those fleeing Soviet control following World War II.

These newcomers quickly established themselves in Santiago, founding a Ukrainian Greek Catholic parish and a choir led by L. Hizhievsky that gained recognition through performances at universities, monasteries, and on Chilean radio.

Among Chile’s Ukrainian heritage stories, Roberto Kozak’s stands out as particularly remarkable. Born to Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina, Kozak’s actions during Chile’s military dictatorship earned him the title “Latin America’s Schindler.”

When General Augusto Pinochet’s 1973 coup unleashed a wave of repression, Kozak transformed his diplomatic office into a sanctuary for political dissidents.

Despite great personal risk during armed searches, he successfully orchestrated the safe evacuation of approximately 33,000 people. His legacy is now honoured at Chile's Museum of Memory and Human Rights.

Other notable figures of Ukrainian descent have enriched Chilean society across various fields: philosopher Felix Schwarzman-Turkenich, pianist Fedora Aberasturi, Miss Chile 2008 Nataly Nadeska Chilet Bustamante, and footballer Serhiy Lytviak, who helped win the Chilean Cup in 1954.

Meanwhile, a telling testament to Ukrainian entrepreneurship in Chile was the Tridente workshop in Santiago, operated by Galician immigrant Mykola Lyakhovych from the 1950s to early 2000s.

Specializing in polar footwear for Chilean Antarctic expeditions, the workshop's legacy lives on through preserved boots and patches that tell the story of Ukrainian craftsmanship meeting Chilean exploration needs.

The journey of Ukrainians in Brazil, Argentina, and Chile reflects a powerful story of resilience and deep integration into their host societies. Their contributions across agriculture, industry, arts, and science not only enriched these nations but also built enduring bridges of shared history and mutual respect.

This human dimension offers a valuable foundation for fostering stronger ties between Ukraine and Latin America, highlighting the potential for deeper collaboration grounded in a legacy of connection and shared values.

This article was produced in partnership with the Ukrainian Institute, Ukraine's major cultural and public diplomacy institution.

Anastasiia Herasymchuk
DEPUTY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AT UKRAINEWORLD

** For an interview with Guto Pasko conducted in Ukrainian (on 9 February 2025), see: Ірена Ремик Калдаш, “‘Батьки подумали, що це справжня українська’. Відомий режисер Гуго Пашко – про російську мову в Києві, брехню росіян і ‘маленьку Україну’ в Бразилії” at: <https://news.obozrevatel.com/ukr/show/people/batki-poobitsyali-bogu-scho-ya-stanu-svyaschennikom-brazilskij-rezhiser-pro-malenku-ukrainu-v-brazilii-brehnyu-rosiyan-i-poizdki-na-ridnu-galichinu.htm>*

See also the video: “Українці БРАЗИЛІЇ У КІНО!” at: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=xdmjtdFtcA8&t=1s&pp=2AEBkAIB>

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3. Australia. “Call for Russia to Face ‘Full Force’ If Aussie Killed,” *Australian Associated Press*, 15 January 2025.

By Dominic Giannini, Holly Hales and Tess Ikonomou

The nation’s Ukrainian community has urged the federal government to respond with “full force” if Russia has executed an Australian prisoner of war, and expel its ambassador.

Australian officials are desperately trying to confirm whether Melbourne teacher Oscar Jenkins has been killed by Russian forces after being captured while fighting for Ukraine.

The Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations said it was shocked at the reports and called for a “full force” response if confirmed.

The government should downgrade diplomatic relations with Russia if Mr Jenkins had been executed, federation co-chair Kateryna Argyrou said.

“The Russian ambassador should be expelled and ordered to leave on the first available flight, as should all Russian diplomats and spies,” she said.

“The Russian embassy should be closed, along with the Russian consulate in Sydney.” Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has vowed to take “the strongest action possible” if Russia has executed him.

“We call upon Russia to immediately confirm Oscar Jenkins’ status, we remain gravely concerned,” he told reporters in Tasmania on Wednesday.

“We’ll await the facts to come out but if there has been any harm caused to Oscar Jenkins, that’s absolutely reprehensible and the Australian government will take the strongest action possible.” The 32-year-old was captured and shown in social media videos visibly bruised and shaken while being interrogated and beaten by a Russian-speaking captor.

The Russian ambassador to Australia has been hauled in over the issue as Australia seeks more information.

The federal government has so far resisted expelling the ambassador, arguing it is better to keep channels of communication open.

“This has been a very difficult relationship for many years, including the downing of MH17 in 2014 as well as the illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine,” Foreign Minister Penny Wong said.

“Australia has maintained diplomatic relations with Russia through that period under different governments.

“However, we will consider all options once we have ascertained the facts and once we can verify what has actually occurred.”

Senator Wong said Russia was expected to comply with international humanitarian law.

The opposition is demanding the expulsion of the Russian ambassador if the reports are true.

Liberal senator Simon Birmingham said if Russia had undertaken an extrajudicial execution of a captured Australian citizen the Albanese government should respond in the strongest possible terms.

“Nothing less than the recalling of Australia’s ambassador to Russia and expulsion of Russia’s ambassador would be sufficient in such circumstances,” he said.

4. Austria. “Ukrainians Commemorate 1,000 Days of Russian Invasion in Vienna,” *APA News Service*, 20 November 2024.

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Vienna – Austria’s Ukrainian community joined Austrian friends in Vienna’s city centre on Tuesday evening to commemorate the 1,000th day of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. While the Ukrainian ambassador Wassyl Chymynez emphasised the importance of Austria’s support for his country in front of 150 to 200 rally participants, representatives of Social Democrats Party (SP), liberal-conservative NEOS and Greens affirmed that this solidarity would continue.

“If we as Ukraine stand united with our partners in the EU and in the democratic world, we can fight for a lasting and just peace. We are Ukrainians, a freedom-loving people who defend what belongs to us on our territory,” Chymynez addressed his compatriots in Ukrainian at Stock-im-Eisen-Platz. The joint demonstration with Austrian parliamentarians also showed that they were on the right track. However, we must remain active, the diplomat demanded.

Simply being active is also a way to change something about the current situation in Ukraine, explained Andrij Karioty from the association “Mrija” (Ukrainian for “dream”, note), which organised the rally. Above an improvised stage on a small trailer, a banner reading “1000 days of honour - 100 years of terror - 10 years of war” referred to the prehistory of the Russian invasion with Bolshevik terror against aspirations for Ukrainian statehood and a war that, from the Ukrainian perspective, began with the Russian annexation of the Crimean peninsula in 2014.

“This is not a happy day today. But it is an opportunity to draw attention to the situation in Ukraine,” said NEOS National Councillor Yannick Shetty. He emphasised that his party would continue to support the country regardless of whether it was in government or opposition in the future. Referring to a parliamentary trip to regions affected by the war, Shetty also called for a visit to Ukraine by right-wing Freedom Party (FP) leader Herbert Kickl, one of the ‘main agitators in Europe against Ukraine’. “He is also a family man. I am convinced that it cannot leave someone like him cold when he visits a centre there, like we did, where children who have been abducted to Russia are brought back,” he said.

The current attacks on Ukraine were not only shocking, but should also be a wake-up call, said Green MEP Meri Disoki. “We can see that European and international solidarity with Ukraine is beginning to crumble,” she said. It was not known, for example, how the election of Donald Trump as US President would ultimately affect support for the country. It is quite clear that Ukraine must hold. If this does not happen, there is a threat of much worse things to come in Europe.

For her part, SP National Councillor Petra Bayr recalled the precarious situation of children in Ukraine, many of whom had been torn from their familiar surroundings and forced to flee within Ukraine or abroad. “This does something to the children that traumatises them,” she explained. In an interview with Austrian news agency APA, Bayr herself revealed that Ukraine would also play a role in the upcoming coalition negotiations between the VP, SP and NEOS. This does not only refer to foreign policy, but also to domestic issues such as employment or the recognition of Ukrainian university degrees, the politician explained.

As a sign of solidarity with Ukraine, the Outer Castle Gate on Heldenplatz was once again illuminated with the Ukrainian national colours on Tuesday evening. However, the Ukrainian ambassador’s request in a letter to the members of the National Council Presidium for the parliament to be illuminated again, which was last illuminated in blue and yellow on 24 August, Ukraine’s Independence Day, failed. “I had a conversation with the President of the National Council (Walter Rosenkranz, note), who explained his position and the position of the Presidential Conference to me,” Ambassador Chymynez told APA on the sidelines of the demonstration. He was talking about general rules on lighting, not Ukrainian specifics. However, the diplomat emphasised that it was important to him that the Burgtor, the centre of Vienna, once again shone in Ukrainian colours.

5. Canada. “Ukrainians Pulling Together in Chilliwack to Save Orthodox Church Building,” *Chilliwack Progress*, 13 January 2025.

