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War and Heirs: The Children of Ukraine’s Elite, Life Abroad and the Price of Inequality

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Twenty family stories — from the Akhmetovs and Poroshenkos to the sons of politicians who have returned to Ukraine. Studying abroad, business, holiday resorts, controversial trips and military service, with photographs, dates and public statements.



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An editorial collage based on published portraits. Flags and years correspond to the dated information in the article. Created using AI.

Every person who died in the war had a name. To his mother, he remained her son, no matter how old he might have been. To his loved ones, he was a person who could have phoned, returned home or finished the work he had started. Public discourse on these losses often replaces these personal stories with generalisations. Alongside this exists another chronicle – foreign universities, family-run businesses and holiday snaps of the heirs to influential Ukrainians.

These chronicles make for painful reading. However, a strong article requires more than simply placing a few individuals next to foreign flags and declaring them all guilty. We need to establish exactly what is known about each person, when this came to light, how the family responded, and whether the circumstances have changed. We have examined twenty family stories. They reveal different forms of privilege and different personal choices.

This is about the war triggered by the Russian invasion. Responsibility for the attack and the strikes on Ukraine does not disappear when Ukrainian privileges are discussed. At the same time, the public has the right to ask its politicians how evenly restrictions, risks and the opportunity to maintain a normal life are distributed.

First, those whose lives did not turn into a glamorous story of life abroad

The poet and soldier Maksym Kryvtsov died on 7 January 2024 at the age of 33. He had published a book, *Virshy z byynytsi* (Poems from the Trenches), worked with the veterans' community and had his own creative voice. Hromadske reported that his mother, Nadezhda, had announced her son's death. In 2025, the Hero of Ukraine award was presented to his family. [2] [3]

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Maksym Kryvtsov. A commemorative illustration by hromadske accompanying an article about the late poet and soldier.

Photo source

It is important to honour the person themselves, rather than turning their death into a token argument against another family. Kryvtsov is under no obligation to prove, posthumously, that anyone was in the wrong. His story serves as a reminder of the cost of societal decisions. One person’s opportunity to continue their career exists in the very same country and at the very same time as another family loses the chance ever to embrace their son again.

There is also the scale of civilian casualties. On 17 November 2026, the UN Monitoring Mission reported 17,994 civilian deaths and 57,854 injuries since the start of the full-scale invasion. These are civilian casualties confirmed by the mission, not an assessment of military casualties nor statistics on the social background of those killed. These figures cannot be used to claim that only poor men are dying. [1]

Yet the issue of inequality itself remains very much present. Who is able to pay for an education abroad in advance, set up a business infrastructure, support a family in another country and hire specialists to handle complex procedures? Which of these options are accessible to a family living on an average wage? Individual stories do not provide a statistical answer for the whole country, but they do allow us to see exactly which opportunities differ.

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How to interpret foreign flags and why the date changes the meaning

In a piece like this, the flag must have a clear meaning. It may indicate a place of residence, a university, a work team, company registration or a trip to an event. These are different facts. A fashion show in Paris does not establish French residency. An American degree does not mean that the graduate has remained in the US. Crossing the Polish border does not indicate where a person will be living three years' time.

The dates in the table and captions refer to events or publications, not to real-time tracking of individuals. Where there is only a statement from a relative, this is indicated as such. Where the country is unknown, it remains so. This compilation covers adult children, as well as one adult grandson and one stepson. Current underage family members are not included in the analysis.

