



## Corruption thriller: Zelensky's deputy minister arrested

### Description

**UKRAINE:** Just 14 days after the President of the Ukrainian National Bank (who is said to have embezzled 5,42 million euros) applied for asylum in Austria, Deputy Minister Wassyl Losynsky was arrested.

Those who are familiar with the EU Court of Auditors' report on Ukraine from autumn 2021 will not be particularly surprised by the current events in Kiev: Deputy Minister Wassyl Losynsky has been arrested for accepting a six-figure bribe.

"The National Anti-Corruption Bureau searched the home of Deputy Minister for Municipal, Territory and Infrastructure Development Vasyl Losynsky and arrested him," *Ukrayinska Pravda* reported.

The ministry has already responded to the report and fired the top official. Losynsky is accused of having received a bribe of 400 000 euros when buying electricity generators. The investigations have been ongoing since September, the government employee apparently wanted to enrich himself by the fact that his compatriots were facing an electricity crisis.

## Warrant issued for the Ukrainian bank boss

The latest chapter in the corruption thriller was exposed just 14 days after Austrian daily the *eXXpress* reported on the President of the Ukrainian National Bank who had fled to Austria. Kyrilo Shevchenko (50) is currently hiding in Vienna because the government in Kiev has accused him of having embezzled 5,42 million euros. In the Ukraine, an arrest warrant has been issued for the bank manager.

As reported, Shevchenko has now applied for asylum in Austria.

The Ukrainian bank boss, who managed the national bank of the warring country until October 4, has excellent international connections: Shevchenko was invited by US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen on April 21 of the previous year to Washington, right after the start of the Russian operation.

He is not the only Ukrainian fleeing justice: President Zelensky suspended the Constitutional Court's chairperson Oleksandr Tupytsky in 2020 in an effort to overturn the court's October decision on corruption.

In December 2020, the Ukrainian parliament reauthorised the government's decision, ignoring the court. Tupytsky, the former President of the Ukrainian Constitutional Court and declared opponent of the Ukrainian leader, currently also lives undisturbed in Vienna.

## **Allegations against the Ukrainian Minister of Defense**

According to official information, the Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksiy Reznikov is suspected of overpriced food purchases for the army, the daily newspaper *Die Welt* reported. Resnikov has been summoned to appear before parliament, Vice-Chair of the Rada Committee on National Security, Defense and Reconnaissance Marjana Besugla told national broadcaster *Suspilne Media* on Saturday.

In addition, the Court of Auditors announced a special audit in the Ministry of Defense.

Earlier, media reports in Kiev caused a stir that the Defense Ministry was buying food to feed its soldiers at prices up to three times higher than retail prices in stores. The contract for 13 billion hryvnia – 300 million euros – is not about feeding the soldiers at the front, but enriching kleptocrats in the rear.

Ukraine was granted EU candidate status in June, four months after the war began. The requirements for accession include the rule of law and progress in the fight against corruption, where Ukraine, despite numerous efforts in recent years, still ranks among the lowest in the world.

## **Press spokesman also fired**

Ukrainian presidential advisor Oleksiy Arestovych was forced to resign after stating that the recent strike on an apartment building in Dnepropetrovsk was caused by a Ukrainian SAM missile, not a targeted Russian attack. He quickly became another casualty of Kiev's information war.

On the evening of January 14, Arestovich said the partial destruction of a residential building in the city was the result of a projectile shot down by Ukrainian air defenses which fell on it. Following this, he was sharply criticized by government supporters and put on the infamous Ukrainian *Myrotvorets* kill list.

On January 16, Ukrainian legislator Alexey Goncharenko reported that a petition was launched to fire him.

Notably, Arestovych has slammed the political war the Ukrainian leader has waged on Ukraine's Russian speaking population and Orthodox Church: "Zelensky has declared war on Christianity. This is when [the Ukrainian secret service, the SBU] entered...the Ukrainian Church of the Moscow Patriarchate..."

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