Church building has fallen into disrepair, but growing Ukrainian community hoping to save it from wrecking ball

Members of the congregation of a small Ukrainian church in Chilliwack were recently shocked to see it in a real estate ad, listed for \$750,000.

But St. Demetrius Ukrainain Orthodox Church has fallen into disrepair, partly because there has been no priest to hold the church together. As more Ukrainians settle in the Fraser Valley, particularly in Chilliwack. And many of those new Canadians have found solace and refuge in the church, and are desperate to see the space saved.

They worry that a buyer would demolish the building to make way for redevelopment. A letter writing campaign has been underway, drawing support from arms of the church and beyond to reverse the church board's decision to sell. They've also created a petition to pull their supporters together, at change.org. That petition had 360 signatures by Jan. 13.

On Sunday, Jan. 12, about 40 church members and supporters gathered for a peaceful rally outside the church. They wanted to draw attention to the matter, while rallying together in solidarity as they plan their next steps.

Among the group was Bradley Gionet, who as founder of Chilliwack Supports Ukraine has received the Paul Harris Fellowship Award and a King's Coronation Medal for his work resettling Ukrainians into Canada.

He spoke of the history of the church and how it fell into disrepair, and more importantly, the significance that the church holds today and the potential the building has to create a new safe haven for those fleeing the war.

“Going back through the archival holdings at the *Chilliwack Progress* and Chilliwack Archives, we know that this congregation did not begin in 1970, but rather in 1946, mere months after the end of World War 2,” he said. “The Chilliwack area has a strong history of supporting Ukrainians during times of war.”

When Ukrainians arrived en masse in the 1940s, they created a cultural hall on Fairfield Island. That building was the backdrop for community dinners, dance shows, and outreach to the general public that shared Ukrainian culture.

The current building, on Victor Street, was established in 1948. In 1970, local Ukrainian families came together to buy it as a group.

“This building has a long history of people putting in the work to see their cultural and spiritual home run successfully,” Gionet said. “For years now, St. Demetrius has stood in this rather derelict state. While some members tried to save it, membership dwindled and even with over 5,000 people in Chilliwack (or 5 per cent of the population) with Ukrainian heritage, all religious and cultural activities have now but stopped.”

He said the church community was “disheartened” to see the building up for sale on Jan. 2, and that it was done without notice to the congregants.

A legal team is working to retain the building, and looking for answers.

“I am hopeful, with the support of Ukrainians in Chilliwack, and the community at large, St. Demetrius Church can be saved,” he said.

He spoke directly to the Ukrainians present for their ongoing help.

“God willing, in a short period of time you will be handed the keys to this beautiful building,” he said. “A diamond in the rough, that will need your time, your money, and your talents. Saving St. Demetrius from the sale will be the easiest challenge in the list of opportunities presented to you.”

He noted that it will take the Ukrainian community coming together in force to save the building, but also care for it into the future.

“Now is the time to build strong connections, and encourage other Ukrainians to show up,” he said.

6. Canada. “City’s Ukrainian Community Continues to Move Away from Christmas in January,” *Edmonton Journal*, 7 January 2025.

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By Lauren Boothby

Following Ukraine’s lead, many now choose to celebrate holiday in December

Celebrating Christmas in January has been a long-standing tradition for many Ukrainian Canadians in Edmonton.

But for a second year, many Edmontonians with Ukrainian heritage are celebrating earlier instead. In 2023, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy officially changed the Christmas holiday to Dec. 25 from the date observed by the Russian Orthodox Church in the Julian calendar, distancing the country from Russia amid the ongoing war. The holiday was traditionally celebrated by many Eastern Orthodox Christians and Ukrainian Catholics with Christmas Eve on Jan. 6 and Christmas Day on Jan. 7.

Some locals were swift in making the switch to the December date last season, observes Orisya Boychuk, president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress Alberta Provincial Council. Many people in her community were already celebrating Christmas on Dec. 25 in addition to the January holiday.

“We could see the early adopters that had hopped over and quickly changed last year, and many who were happy because they wanted to do one Christmas anyways,” she said.

With the new official date in place for a second year, it’s hard to know how many people are forgoing the old date. But Boychuk saw more people celebrating in December this season. And she knows the transition may take longer for some, while others may not switch at all.

“This year, I definitely got a sense that more people had moved over to the (December) 24th, 25th date. We do know people that are celebrating on (January) 6th, so we will be going to their homes carolling as well,” she said. “There is a bit of a mix, but I would say there was more of a shift this year.

“Others have taken some time and there may be some that may never switch. I think this is a long-standing tradition within our Ukrainian community.”

Her family is switching to December, but for this year it made sense to have two Christmases

because of her daughter's availability. There was a turkey dinner on Dec. 24 and carols at other families' homes in the community the next day.

Her second Christmas was this past Saturday, Jan. 3, with more of the traditional fare - 12 meatless meals, carolling visitors, and a small gift exchange.

Whether Edmontonians continue to celebrate in January or make the shift to December, she knows the Christmas holiday traditions will remain - going to church to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, spending time with family and friends, sharing food and singing carols.

"Christmas is a time of community. It brings people together, our family together, our friends together, and it also celebrates our culture and our tradition. And it really identifies, I think, the richness of our culture and who we really are," Boychuk said.

"The tradition and the celebration of Ukrainian Christmas really has not changed, and it really is just the date that has changed."

Even if January Christmas celebrations don't continue, many Ukrainian Canadians will still be in the holiday spirit this month for Malanka, a New Year's festival.

Embracing new traditions

Janice Krissa used to celebrate Christmas in January, but she doesn't anymore.

After meeting more newcomers from Ukraine, she's started seeing the tradition of celebrating Christmas in January as "more of a Canadian thing" celebrated by people with Ukrainian ancestral roots rather than the holiday celebrated by people who live in Ukraine today.

"It was kind of hard for me, because I always used to celebrate Ukrainian Christmas, and it was honestly more of a Canadian thing," she said. "They have called December 25th their holiday, the Ukrainians from Ukraine."

Krissa owns DON'YA Ukraine's Kitchen. All of her employees are Ukrainian newcomers.

Her kitchen was still busy this past weekend because, she thinks, many Ukrainian-Canadians are still celebrating Christmas this month. She wonders if they know the official holiday date has changed.

"They're still celebrating, which is fine," Krissa said. "We're not upset with anybody, and we sell them food, lots of food, but because all of our employees are from Ukraine, we're following what they want. And it's really cool."

Leaving the old date behind for her also means embracing new traditions, like Vertep - something that started as a puppet theatre but now involves carolling through the Christmas season and into the new year. She's also trying new food and learning new games.

“Ukrainians will celebrate Christmas until Valentine’s Day, almost. You can sing Christmas carols,” she said.

“Myself - am I sad that we’re not doing Ukrainian Christmas? A little bit. But at the same time, I always stand with Ukraine, and I’m looking forward to new celebrations.”

For her, the most important thing is supporting Ukraine and leaving the conflict behind.

“Just being respectful of what people celebrate and want to celebrate. I don’t think it really matters. Whatever is most comfortable for people,” she said.

“Just as long as they understand.

We stand with Ukraine. They made the change, so we did too.”

7. Canada. “Saskatchewan Commemorates Holodomor,” *Saskatchewan.ca/government*, 19 November 2024.

During a special service at the Legislative Building today, Premier Scott Moe and MLAs joined with members of the province’s Ukrainian community to commemorate the millions who died during the 1932-33 famine in Ukraine.

“Holodomor, The Great Famine, is still present in the hearts and minds of the Ukrainian community over 90 years later,” Honorary Consul of Ukraine Ken Krawetz said. “We join our Saskatchewan citizens of Ukrainian heritage and those across the globe, to remember this dark time and honour those lost.”

The word Holodomor means “extermination by hunger” in the Ukrainian language. The service was held in solidarity with Holodomor Memorial Week; a memorial candle was lit and will remain lit throughout the week to represent unity with those around the world marking the Holodomor genocide.

In 1932 and 1933, the man-made famine engineered by the Soviet government resulted in the deaths of millions of people through starvation and deprivation. Crops were confiscated and regulations were imposed preventing people from leaving their communities in search of food.

An exact reproduction of the statue, entitled “Bitter Memories of Childhood” by sculptor Petro Drozdowsky, of a young, starving peasant girl clutching a wheat sheaf, was dedicated on the grounds of the Wascana Centre in 2015. The original statue still stands in the National Museum of the Holodomor-Genocide in Kyiv, Ukraine.

The statue is located southeast of the Legislative Building on Lakeshore Drive, serving as a permanent reminder of the tragedy.

Saskatchewan was the first jurisdiction in North America to recognize this genocide with the passing of The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act in 2008.