There is also a legal distinction. According to the official clarification from the Defence Forces, the general mobilisation category comprises fit men aged 25–60 with no legally recognised grounds for deferment. For men aged 18–24, military service obligations and other circumstances are taken into account; a voluntary contract is possible on a separate basis. Women are not obliged to go to the front simply because of their family ties to a politician. [4]

The rules on leaving the country are a separate issue. In August 2025, the Ministry of the Interior clarified the right of men aged 18–22 inclusive to cross the border provided they had the necessary documents, with exceptions for certain officials. It is not possible to assess the 2023 departures according to rules introduced at a later date. For each contentious case, the version of the rules in force at the time and the individual circumstances are crucial. [5] [6]

That is why there is no single list of 'draft dodgers' below. There are established facts, media reports, responses from the families and an editorial assessment of their public significance. This allows us to ask a more challenging question than the usual 'why isn't he in the trenches?'. To what extent does the state treat people equally when they have vastly different levels of access to money and influence?

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Twenty families — a brief overview of the facts

Family	Adult children and family ties	What does the country mean?	Date of information
Rinat Akhmetov	Damir Akhmetov	□□□ Switzerland. The family’s residence, a statement from the father	27 April 2022
Petro Poroshenko	Oleksiy and Mykhailo Poroshenko	□□□ Britain – Mykhailo; Alexei’s country is not specified in the interview. Studies and work, as told by his father	17 February 2025
Ihor Kolomoyskyi	Grigory Kolomoyskyi	□□□ France – confirmed trip. Holiday trip; permanent residence unknown	2023; article updated on 25 December 2025
Viktor Pinchuk and Leonid Kuchma’s family	Roman Pinchuk	The UK and the US – past education and employment. Educational and career histories; country of residence not confirmed	10 January 2025
Dmytro Firtash	Anna Firtash	□□□ France – business registration; no fixed abode. Corporate details from the investigation	21 April 2025
Konstantin Zhevago	Sofia and Ivan Zhevago	□□□ France – Sofia at a fashion show; Ivan’s country is not specified. Public event and property details	23 January 2023; review 27 February 2025

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Family	Adult children and family ties	What does the country mean?	Date of information
Serhiy Tihipko	Timofey and Anastasia Tigipko	Abroad; the countries where the adult children are living are not named in the interviews. A mother’s statement on education	10 September 2026
Vitali Klitschko	Maksym Klitschko	□□□□ USA. The university’s official sports team	Season 2026/27
Yulia Tymoshenko	Yevheniia Tymoshenko	□□□□ UAE – according to media reports; the mother confirmed living abroad. Reports of residence and the mother’s public response	18 April 2022; review 4 March 2025
Volodymyr Groysman	Yulia and Khristina Groysman	□□□□ Britain – historical education and business. Education and business connections; current residence status not fully verified	2017–2019; review 31 August 2024
Arseniy Yatsenyuk	Khristina Yatsenyuk	□□□□ USA – Los Angeles in published reports. Public professional profile as presented by the media	15 August 2024
Andrei Kostin	Anastasia Kostina	□□□□ Finland – according to Anastasia’s own explanation. A public post and the subsequent response	8–14 August 2023
Fyodor Venislavsky	Venislavsky’s two sons	The US – a report on the younger son; Ukraine – a statement on the elder son’s military service. Controversial reports and a published retraction	April 2026

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Family	Adult children and family ties	What does the country mean?	Date of information
Igor Palitsa	Zakhar Palitsa	□□□ Switzerland – education and citizenship as reported in the media. Historical ties abroad and current business interests	CPK profile for 2020; business data for 2025
Olena Kopanchuk	Dmytro Kopanchuk	Crossing the border with Poland; the destination country remains unidentified. An investigation into the circumstances of the departure	1 January – 5 August 2023; the media revisited the topic on 17 November 2026
Andriy Sadovyi	Ivan-Pawel Sadovyi	□□□ UK – eldest son's studies completed; current country of residence not specified. Education, father's comment and details from the declaration	December 2024; July 2025; August 2026
Oleksiy Honcharenko	Oleksiy Goncharenko Jr	□□□ Ukraine – Odessa, according to his father's statement. His father's statement on his return and studies	July 2024; response published on 7 October 2026
Viktor Yushchenko	Taras Yushchenko	□□□ Ukraine; previously □□□ USA — education. A father's statement on his return and work	25 August 2026
Yuriy Lutsenko	Oleksandr and Vitaliy Lutsenko	□□□ Ukraine – reports on military service. Public statements by the father and reports on military service	July 2024; subsequent interviews