International Holodomor Day is recognized on the fourth Saturday of November and, this year, falls on November 23, 2024.

8. Canada. “1,000 Days of War,” *Sault Star*, 19 November 2024.

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PG A1 / Front

By Margaret Kirk

Sault Ste. Marie’s Ukrainian Congress hosts commemorative events

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) has established a new branch in Sault Ste. Marie, a move that aligns with the city’s growing Ukrainian population.

Iryna Pedko, president, and Mariia Chuchman, vice-president, lead the branch, which is part of the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC). Founded in 1967, the UWC advocates for the interests of 20 million Ukrainians in 60 countries.

Canada is home to 1.4 million Ukrainians, one of the nation's largest ethnic communities. Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, around 40 Ukrainian families have settled in Sault Ste. Marie, either arriving directly from Ukraine or relocating from other parts of Canada, according to Chuchman.

Tuesday marks 1,000 days since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The conflict has displaced over 6 million Ukrainians as refugees abroad and 3.5 million internally, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Reports from the WHO and United Nations also highlight the destruction, with over 2,100 attacks on health care, two million damaged homes, and 65 per cent of Ukraine's energy infrastructure rendered inoperative. This leaves millions facing a third consecutive winter without heat.

Despite the challenges, Ukraine has gained recent support through a shift in U.S. policy. President Joe Biden has approved the use of U.S.-supplied missiles against Russia, allowing Ukraine to strike deeper into Russian territory.

“We’ve been waiting for this decision for almost four years,” said Chuchman. She noted that the increased defensive capabilities could deter further Russian aggression.

Biden’s decision to authorize the missiles comes amid reports that North Korea has deployed 12,000 troops to support Russia, according to sources cited by the National Post.

“The last few days have been incredibly hard for Ukrainians back home,” said Chuchman, who added that people have been dying “day and night.”

President-elect Donald Trump, who takes office in January, has expressed intent to swiftly end the war, causing Ukrainians to speculate about who will be the main beneficiaries of negotiations.

“It is really hard to predict these kinds of things because Trump is known mostly as an unpredictable person,” said Chuchman.

“On behalf of all Ukrainians across the world, I hope that it will not be on anyone else’s conditions but Ukrainian, and in favour of the Ukrainian nation. We do hope that he will do everything legal and fair to stop this war,” said Chuchman.

She also noted that some candidates Trump is considering for his administration are in support of Ukraine, so she hopes they continue to support, and help Trump end the war.

“It’s not that we expect the world to stop the war in Ukraine, because it’s a war in our homeland,” said Chuchman. “We want to defend ourselves, but we have to acknowledge that the U.S. is one of the strongest countries in the world.”

Chuchman would like to see the U.S. use its power and influence to make the world “more fair” and “stop the crimes” that Russia commits against Ukrainians.

In addition to the somber 1,000-day milestone, and heightened U.S. involvement, November also brings about International Holodomor Memorial Day, observed on Saturday.

The Holodomor, a man-made famine orchestrated by the Soviet Union between 1932 and 1933, killed an estimated 3.5 to 7 million Ukrainians.

Canada was the first country to recognize the Holodomor as genocide.

“This occasion connects the tragic histories of the Holodomor and the current war,” said Chuchman.

The UCC branch in Sault Ste.

Marie has organized events to honor 1,000 days of war and Holodomor Day to 'show solidarity with Ukraine and give back,' said Chuchman.

On Nov. 19 the Ukrainian community of Sault Ste. Marie is asking everyone to take one minute of silence at 7:32 p.m. for all the lives that have been taken.

The chosen time, when written in the 24-hour clock format (19:32), reflects the year the famine took place.

Local schools, including H.M. Robbins, have also decided independently to hold moments of silence this week. “We’re so grateful for the local support,” said Chuchman.

On Saturday, the public is invited to a Big Pierogi Making at St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church. The food will be donated to the Great Northern Retirement Home as a "tribute to the lives lost in the Holodomor and a reminder that food should never again be something people struggle to access," said Chuchman.

She thanked No Frills for providing the ingredients to make the traditional Ukrainian dish.

Admission to help with pierogi making is by donation and allows local Ukrainians to "celebrate and share their culture with the broader community," said Chuchman. "The Ukrainian community is mostly filled with newcomers, and it is really hard for some of us to donate while we are in need ourselves."

Also on Saturday, a memorial service will be held at St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church at 5 p.m., followed by a candle lighting along McNabb Street outside of the church will take place from 5:30 to 5:40 p.m.

In addition, Chuchman shared a call to action on social media to "light up the darkness." Those who wish can light a candle of remembrance and post a photo and reflections of remembrance on social media with the hashtag "#HOLODOMOR."

"We do our best to host events like this so locals can learn about our culture and our traditions and sometimes have fun with us ... We would like to become part of this local community and become a part of local life," she said.

"While we deeply appreciate the support Ukrainians received in 2022, the war continues..." said Chuchman. "It is essential to honor those who have lost their lives by living fully each day.

"However, while daily struggles can't compare to the immense losses endured in Ukraine, the need for support remains as critical as ever." The Local Journalism Initiative is made possible through funding from the federal government.

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9. General. "ANALYSIS-Ukrainian Migrant Exit Could Squeeze Eastern Europe's Economies," *Reuters News*, 16 January 2025.

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More than 4.3 mln Ukrainian refugees are in EU

Ukrainian workers' looming exit may strain CEE labor markets Ukrainian labour helped Eastern Europe growth outpace euro zone

US tariff changes, robust dollar are additional economic threats

By Libby George

VIENNA, Jan 16 (Reuters) - Eastern European nations confronting a plethora of economic threats fuelled by war on their doorstep may face fresh pressure if peace is reached in Ukraine - from tight labour markets that fuel inflation thanks to an exodus of Ukrainian workers.

Central and eastern European countries are home to a large proportion of more than 4.3 million Ukrainians who fled to the EU in the wake of Russia's invasion and have filled jobs amid historically low unemployment levels.

Their possible return to Ukraine after a peace deal is reached would be a snag in what is otherwise good news for the region.

“Demography is a risk, and it’s one that a resolution of the war in Ukraine will make worse, because some of those Ukrainians will go back home,” Charlotte Ruhe, managing director for Central and South Eastern Europe at the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development said at the Invisso Central and Eastern European Forum in Vienna.

Incoming U.S. President Donald Trump's pledge to end hostilities between Russia and Ukraine when he takes office on Jan. 20 has prompted many to begin considering a post-war future. However, it is unclear how he plans to achieve this and his advisors have conceded a peace deal is months away.

Economic growth across central and eastern Europe was 2.2% last year, Raiffeisen Bank International estimates -- faster than the stagnant 0.8% it predicts in the euro zone.

DRIVING EXPANSION

Ukrainian workers - who gained legal rights to live and work in Europe via a March 2022 European Union directive - aided this dynamism, helping the region's manufacturing and export-driven economies expand quickly.

Of the 4.3 million people who fled Ukraine for the EU by December 2023, 22% of them were in Poland and roughly 9% in the Czech Republic, Eurostat data showed.

“Part of the economic success in many countries is linked to Ukrainians who moved there over the last two years,” Christian Petter, head of Austria and CEE with J. Safra Sarasin, said at the summit.

“Now, with the war hopefully being finished, of course, there is a big chance that these people will return to Ukraine and [leave a gap in] labour markets like in Prague, in Bratislava, in Warsaw, and will be a challenge to be replaced.”

The region faces other, bigger, headwinds.

Growth in several countries - notably Hungary - has centred around manufacturing and exporting, including car parts, thanks to the region's comparatively affordable workforce.

UNCERTAINTY OVER TARIFFS

Potential trade wars, spurred by Trump's tariff promises, complicate this model as government debt remains elevated.

Poland, Romania and Slovakia's debt-to-GDP ratios could continue to climb, according to Erste Group. Poland's deficit-to-GDP last year - bloated by defence spending - stood at roughly 5% of GDP, above the EU's 3% target.

A loss of workers would add to pressure.

In November, Poland's central bank published a survey of Ukrainian migrants, showing that while just 2% of refugees and 1% of pre-war migrants wanted to go back to Ukraine in less than a year, those figures would jump to 59% and 34%, respectively, if the war were to end.

Unemployment in Poland stands at all-time lows, pushing wage growth to peak last year at 10%.

The Czech government has warned that looming labour shortages threaten its economy, a trend mirrored in other countries in the region.

Rising wages and inflation make it harder for central banks to cut interest rates, and sticky inflation and a rising U.S. dollar have already challenged the current rate-cutting cycle in eastern Europe.

Keeping rates higher for longer pressures economies and makes local debt more expensive for governments.

Raiffeisen Bank International head of research Gunter Deuber said falling inflation was not a given, and its pace was likely to remain static in Hungary and Romania, while climbing in countries including the Czech Republic.