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Family	Adult children and family ties	What does the country mean?	Date of information
Yegor Sobolev	Mikhail Sobolev	□□□ Ukraine. Statements from both parents regarding enlistment in the Armed Forces of Ukraine	October 2025

1. Damir Akhmetov. The Swiss branch of the family empire

□□□ Switzerland · 27 April 2022. The family’s residence, a statement from the father. [7] [8]

The most reliable source on the life of Rinat Akhmetov’s eldest son in Switzerland is his own father. In responses published by Metinvest in Le Temps on 27 April 2022, the businessman revealed that Damir’s family lives in Switzerland. It was there that his son met his future wife, Diana, with whom he attended the same school. This is a direct public statement made after the full-scale invasion had already begun. [7] [8]

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Damir Akhmetov. The profile was published by Forbes Ukraine; the source is listed as Metinvest. Photo source

Forbes describes Damir as a partner in the management of his father's business and a member of the supervisory boards of Metinvest and DTEK. The profile also mentions the purchase of two villas near Geneva with a combined value of over 100 million francs. The date of the specific purchase and the date of the interview are different, so this information cannot be presented as a new purchase made during the war. [7] [8]

In this story, Switzerland represents a stable family and business infrastructure. The advantage of significant wealth is particularly evident here — the ability to distribute assets, work and family life across several countries. The residence confirmed by his father relates to 2022. It does not establish Damir's current address and does not in itself prove a breach of military registration rules.

2. Oleksiy and Mykhailo Poroshenko. England, international work and questions about returning

□□□□ Britain – Mikhail; Alexei’s country is not specified in the interview · 17 February 2025. Studies and work, as told by his father. [9] [10]

In an interview with ‘Ukrainska Pravda’ on 17 February 2025, Petro Poroshenko spoke about his two sons separately. According to him, Oleksiy works for an international corporation under a contract signed back in 2019 and coordinates enterprises that support the army. His father also recalled his eldest son’s service in the Donbas in 2014. This part of his biography cannot be disregarded for the sake of a convenient accusatory narrative. [9] [10]



Oleksiy Poroshenko on the left, Mykhailo on the right. Photo from an interview with ‘Ukrainska Pravda’, 17 February 2025. In his father’s reply, Britain is specifically mentioned in relation to Mykhailo. Photo source

Regarding Mykhailo Poroshenko, it was reported that he has been studying abroad since before the war, works with voluntary organisations in England and assists with translation for Ukrainian military personnel undergoing training in Britain. When asked directly about his son’s own military training, he replied in the negative. The promise to return if required by law represents the politician’s position at the time of the interview, rather than a confirmation of a subsequent return. [9] [10]

In January, lawyer Igor Golovan separately explained the legality of Alexei’s removal from military registration and his departure following the end of his term as an MP. Given the public controversy, this response must also be taken into account. The key questions remain specific — what obligations applied to each son during the relevant period, and what changed following the interview. A surname alone is not sufficient to conclude that an offence has been committed.

3. Hryhoriy Kolomoyskyi. His basketball career and Courchevel during the war

□□□ France – confirmed trip · 2023; post updated on 25 December 2025. Holiday trip; permanent residence unknown. [11]

Grigory Kolomoyskyi is known for more than just his background. His public biography includes American university basketball, an Israeli club and appearances for ‘Dnipro’. ‘Telegraf’ recalls these stages and features images from ‘Ukrainska Pravda’s’ investigation into Courchevel. According to the publication, in 2023 journalists spotted the businessman’s son at the family chalet in the French resort. [11]



Grigory Kolomoyskyi. An archive sports photograph from a publication in *Telegraph*. The photograph is not related to the trip to Courchevel. Photo source

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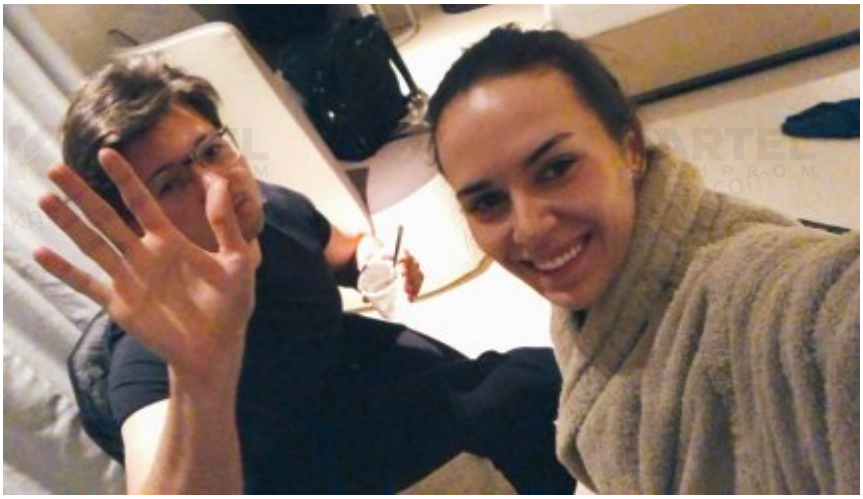
It is precisely the military context that lends these images their social significance. The everyday resort life of a well-off family coexists with the need to raise money for the treatment, rehabilitation and support of servicemen. However, the image of a man by a chalet establishes the fact of a specific stay, rather than his entire lifestyle over several years. The article explicitly states that Grigory’s subsequent whereabouts are unknown. [11]

Therefore, the French flag here refers to a trip in 2023. This story must not be turned into a report about current residence in France, nor should it automatically be interpreted as evidence of an illegal border crossing. The subject of criticism is the ability to continue an expensive holiday during wartime and the willingness of an influential family to explain such a choice to the public. Separate evidence is required for a criminal charge.

4. Roman Pinchuk. The heir’s international career and the limits of fame

The UK and the US – education and work in the past · 10 January 2025. Educational and career history; country of residence not confirmed. [12]

Roman Pinchuk has several connections to the political and business elite. He is the son of Olena Pinchuk and Ihor Franchuk, the grandson of Leonid Kuchma and the stepson of Viktor Pinchuk. It is important to describe these relationships accurately. One family history cannot be counted as three separate examples simply to pad out the list. [12]



Roman Pinchuk with Maria Gnashuk. Archive photograph from a ‘Telegraf’ publication, source: Maria Gnashuk’s Facebook. Roman’s country of residence cannot be determined from this photograph. Photo source

Based on a ‘Telegraph’ article dated 10 January 2025, Roman studied at Sevenoaks School in the UK, then at an American university; he worked in Houston as part of the ‘Interpipe’ team and joined EastOne in 2016. This is a story of early access to international education and a major family business. It illustrates just how varied the start of a professional career can be. [12]

However, the publication has not established where Roman was on the date of the article. Information from his wife’s profile regarding Palo Alto does not prove that they were living there together. An American flag with the caption ‘lives in the USA’ should not appear on the basis of this publication. The public concern here relates to the exercise of influence through family-owned companies. An unconfirmed location cannot be presented as an established fact in this context.