"This means we don't expect too big of rate cuts coming in our region," he said.

THREATS ABOUND

Still, Deuber was sceptical that Ukrainian workers who had established themselves would really leave, particularly given uncertainties around a possible peace deal.

The EBRD's Ruhe emphasized that companies could use departing workers as an opportunity to invest in labour-saving engineering measures.

Bankers and investors said post-war Ukrainian reconstruction efforts could be a boon for neighbouring countries, particularly Poland.

But Trump's return to the White House - and the dollar strength, tariff threats and uncertainty it will bring, along with deteriorating faith in U.S. Federal Reserve rate cuts - make for a

challenging mix for policy makers.

“Threats are everywhere,” Ana Tripovic, state secretary in Serbia's Ministry of Finance, told the summit.

She noted that COVID-era debt increases and the energy crisis prompted by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, were now compounded by the strong U.S. dollar, making it more expensive for countries like hers to service international debt.

“The market work is getting more and more complicated,” she said. “Today... we are facing all those threats and challenges that happened years apart.”

(Reporting by Libby George, additional reporting by Karol Badahal in Warsaw and Gergely Szakacs in Budapest; Editing by Karin Strohecker and Bernadette Baum)

10. General. “Ukraine’s Parliament Supports Bill on Multiple Citizenship in First Reading,” *Kyiv Independent*, 17 December 2024.

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By Martin Fornusek

The Ukrainian parliament on Dec. 17 supported in the first reading a bill allowing multiple citizenship for Ukrainian citizens, lawmaker Yaroslav Zhelezniak said.

The Ukrainian law currently specifies that Ukrainians can hold only a single citizenship, while multiple citizenship is not recognized.

President Volodymyr Zelensky submitted the bill legalizing multiple citizenship in August and stressed its importance as part of his internal resilience plan in November.

The bill, supported by 247 lawmakers in the first reading, still has to pass a second reading and be signed by the president before becoming law. The parliament also asked the Constitutional Court to review the document.

The legislation lists permissible cases for holding multiple citizenship, simplifies procedures for foreigners to obtain Ukrainian citizenship, and establishes new grounds for losing citizenship, such as receiving a Russian passport or serving in the Russian Armed Forces.

The bill is also seen as part of Ukraine's effort to strengthen ties with the Ukrainians living abroad. Zelensky said the document should allow ethnic Ukrainians born abroad to obtain citizenship.

Even before the full-scale invasion, the Ukrainian diaspora has been widespread around the world, with particularly large communities in the EU, the U.S., and Canada. The war drew millions more from their home, with some 6.7 million living as refugees abroad as of August 2024.

To foster the relationship with the Ukrainian community abroad, the government launched a new department called the National Unity Ministry, headed by former Naftogaz chief Oleksii Chernyshov.

11. General. “Ukraine’s New Ministry for Communication with the Diaspora,” *Osw.waw.pl*, 5 December 2024.

Marcin Jędrysiak

On 3 December, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine appointed Oleksiy Chernyshov as Deputy Prime Minister and head of the newly established Ministry of National Unity, which was formed through the reorganisation of the former Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories.

In August, President Volodymyr Zelensky announced plans to create a government agency tasked with liaising with Ukrainians residing abroad. The precise scope of the ministry’s responsibilities and powers remains unclear. According to initial statements, its objectives include creating conditions to encourage emigrants to return to Ukraine, such as providing assistance in securing employment and accommodation. The president also identified combating Russian agents within the Ukrainian diaspora as one of the ministry’s tasks. Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal claimed it was necessary to establish the ministry in view of the need to safeguard the identity of Ukrainians abroad and prevent their assimilation.

The Ukrainian government’s stance on emigrants has been ambivalent so far. The newly established Ministry of National Unity is therefore intended to mark a shift in this approach. However, there remains serious concerns about the purpose of creating this new government agency and its effectiveness, largely due to doubts surrounding its leader and the still undefined scope of its prerogatives.

Commentary

The new ministry has been established in an attempt to centralise emigration policy within a single institution. This move reflects the government’s failure in communication with migrants. Ukrainians living abroad have often complained that Kyiv treats them as second-class citizens or even traitors. Such sentiments have been particularly pronounced among men accused of evading military service, even if they had left the country long before Russia’s invasion. A prime example of this attitude was the government’s decision in April this year to suspend consular services for military-age men abroad. At the same time, however, the government hopes that emigrants will embrace the role of ‘ambassadors of Ukraine abroad.’

Between 7 and 9 million Ukrainian citizens currently reside abroad, including 5–6 million refugees. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimates that the entire Ukrainian diaspora consists of 15–25 million ethnic Ukrainians. Faced with significant demographic challenges (see ‘Ukraine in the face of a demographic catastrophe’), which are anticipated to result in a labour shortage, the government cannot afford to alienate such a substantial segment of the population. Measures

aimed at preserving and strengthening emigrants' ties to the homeland include the proposed introduction of dual citizenship for Ukrainians (the legislative process is already underway) and the creation of the E-Consul electronic platform.

Institutional challenges cast doubt on whether the new ministry will be able to fulfil its responsibilities, since neither the formal scope of its duties nor its action plan has been outlined. As a result, its prerogatives may overlap with those of other ministries, leading to a potential dispersion of its activities. Furthermore, it has not been clarified how the ministry will combat Russian agents abroad or coordinate such efforts with relevant security services. Additionally, the 'restructuring' of the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories has, thus far, primarily amounted to little more than a name change. The opposition has criticised the move as an unnecessary waste of funds. Notably, a group of deputies from the Servant of the People party refused to endorse Chernyshov's nomination, with some expressing that their dissent stemmed from a lack of clarity regarding the new ministry's purpose. The required majority was achieved with the backing of the Platform for Life and Peace, a faction originating from the formerly pro-Russian Opposition Platform – For Life.

Concerns have been raised regarding Chernyshov's appointment as head of the new ministry, as his educational background in law and economics does not include experience in engaging with emigrant communities. He is believed to have close links to Andriy Yermak, the head of the Office of the President of Ukraine. From 2020 to 2022, Chernyshov served as Minister for Communities and Territorial Development, and since November 2022, he has been the CEO of Naftogaz, Ukraine's state-controlled gas distribution monopoly. Prior to the cabinet reshuffle in September (see 'Ukraine: a major government reshuffle'), the media suggested that he wanted to replace Denys Shmyhal as prime minister. Chernyshov was also considered a candidate for Minister for Communities, Territories, and Infrastructure Development or Ambassador to the United States. However, his reputation has been tarnished by a corruption scandal involving allegations of accepting a bribe from a property developer.

12. Greece. "Athens Rally to Mark 3rd Anniversary of Russia's Invasion of Ukraine," *Kathimerini*, 19 February 2025.

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The Ukrainian community of Athens has organized a march and rally in central Athens for this Sunday to mark the third anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The event is being coordinated by the Association of Ukrainian Women in Greece and the Association of Ukrainian Diaspora in Greece, with support from the Embassy of Ukraine.

It is part of the global #StandWithUkraine campaign, which seeks to raise international awareness of the ongoing consequences of Russian aggression.

Organizers have called on participants to gather at Panepistimio metro station on Sunday afternoon at 3 p.m. before marching to Syntagma Square, where the rally will feature speeches and artistic performances.

Organizers have expressed gratitude to Greece for steadfast support offered to Ukraine, inviting the public to join the event.

13. Greece. “Ukrainian Embassy in Greece Calls for Investigation into Communist Attack on Holodomor Memorial Rally,” *Political News*, 25 November 2024.

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KYIV. Nov 25 (Interfax-Ukraine) – The Embassy of Ukraine in Greece expresses its strong protest against the violent provocative actions of members of the Communist Party of Greece during an event organized by the Ukrainian community in the municipality of Mandra Idyll in order to honor the memory of the victims of the Holodomor. This is reported on the diplomatic mission’s Facebook page.

“The Embassy strongly condemns the shameful violation of an official event dedicated to events of historical and emotional significance for the Ukrainian people. These provocative actions, which led to physical attacks, in particular an attack on a Ukrainian diplomat, which led to physical harm, are absolutely unacceptable and constitute a blatant violation of international norms,” the statement says.

The Embassy of Ukraine called on the Greek law enforcement agencies to promptly investigate the incident and ensure the responsibility of those responsible. “It is necessary to protect the rights of people and communities to remember historical tragedies without fear of intimidation or violence,” the text reads.

Earlier, the priest of the Ukrainian Church Community of St. Nicholas of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Greece, Ihor Posolenyk, said that the participants of the Ukrainian action dedicated to the memory of the victims of the Holodomor were attacked by representatives of the Communist Party of Greece.

“On Saturday, during a peaceful event dedicated to the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Holodomor in Ukraine, a group of aggressive individuals under communist flags and slogans attacked Ukrainians, among whom a significant number were women and children of Ukrainian schools and associations (Madri, Greece). The incident occurred near the monument to Taras Shevchenko, where Ukrainians gathered to hold an authorized prayer event for the victims of the Holodomor,” the priest described the events on his Facebook page.

According to him, this case “came as a shock to the community, especially considering that the attack took place at an event that was supposed to emphasize the importance of remembering the tragedies of the past.”

The local Ukrainian community also called on the Greek authorities to investigate the incident, identify the perpetrators and guarantee the safety of such events in the future.

14. Lebanon. “Lebanon Interested in Importing Meat, Dairy Products and Cattle - Agrarian Minister,” *Interfax-Ukraine*, 31 December 2024.

Ukraine exports products to Lebanon for more than \$400 million, although the potential is \$1 billion, promising supplies are cattle, meat and dairy products, said Minister of Agrarian Policy and Food Vitaliy Koval following his visit to Lebanon and meeting with businesses.

The Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food noted that Koval met with Lebanese businessmen - representatives of more than 12 companies involved in imports: millers, traders, entrepreneurs buying food products; meat and grain from Ukraine.

According to the minister, Lebanese entrepreneurs import tens of thousands of tonnes of cattle. Recently, they began importing sheep to Lebanon. These areas of breeding may be promising for Ukrainian farmers due to the meat shortage.

“Today we export products to Lebanon for more than \$400 million, although the potential is \$1 billion. That is why the task of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy is to increase the import of our products to Lebanon. I discussed with their businesses what needs to be done to increase trade turnover. Lebanese entrepreneurs noted some bureaucratic issues and logistical problems. Now I clearly understand what needs to be simplified in the procedures. Lebanon is an important trading partner for us, so we will work on developing our relations further,” Koval emphasized.

The minister drew attention to the fact that Lebanon has a very active Ukrainian community. During a meeting with its representatives, the Ukrainian delegation discussed logistical communication with Ukraine and increasing domestic products in Lebanese stores.

Koval called on the diaspora to be ambassadors of Ukraine: to popularize Ukrainian products, noting their quality.

15. Malta. “Ukrainian Community to Hold Protest over Lavrov Presence at OSCE Meeting,” *Malta Today*, 5 December 2024.

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The Ukrainian community in Malta will be holding a protest over Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's visit to Malta for the OSCE ministerial meeting.

“The Foundation for the Ukrainian Community of Malta condemns the decision to welcome the Russian official to the conference held in the country that upholds democratic values and freedoms,” the group said.

The protest will be held out the MFFC in Ta' Qali at around 12:30pm. The OSCE meeting is being held at the venue.

Describing Lavrov as a key representative of the regime responsible for a brutal war against the peaceful population of Ukraine, they said he should have never been allowed to attend the OSCE meeting.

“This protest is not just about opposing a single visit,” said a spokesperson for the Foundation. “It is a stand for democracy, human rights, and justice. We cannot remain silent when a representative of an aggressor state freely visits a European country, which should instead serve as a sanctuary of peace and solidarity.”

They said the event aims to demonstrate that war crimes against civilians are unacceptable, and those responsible must face international isolation, not be welcomed at global forums.

“The Ukrainian community invites everyone who shares the values of freedom, democracy, and solidarity with Ukraine to join the rally,” a statement read. “Together, let us stand united to uphold human rights, promote peace, and ensure accountability for those who perpetuate war and suffering.”

On Thursday, Lavrov slammed western countries for what he claims was an escalation of the Ukraine war.

Lavrov claimed that Ukraine's goal is to “keep Russia down and inflict defeat on it on the battlefield,” remarking that there is no area within the OSCE where it can contribute meaningfully, claiming that mutually respectful dialogue has been killed within the 57-nation organisation.

The last time Lavrov visited an EU country was in December 2021, when he travelled to Stockholm for an OSCE event prior to the escalation of the Ukraine conflict.

16. Moldova. “Victims of Ukrainian Famine Commemorated in Moldovan Capital,” *Moldpres*, 22 November 2024.

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Chisinau, 22 November /MOLDPRES/ - The victims of the Holodomor (Ukrainian Famine) from the 1932-1933 years were commemorated at a today’s roundtable dedicated to this tragic event in Chisinau today. The Holodomor left painful traces also in Bessarabia (1946-1947). The event was held under the slogan, We Keep in Memory! We Will Not Forget!

The famine organized by the totalitarian regime in order to subdue people killed millions of people and children were worst hit. “The criminal regime spread not only famine, but also fear, as during decades, this tragedy was passed over in silence. The people learned the truth, after Ukraine and Moldova had left the Soviet empire and became sovereign and independent states,” the participants in the roundtable said.

The participants in the meeting launched a call to support the Ukrainian soldiers who presently fight for Ukraine’s liberation from the Russian occupation. “On these days, our memory is our strength. The world community also mobilizes us for a common fight against the global evil. This year, the commemoration days are held under the slogan, Light a candle for the victims of Holodomor. Support the soldiers in the fight for Ukraine,” reads the organizer’s press release.

Thirty states from all over the world officially recognized the Holodomor from Ukraine as a genocide act. “The Embassy of Ukraine expresses deep gratitude to Moldova, which joined this important act in 2022,” the charge d’affaires of Ukraine in Moldova, Natalia Sirenko, said.

A documentary on the Holodomor’s tragedy was screened at the roundtable. Eye witnesses were telling what they had felt on that period of ordeal for Ukraine. The people present at the event stood silent for one minute in the memory of the victims of the Holodomor from Ukraine and of the organized famine in Moldova.

Attending the roundtable were the director general of the Interethnic Relations Agency, Viaceslav Riabcinski, the president of the Ukrainian Community from Moldova, Vitalii Mrug, the deputy head of the social, humanitarian and interethnic relations department at the Chisinau city hall, Vera Petuhova, the head of the public association, Cultural Movement of Ukrainians from Moldova, journalist Zinaida Gurskaia, the dean of the Odessa-based I.I. Mechnikov National University’s Faculty of History and Philosophy, Veaceslav Kusnir, a researcher of the Moldovan Academy of Sciences, Katerina Kojuhar.

The roundtable was organized by the Ukrainian Community from Moldova, with the support of Ukraine’s Embassy in Moldova and the Chisinau city hall.

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17. New Zealand. “Ukraine ‘Needs NZ Support to Go On,’” *Bay of Plenty Times*, 8 February 2025.

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PG A012

By David Williams

New Zealand’s Ukrainian community wants Kiwis to not grow tired as the war nears its fourth year, with the Ukrainian ambassador saying support is an investment in global security.

An estimated 600,000 Russian troops have been killed or injured since the beginning of the full-scale invasion in February 2022.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said 43,000 Ukrainian soldiers have been killed and 370,000 wounded.

Auckland resident Katia Samokisha told the Herald that community members would volunteer and help Ukraine until the war is over.

“If it will take 10 years or more, we will continue to do what we do.

“We have to contribute our time if we cannot contribute our lives,” she said.

Mahi for Ukraine spokesperson Kate Turska said the Ukrainian community in New Zealand remains deeply grateful for the support it has received

“(We) continue to do everything we can — through fundraisers, advocacy, and direct aid — to help Ukraine,” she said.

“We have formally requested that the New Zealand Government extend sanctions against Russia and issue a public statement marking this anniversary,” she said.

“We hope New Zealand will reaffirm its commitment to standing with Ukraine.”

Ukrainian ambassador to Australia and New Zealand Vasyl Myroshnychenko said support of Ukraine was an investment.

Myroshnychenko pitched the idea during his recent meeting with Foreign Minister Winston Peters.

“I wanted to thank them for their support and explain that support for Ukraine is not a charity but an investment into the security of New Zealand,” he said.

“The issue of sovereignty is important to New Zealand and for countries around New Zealand. The protection countries have in the UN Charter went down the drain with the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

“If there is one country who can use weapons and force to take over one country, then others will say, ‘If Russia can do it, why can’t we do it’.”

Myroshnychenko said Prime Minister Christopher Luxon visiting Ukraine would be a strong sign of solidarity.

Peters posted on X, formally known as Twitter, welcoming Myroshnychenko back to Wellington.

“They discussed the situation on the ground in Ukraine and New Zealand’s ongoing support in the lead-up to the third anniversary of Russia’s illegal invasion.”

Since the February 2022 invasion, New Zealand has imposed sanctions on more than 1700 individuals and entities and donated more than \$100 million in aid to Ukraine.

Last November, Peters announced new chemical weapons and missile sanctions against Russia.

“These new sanctions respond to recent findings by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons that illegal riot control agents are being used on the frontlines in Ukraine,” Peters said.

In February last year, the Government sent \$25.9m in aid to Ukraine, including \$6.5m to

purchase weapons.