5. Anna Firtash. A French company as an extension of the family’s wealth

□□□ France – business registration; no fixed abode · 21 April 2025. Corporate details from the investigation. [13]

On 21 April 2025, Bihus.Info reported that Anna Firtash had become the owner of a French property company. The firm was registered in October 2023 in Beaulieu-sur-Mer. Journalists also linked the businessman’s daughter to the takeover of the Ukrainian ‘Energy Consulting Company’ in the

summer of 2024. This concerns companies and owners, not a holiday photograph. [13]

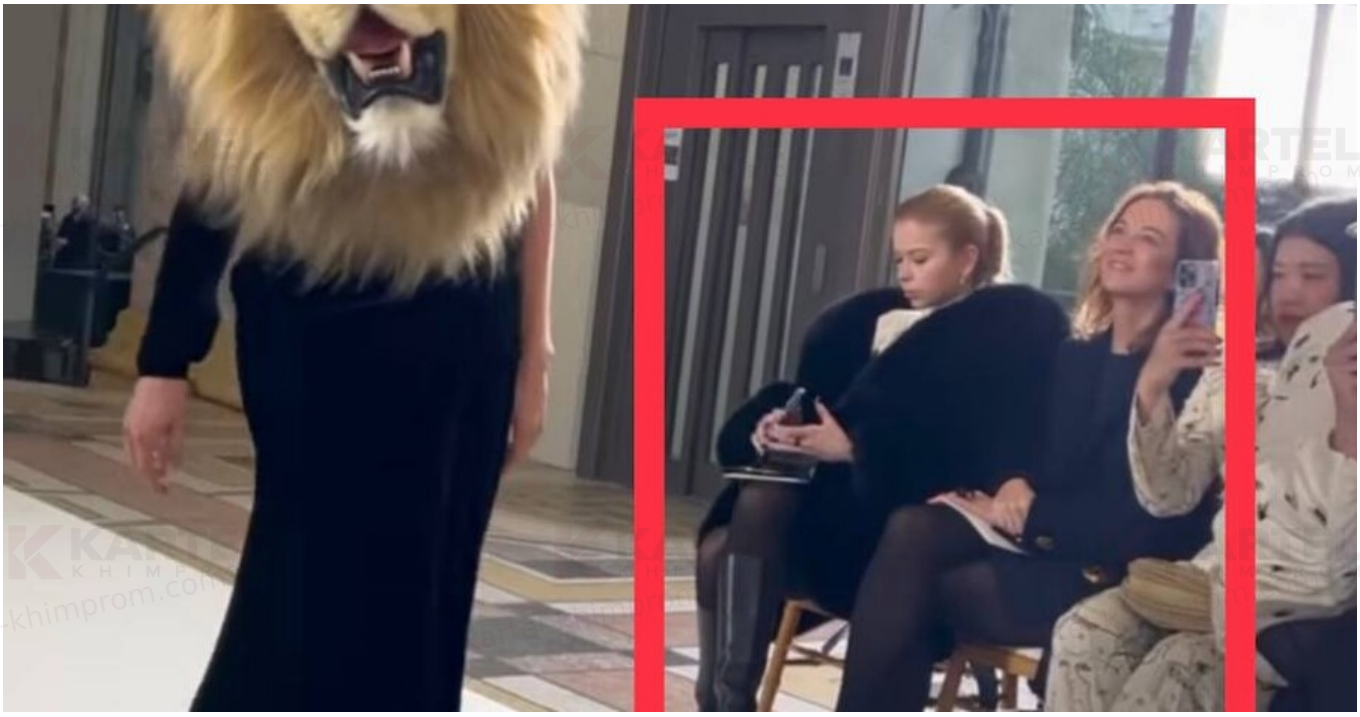
This marks an important shift in the debate on inequality. Access to a life abroad is not solely determined by holiday expenditure. It can be underpinned by registered assets, legal structures and international business connections. In such cases, war does not halt the transfer of capital to the next generation. Specific transactions, sources of funding and the applicability of restrictions to those involved should be scrutinised. [13]

A father's sanctions status does not automatically make his daughter guilty, nor does it mean that any of her transactions are prohibited. The company on the French coast also does not confirm that the owner is permanently resident in France. In this story, the issue identified by journalists is business development during the war. To attribute a resort-style lifestyle or evasion of military service to Anna on the basis of such a registration would be a misrepresentation of the evidence.