It also announced the extension to the deployment of up to 97 NZDF personnel to Europe to train Ukrainian soldiers and provide logistical support.

18. Portugal. “Ucranianos em Portugal queixam-se de violação de dados” [Ukrainians in Portugal Issue Complaint about a Data Breach], *Agência Lusa*, 11 January 2025.

Ucranianos em Portugal queixam-se de violação de dados
Associação dos Ucranianos em Portugal apresentou uma queixa junto da Comissão Nacional de Proteção de Dados.

A Associação dos Ucranianos em Portugal apresentou uma queixa junto da Comissão Nacional de Proteção de Dados, depois de centenas de imigrantes em Portugal terem recebido chamadas, falando russo, com pedidos de informação sobre contas bancárias.

“Nos últimos dois meses, centenas de ucranianos que residem em Portugal e têm números de telemóvel de operadores portugueses estão a receber telefonemas de diferentes números móveis e fixos de Portugal, onde pessoas com voz feminina ou masculina falando em língua russa tentam obter informações pessoais”, refere a queixa a que a Lusa teve acesso este sábado.

Em declarações à Lusa, Pavlo Sadokha, presidente da associação, explicou que quem faz as chamadas sabe o nome da pessoa proprietária do número de telemóvel e “apresenta-se como inspetor da Polícia Judiciária” portuguesa, mas falando em russo.

Os pedidos de informação incluem a recolha de dados bancários o que tem levado os membros da associação a desconfiar.

“Já muita gente nos contactou para tentar saber quem tem esses dados e sei de quem já apresentou queixa na polícia”, explicou o dirigente.

“Como as vítimas desses telefonemas não têm nada em comum além de serem de nacionalidade ou origem ucraniana (não são membros dos mesmos grupos nas redes sociais), suspeitamos que alguns dados pessoais em massa tenham sido quebrados ou roubados, indicando números de telemóveis com nomes e sobrenomes e possivelmente a nacionalidade”, refere ainda a queixa à Comissão.

Muitos dos números das pessoas que foram alvo dos telefonemas não existem na base de dados da associação, explicou Pavlo Sadokha, indicando que o único elemento em comum é integrarem plataformas de redes sociais comuns aos imigrantes.

Trata-se de imigrantes ucranianos e alguns russos opositores do regime de Moscovo, mas Pavlo Sadokha disse à Lusa que as conversas nunca indicaram questões políticas, mas sim tentativas de aceder a dados bancários.

Segundo Pavlo Sadokha, a associação está a recolher as queixas e os números utilizados para os

entregar às autoridades portuguesas de modo a que o caso seja averiguado.

“Isto nunca aconteceu, mas suspeitamos de tentativa de burla”, disse.

[Translation from Portuguese follows below – S.C.]

The Association of Ukrainians in Portugal has filed a complaint with the National Data Protection Commission after hundreds of immigrants in Portugal received calls in the Russian language asking for information about bank accounts.

“Over the last two months, hundreds of Ukrainians who reside in Portugal and have cell phone numbers from Portuguese operators have been receiving phone calls from different mobile and landline numbers in Portugal, where people with female or male voices speaking in Russian try to obtain personal information,” states the complaint that Lusa had access to this Saturday.

Speaking to Lusa, Pavlo Sadokha, president of the association, explained that whoever makes the calls knows the name of the person who owns the mobile phone number and “introduces himself as an inspector from the Portuguese Judicial Police,” but speaking in Russian.

The requests for information include the collection of banking data, which has led members of the association to become suspicious.

“Many people have already contacted us to try to find out who has this data and I know of people who have already filed a report with the police,” explained the leader.

“As the victims of these phone calls have nothing in common other than being of Ukrainian nationality or origin (they are not members of the same groups on social networks), we suspect that some personal data in bulk that indicate mobile phone numbers with first and last names and possibly nationality has been breached or stolen,” the complaint to the Commission further reads.

Many of the numbers of the people who were targeted by the phone calls do not exist in the association’s database, Pavlo Sadokha explained, adding that the only common element is that they are part of social media platforms common to immigrants.

It is a case of Ukrainian immigrants and some Russians who are opponents of the Moscow regime, yet Pavlo Sadokha told Lusa that the conversations never mentioned political issues but were rather attempts to access banking data.

According to Pavlo Sadokha, the association is gathering the complaints and the numbers used to deliver them to the Portuguese authorities so that the case can be investigated.

“This has never happened, but we suspect that it was an attempt at fraud,” he said.

19. Spain. “Three Years on from Start of War, Thousands of Ukrainians Still Move to Catalonia Each Year,” *Catalan News*, 23 February 2025.

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Registrations of Ukrainians newly living in Catalonia have not stopped since the start of Russia’s full-scale invasion, which began three years ago.

In 2024, there were a total of 4,228 newly registered Ukrainians living in Catalonia, according to data from Spain’s National Statistics Institute. This means that a total of 28,800 Ukrainians moved to the territory since March 2022.

Not all 28,800 are necessarily still living in Catalonia, though, as the data only tracks registrations with local councils - known as the “empadronament” in Catalan. In fact, no official data has emerged on the number of Ukrainians who have returned to their country.

However, several indicators suggest that the community continues to grow in Catalonia, as school enrollments have grown by 50% in the last year to 6,824 and social security registrations by 7%.

The majority of the 28,800 Ukrainians who have registered in municipal logs since early March 2022 came during the first months of the conflict. That month, 6,763 Ukrainians fleeing hostilities registered, and half of the total who have signed up so far did so in the first five months of the war.

In Spain as a whole, there are 134,643 Ukrainians who have registered with the city councils between March 2022 and December 2024, with 21.4% of whom doing so in Catalonia.

The Ukrainian community in Catalonia is predominantly female, as 61.7% of those registered with a health card in Catalonia at the beginning of this year were women.

Rally

Around 2,500 people, according to the local police, gathered in Barcelona on Sunday evening to mark the third anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The rally, organised by the Ukrainian community in Catalonia under the banner #StandWithUkraine, described the conflict as “cruel” and “unjust.”

‘Russian troops out of Ukraine’ and ‘Europe, listen, it’s your fight too’ were some of the slogans chanted by the crowd.

Signs in English, Catalan and Spanish criticized Putin and Russia, but also Trump calling him a “traitor.”

The march started at the European Parliament Office in Barcelona and ended with speeches in Plaça de Catalunya.

“Ukraine is the shield for the entire civilized world, with democratic values and principles, of peace and justice,” said the Ukrainian consul in Barcelona, Vitalli Tsymbaliuk.

The Castellars de Cerdanyola made two human to[w]ers displaying the flags of Ukraine and the EU.

20. United Arab Emirates. “Ukrainians in UAE Send Message of Christmas Hope as Third Anniversary of War Approaches,” *National*, 25 December 2024.

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By John Dennehy

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Ukrainians living in the UAE are standing together in solidarity as they mark a third Christmas overshadowed by the spectre of war in their homeland.

Members of the community told The National it was “deeply painful” to experience the season with the conflict approaching the three-year mark. But they also emphasised that Ukraine had shown “extraordinary strength” over the past few years and its people still held out hope for peace.

Russia launched a full-scale invasion of the country in February 2022. There are no indications that the Ukraine war will end anytime soon and the conflict is even showing signs of escalating.

Moscow’s forces are advancing in the country at the fastest pace since the early days of the invasion and Russia controls a chunk of eastern Ukraine. The conflict is estimated to have so far killed hundreds of thousands and displaced millions.

Another harsh winter

“It is deeply painful knowing Ukraine is marking its third Christmas in a full-scale war,” said Yevheniy Semenov, 30, a Ukrainian resident in Abu Dhabi of more than 11 years and vice president of the Ukrainian World Congress.

“It has been a difficult winter with damage and blackouts, with many families celebrating by candlelight or not at all.”

Mr Semenov said there was immense sorrow in the UAE-based community for the lives lost, those separated from their families and the destruction caused by nearly three years of conflict.

“Yet there is a lot of brightness. In the face of this huge hardship Ukraine has shown extraordinary strength,” he said. “Christmas is a time of peace and joy but for us it is a season of resilience and hope. It is a moment to honour those who sacrificed everything and to reflect on the trials of those back home.”

It is thought there are about 15,000 to 20,000 Ukrainians in the UAE and the community is marking the festive season despite the war. The Ukrainian embassy is supporting several gatherings over the period, while many will attend Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church religious services at churches across the UAE on December 25.

Bringing the Christmas spirit

“Christmas is a unique opportunity for the Ukrainian community in the UAE to come together, demonstrate the indomitability of the Ukrainian spirit, faith in the victory of good and the restoration of a lasting, just peace in Ukraine,” said Vitaliy Fedianin, press secretary of Ukraine's embassy in the UAE.

“We are grateful to the UAE, which ensures high standards of tolerance and peaceful co-existence, for the opportunity to celebrate Christmas, as well as for its humanitarian support to Ukraine.”

Members of the community also gathered at Umm Al Emarat Park in Abu Dhabi last Saturday for “Rizdvo – Ukrainian Christmas Day in the Park” with many wearing traditional vyshyvanka embroidery.

The event was attended by other nationalities and it highlighted the rich cultural tapestry of the country. Ukrainians showcased their traditions with carols, workshops and the appearance of Ukrainian Santa, or Sviatyi Mykola (St Nicholas). Rizdvo is the Ukrainian word for Christmas.

“Even in a warm Emirati winter, we can bring some of Ukraine’s Christmas spirit to families here,” said Mr Semenov, contrasting the weather here to Ukraine where it is typically very cold and snowy.

“By sharing our culture we are showing that no amount of darkness can erase the light of who we are.”

Preserving rich traditions

Oksana Svyrypa, a Ukrainian resident of Dubai who also attended, said it was important to preserve the traditions and identity of Ukrainians.

“We feel deep sorrow over the devastating war in Ukraine, which is claiming the lives of our people yet also immense pride in our identity as Ukrainians,” said Ms Svyrypa, 33, who has been in the UAE for close to three years and is from the Volyn region of north-west Ukraine near the city of Novovolynsk.

“The greatest dream and hope is that Ukraine will triumph and serve as a symbol of unyielding spirit, resilience and faith for all humanity.”

Ukrainian drones struck a major Russian fuel depot for the second time in just over a week on Sunday. It came after Russia launched massive attacks on Ukraine’s energy grid, which

threatened to plunge countless homes into darkness in winter.

Soldiers from North Korea are also believed to be deployed to the front lines. The continuing full-scale war is an escalation of a hybrid conflict that had continued since 2014.

Yevheniia Kryklyvets, 23, a volunteer at the Christmas event in the park, has relatives back in the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv. She carries out daily checks on a smartphone app that warns of air raids.

“We are very tense about what will happen,” said Ms Kryklyvets, who moved to the UAE in 2022. “We have lots of relatives there and it does not look promising. Blackouts can reach 20 hours a day in winter.”

Ms Kryklyvets said events such as the Christmas gathering were important in showing the world Ukraine has other stories to tell rather than just what one reads in the news.

“We are doing our best to keep talking about Ukraine,” she said. “We have so much we want to tell the world.”

Mr Semenov is from a part of Ukraine called Chernivtsi, close to the border with Romania, where his mother, sister and other family members remain.

While it is far from the front lines, there is constant concern among Ukrainians for those back home.

“They are as OK as they can be,” he said, regarding his family. “Our region is relatively safe – but there is no safe place in Ukraine.”

Despite the trauma of war, the main hope in the community was for a just and lasting peace not just for Ukraine but all affected by turmoil and conflict.

“We wish everyone in Abu Dhabi and around the world a season of hope, unity and kindness,” said Mr Semenov. “And next Christmas will be hopefully one of peace for Ukraine, Gaza, Lebanon and all nations.”

21. United Kingdom. “United Kingdom: Ukrainian Cherub to Be Official Scotland Office Card,” *ForeignAffairs.co.nz*, 18 December 2024.

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Source: United Kingdom - Executive Government & Departments

Scottish Secretary chooses Ukrainian schoolgirl’s artwork for Christmas card

A picture of a blonde cherub painted by a 12-year-old Ukrainian girl living in Edinburgh is to be Scottish Secretary Ian Murray’s official Christmas card.

Amelia Marchenko, who is originally from Ukraine's Donetsk region, now lives in Edinburgh with her parents, two sisters and one brother. The family had to flee conflict in Ukraine in 2014 and again in August 2022.

Amelia also painted an image of a Santa hat and sleigh, which will also be used for Scotland Office Minister Kirsty McNeill's official Christmas card.

The Edinburgh branch of the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (AUGB) ran a competition amongst the children and young people who attend activities in the Ukrainian Community Centre. Mr Murray met many of the young people who use the centre when he visited earlier this year.

Amelia was among dozens of young Ukrainian artists who submitted entries to the competition. Her winning design features a cherub with golden hair set against a backdrop of traditional Ukrainian and Scottish symbols, bringing together both cultures in a festive celebration.

Mr Murray said:

As we gather to celebrate this festive season, I am absolutely delighted that we are sharing this special Christmas card featuring artwork by the very talented Amelia Marchenko. All the designs submitted by the Ukrainian children were fantastic, but hers definitely edged it.

Having visited Edinburgh's Ukrainian Community Centre's teens club in August, I was inspired by their creativity, resilience and spirit. Amelia's beautiful design represents not only the joy of the season, but also the warmth of Scotland's welcome to those Ukrainians who have made our country their home.

I wish everyone a peaceful Christmas and a bright New Year.

This is the first time the Scotland Office has run a competition for its Christmas card design. The children were invited to submit artwork, in any medium, that captured the essence of Christmas and the spirit of peace and goodwill.

The competition was open to children aged 5-16 who attend the Ukrainian Community Centre. Participants were encouraged to incorporate elements of both their Ukrainian heritage and their new Scottish home in their festive designs. The judging panel, which included Mr Murray and representatives from AUGB Edinburgh, were particularly impressed by the creative ways the young artists blended both cultures in their artwork.

Electronic versions of the card with the winning design will be sent by Mr Murray to organisations and stakeholders across Scotland. Amelia received a congratulatory letter and certificate from the Secretary of State, and her original artwork will be framed and displayed in the Scotland Office.

The Edinburgh branch of AUGB was founded in 1947 and has provided a social and cultural place to meet for the Ukrainian diaspora. Since the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, AUGB has worked closely in partnership with community and voluntary sector partners which have welcomed and supported displaced people from Ukraine that have called Scotland their home

since the Russian invasion. The Ukrainian community centre in Edinburgh provides a vital community hub, offering everything from language classes to cultural activities and support services.

The Ukraine Club in Edinburgh supports more than 500 people each week. The Ukrainian youth work partnership and the cultural programme at the Ukrainian community centre is funded by the UK Government and the National Lottery Community Fund. The National Lottery Community Fund is supporting the project with a £116,930 Improving Lives grant.

22. USA. “New York’s Ukrainian Museum: Opening Out and Taking Back,” *Kyiv Post*, 28 December 2024.

By Stash Luczkiw

In an effort to give Ukrainian art and culture its rightful place on the world’s stage, the Ukrainian Museum in New York uses its cosmopolitan history to attract international attention and prestige.

When Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky visited New York’s Ukrainian Museum last September during his trip to speak at the UN General Assembly, he brought international attention not only to his country’s fight for survival but also its rich artistic tradition.

The Ukrainian Museum sits in the heart of the East Village, a part of Manhattan that became the creative epicenter of the world’s art capital in the second half of the 20th century.

Once called the Lower East Side, the neighborhood had long been a simple grid of tenements teeming with immigrants. First, there were the Germans in the early 19th century, followed by the Irish, Italians, and Jews. A wave of Ukrainians and Poles came after World War II and mixed with a subsequent wave of Puerto Ricans.

One of the most recent demographic invasions was that of the Yuppies (young urban professionals), who have been transforming the neighborhood from the city’s art workshop into more of a showcase window.

A block away from the Ukrainian Museum – directly across the street from the St. George Ukrainian Catholic Church and adjacent St. George Academy high school, crowds gather outside McSorley’s Old Ale House, the oldest continuously operating bar in New York. Established in 1854, the watering hole – whose motto used to be “Good Ale, Raw Onions and No Ladies” – was one of the poet Walt Whitman’s favorites. McSorley’s denizens included several generations of New York bohemians, from e.e. cummings to Jack Kerouac to Woody Guthrie.

The legendary Filmore East Theater, a venue made famous by Jimi Hendrix and the Allman Brothers, was just around the corner from the current museum.

Two blocks from the original Ukrainian Museum on Second Avenue, the historic St. Mark’s Church became a magnet for the Beat Generation reading their poetry and musicians, like Patti

Smith and Phillip Glass, appearing in its hallowed performance space.

And a short walk from the Ukrainian Museum, on the Bowery, is the New Museum specializing in cutting-edge contemporary art.

The Bowery used to be New York's skid row. It was also the birthplace of punk rock, where CBGBs was located. Today it is lined with upscale hotels, boutiques, and restaurants for tourists who come to bask in New York's cultural buzz.

From vyshyvanky to avant-garde

Since February 2024, everything related to Ukrainian culture has had to deal with the shock of Russia's full-scale invasion. Cultural institutions have been no exception.

The original Ukrainian Museum was established in 1976 by the Ukrainian National Woman's League of America under the direction of Maria Shust, on the upper floor of a tenement building that also housed the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America. It was practically unknown outside the Ukrainian diaspora community.