6. Sofia and Ivan Zhevago. The front row in Paris and their influence on the media

□□□□ France – Sofia at a fashion show; Ivan's country not specified · 23 January 2023; review 27 February 2025. Public event and ownership details. [14] [15]

On 23 January 2023, Sofia Zhevago attended the Schiaparelli show in Paris with her mother, Alina. 'TabloID' published the photos the following day, drawing attention to the front row. This is one of the most telling glimpses into the social lives of the heirs during a full-scale war. The event and date are known, but Sofia's permanent address in France cannot be deduced from them. [14] [15]



Sofia Zhevago and her mother Alina at a fashion show in Paris on 23 January 2023. Collage by KP.UA featuring a still from social media; the event was also covered by ‘TabloID’. Photo source

Konstantin Zhevago’s eldest son, Ivan, is linked to another sphere of public influence. In its February 2025 review, *Telegraf* lists him as the owner of *Goldberry* LLC, the legal entity behind the *Espresso* TV channel. Media ownership makes the question of the origin and management of family capital a matter of public interest, regardless of the owner’s country of residence. [14] [15]

Ivan’s whereabouts in that article have not been established. The assumption made there—that the possible departure of a man of a certain age must necessarily be unlawful—is not a correct legal conclusion. Age alone does not reveal all the grounds provided for by law. Here, one can document his daughter’s event in Paris and his son’s public business connections. These different facts must not be conflated into a single narrative about the ‘flight of Zhevago’s children’.

7. Tymofiy and Anastasia Tihipko. International experience they still hope to bring home

Abroad; the countries where the adult children are living are not named in the interviews · 10 September 2026. A mother’s statement on education. [16]

In September 2026, Viktoria Tigipko told the programme ‘Morning in the Big City’ that the children from her marriage to Serhiy Tigipko had long been studying abroad and were living in different countries. The fields of study mentioned include finance, industrial design and engineering. For the purposes of this article, the focus is on the adult children, Timofey and Anastasia. The biographies of the younger family members are not discussed here. [16]

The mother explained the choice as a necessity to understand the international market and build professional networks. She also said that the children want to return, but must first complete their education. This is an understandable family strategy. What makes it politically sensitive is the ability of a well-off family to pursue long-term plans outside a country at war. [16]

Specific countries and universities are not named in the commentary provided for each adult child. Consequently, there is no basis here for drawing the flag of Spain, Britain or any other country based on an individual photograph from a trip. A promise to return is not the same as an actual return. A pertinent question for influential families is: how will the stated intention to apply their knowledge in Ukraine be confirmed by real-world decisions after graduation?

8. Maksym Klitschko. His American university career on his official page

□□□□ USA · 2026/27 season. The university’s official sports squad. [17]

You don’t need to search through random Instagram stories to find Vitali Klitschko’s younger adult son. On the official website of East Carolina University, there is a profile for Maxim Klitschko as a member of the men’s basketball team for the 2026/27 season. It explicitly states that he is Vitali Klitschko’s son. His previous sporting experience is listed as AS Monaco Basket. [17]



Maxim Klitschko. Official portrait by East Carolina University Athletics, 2026/27 season squad. Photo source

Such a source confirms a university sports career in the US. It is considerably more accurate than photographs taken at an airport or on a beach. At the same time, the player's profile does not reveal the circumstances of his departure from Ukraine, his citizenship at each stage of his life, whether he has military registration obligations, or the grounds for any deferment. It does not allow the athlete to be labelled a violator. [17]

This story illustrates another kind of advantage — the opportunity to build an international career at a young age. The sporting endeavour itself is a reality and requires training. The question of social justice arises regarding the accessibility of such a path for Ukrainian youth, whose studies and plans have been disrupted by the war. The American flag here signifies confirmed membership of a university team for the specified season. It does not constitute permanent residency for the rest of one's life.