In the 2000s, the museum moved to its current location, in a building designed by Ukrainian-American architect George Sawicki of Sawicki Tarella Architecture & Design.

After the Revolution of Dignity, the museum accelerated its outreach to the artistic community outside the Ukrainian diaspora. There were shows of young Ukrainian-American artists and readings with Ukrainian-American poets who wrote in English.

Over time, the building on Sixth Street, behind the St. George Church, has become the largest Ukrainian art museum outside Ukraine.

In 2022, shortly after Russia's full-scale invasion, Maria Shust retired, and Peter Doroshenko was chosen as the new director of the museum.

Doroshenko had previously been executive director at Dallas Contemporary Art Museum. Prior to that, he was the founding President of the PinchukArtCentre in Kyiv, which opened in 2006.

"Directing the museum was not in my original career plans, but with the invasion and all the attention drawn to Ukraine and its culture, it seemed like that was my fate," Doroshenko told Kyiv Post.

Doroshenko's explicit mission is to bring the Ukrainian museum and Ukrainian art more widely to the public worldwide. "I wanted to go beyond pysanky and vyshyvanky," he said, referring to the traditional folk art of intricately colored Easter eggs and embroidery.

Bringing Ukrainian art to the world

In an effort to go beyond New York and solidify Ukraine's cultural legacy internationally,

Doroshenko has set out to embrace Soviet and “Russian” artists who actually lived and worked in Ukraine, inspired by Ukrainian culture and traditions.

His approach has been two-pronged. On the one hand, he aimed to open up the museum to the vibrant culture of the neighborhood. On the other hand, he hoped to reclaim all the Ukrainian artists who have long been mistakenly considered Russians.

As a gesture to the local surroundings, Doroshenko once put together an exhibit featuring photographer Peter Hujar, a Ukrainian-American intimately linked to the East Village art scene in the 1960s and ’70s.

Doroshenko is currently working on a project with the Yara Arts Group, led by Virlana Tkacz – another pillar of the East Village’s thriving artistic community – which includes Serhiy Zhadan’s poetry, translated by Tkacz and Wanda Phipps.

There is also a solo exhibition of Alexandra Exter, dubbed the “avant-garde Amazon,” who lived and worked in Kyiv. Exter was a fixture in European artistic circles during the early 20th century, traversing Kyiv, Odesa, Paris, and Venice.

The collection of modern works includes masterpieces by David Burliuk and Alexander Archipenko that confirmed their contribution to the evolution of 20th-century art.

Future shows, intended to bring attention to Ukrainian artists whom most of the world still does not realize are Ukrainian, will involve Kazimir Malevich, Ilya Repin, and even ballet dancer Olga Picasso (the Spanish artist’s wife, née Khokhlova).

Apart from the exhibitions, the museum holds courses in Ukrainian language, embroidery, and other crafts. It has also hosted panel discussions on the controversial issue of decolonization as it pertains to Ukrainian art.

The hope is that by making people in the heart of the world’s art capital more aware of Ukraine’s contribution to the development of contemporary art, there will be a ripple effect that raises Ukrainian culture from merely “provincial” – as many of those who parrot Russian propaganda like to claim – to its rightful place in the history of modern and contemporary art.

Stash Luczkiw is a US-born, European-based writer, translator and features editor for Kyiv Post.

23. USA. “1,000 Days of War: Stories from the Ukrainian Community in Bethlehem, PA,” *Comenian*, 5 December 2024.

By Sofia Savenko, Reporter

On Nov. 19, 2024, Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine reached its 1,000th day. Ukraine likely faces its harshest winter yet, with Russian strikes massively targeting critical energy infrastructure, leaving millions at risk amid freezing temperatures. Over 39,000 civilians have already been killed or injured, 3,400 schools and hospitals damaged, and 10 million displaced.

For Bethlehem's Ukrainian diaspora, the war has brought profound pain and uncertainty. Still, they persist in actively supporting Ukraine's fight for freedom. Among them are a women's organization leader, a university student, and a reverend, each contributing in their own ways.

At the heart of local Ukrainian advocacy is Yuliya Semenovych, president of the Bethlehem-Allentown branch of the Ukrainian National Women's League of America .

After Russia's full-scale invasion on Feb. 24, 2022, Semenovych mobilized her community to raise funds and personally delivered hundreds of pounds of essential supplies like uniforms and boots for volunteers in Ukraine. Her health suffered from constant travel and 80-hour workweeks, prompting her to step back.

A chance encounter at a local festival brought her to the UNWLA, where she became president within a year of joining.

Founded in 1925, the UNWLA is the largest and oldest Ukrainian women's organization in the U.S., focusing on humanitarian, cultural, educational, and advocacy efforts. Its initiatives include "Zemliachku," equipping women on Ukraine's frontlines with protective gear tailored to women's bodies, and "Return Ukraine's Children," which advocates against Russia's illegal deportation and re-education of Ukrainian children, having achieved significant success with U.S. congressional resolutions.

Currently, the UNWLA's "Keep Ukraine Warm" campaign is raising funds for winter uniforms for women defenders and warm clothing for vulnerable children.

Semenovych expressed deep gratitude for the community's support and opportunities to raise awareness through events such as library readings and town hall flag-raising ceremonies.

However, she noted a general decline in media attention and emphasized the ongoing need for U.S. support, which she argued is crucial not only for Ukraine's defense but for strengthening both national and global security.

"The Ukrainian people are more grateful than you know for the support of the American people," Semenovych said. "There is so much more to this war than most people realize, and as unfortunate as the circumstances have been around the attention towards Ukraine, I am grateful that the whole world now knows at least a little bit about it."

This sentiment is shared by Vitalii Martyniak, a 21-year-old International Relations, Politics, and Environmental Science student at Lehigh University. Born and raised in Western Ukraine, Martyniak was studying at a Canadian college when the full-scale invasion began.

"I felt as if my future was just collapsing in front of me because all the plans I had – going back to my country, working for the government, and hopefully doing something good for society – were vanishing before my eyes," Martyniak recalled.

Faced with the choice of either returning to Ukraine to fight the aggressor or staying abroad to

continue his education, his first instinct was to join the military. After much deliberation, however, he reconsidered.

“I chose to work hard and get an education so I can return and give back to society,” he said, his voice unsteady. “Was it a good decision or not? I don’t know.”

Martyniak shared how the emotional toll of the war shifted from deep grief to a numbness he suspects is a coping mechanism. “It’s much easier to now study here, knowing that my family has a roof over their heads and they’re doing alright,” he said.

Martyniak began volunteering in Canada, helping Ukrainian refugees furnish their apartments and access essential resources. Now at Lehigh University, he helps organize events through the “Ukrainian Association,” raising awareness about the war, hosting Ukrainian ambassadors through Lehigh’s UN Office, and screening films like *20 Days in Mariupol* but also promoting Ukrainian culture through activities like “pysanky” easter-egg painting and “motanka” doll-making.

He also stressed that Ukraine couldn’t defend itself without Western support but expressed worry over many Western governments’ lack of commitment not just to Ukraine’s survival but to its victory. He echoed concerns voiced by many Ukrainians that a short-term peace deal could fuel further Russian aggression and called for a unified, resolute stance from the U.S. and Europe to achieve sustainable peace.

“We must not let Russia win and achieve its key objectives with which it started the war,” he said. “We must stop Putin before he can cause more war; we must stop it at its roots, which is in Ukraine.”

Uncertain about the possibility of a military draft upon returning home, Martyniak will reunite with his mother and sister this Christmas, not in Ukraine or the U.S., but in France.

Amid the ongoing war, many in the Ukrainian community have found solace in their faith. Ukrainian-American Reverend Paul J. Makar of St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Church in Bethlehem has been a pillar of support. His church has partnered with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Allentown for joint prayers for peace in Ukraine.

“Who loves God and who loves Ukraine, always has a home in our house,” Makar said, underscoring his mission to reach as many people as possible.

St. Josaphat’s efforts include food and monetary collections, with funds supporting organizations like the United Ukrainian American Relief Committee. This summer, the church organized a large school supply drive, collecting backpacks and other school supplies for Ukrainian refugee children in Philadelphia. They also host UNWLA’s regular meetings.

“Everyone has been touched by the war in one way or another,” Makar said. He recalled a parishioner from their sister parish in Easton who fears he may never see his family in Eastern Ukraine again.

Makar closed by urging those inside and outside Ukraine to remain steadfast in their faith and never forget their identity. “No one can take that away from you,” he said.

For the Ukrainian community in Bethlehem, the war is far from over, but through advocacy, education, and faith, they continue to persevere, united by their hope for a sovereign, free, and democratic Ukraine.

“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.”

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