9. Yevhenia Tymoshenko. Dubai and the family business outside Ukraine

□□□□ UAE — according to media reports; the mother confirmed living abroad · 18 April 2022; review 4 March 2025. Reports of residence and the mother’s public response. [18] [19]

Ukrainian media had been reporting on Yevhenia Tymoshenko’s life with her family in Dubai even before the full-scale invasion. In March 2025, *Telegraf* once again described her life abroad. However, to understand the family’s position, an interview with Yulia Tymoshenko herself in April 2022 is more important. [18] [19]



Yevheniia Tymoshenko. An archive portrait from a ‘Telegraph’ publication dated 4 March 2025. Photo source

The leader of ‘Batkivshchyna’ confirmed that her daughter and son-in-law were abroad and explained that they had made this decision before the war. According to her, she had forbidden them from doing business in Ukraine. When asked about Dubai, Tymoshenko chose to refer to an attempt to work there rather than to living there. Therefore, for the sake of accuracy, a distinction must be made between the family’s confirmed itinerary abroad and the specific city named by the media. [18] [19]

This story illustrates a telling way of explaining privilege. Moving the family business abroad is presented as a means of protecting it from conflict with the mother’s political activities. Yet for society, the question remains as to the gulf between the living conditions of a politician’s family and those of the citizens for whom they propose solutions. One can assess this objectively, without inventing military service obligations for the daughter or labelling any overseas business venture as

a violation. The information about the country includes specific dates and does not constitute verification of her current whereabouts.

10. Yulia and Khristina Groysman. A British education and family assets

□□□□ Britain – historical education and business · 2017–2019; reviewed 31 August 2024. Education and business connections; current residence not fully verified. [20] [21]

Yulia Groysman — the daughter of the former prime minister’s wife from her first marriage, and his stepdaughter. In 2018, *Ukrainska Pravda*, citing *Nashi Hroshi* and the UK register, reported on her London-based company, 2100 Consultancy Ltd, registered in May 2017. The publication also described Yulia’s legal education and her work in Britain. This is a pre-war story, not a confirmed instance of her leaving the country after February 2022. [20] [21]

Her other adult daughter, Khristina, studied at CATS College in the UK. In an article published in August 2024, *Telegraf* also noted her inclusion among the co-owners of a shopping centre in Vinnytsia in 2019. The combination of a foreign education and early access to family assets is more significant here than the details of daily life. [20] [21]

In this family’s accounts, there are inconsistencies regarding the dates of Yulia’s education. These cannot simply be carried over into the new article. We are relying on an earlier report about the company and are setting out Christina’s story separately. These facts allow for a discussion of the intergenerational transfer of opportunities. They do not provide grounds for claiming that both women currently live in London, nor do they constitute an allegation of a breach of mobilisation rules.

11. Khristina Yatsenyuk. Los Angeles as a career path

□□□□ USA – Los Angeles in published reports · 15 August 2024. Public professional profile as reported by the media. [22]

Arseniy Yatsenyuk’s eldest daughter, Khristina, according to a ‘Telegraph’ article dated 15 August 2024, was building a career as a stylist in Los Angeles. The publication reproduced a description of her professional profile. This information relates to her work and life in the US at a specific stage, and does not confirm her whereabouts in November 2026. [22]



An archived screenshot of Khristina Yatsenyuk’s professional profile from a ‘Telegraph’ publication. Her profile states she is 23 years old, so this is an earlier screenshot rather than an update from 2024 or 2026. Photo source

When discussing the former prime minister’s family, it is easy to slip into judging his daughter’s appearance, hairstyle and clothing. Such details explain almost nothing. A socially significant aspect of the story is the opportunity to build a creative career in a major international centre and to benefit from an international professional environment at a time when a significant proportion of Ukrainian youth are forced to rethink their plans. [22]

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Khristina is not responsible for her father’s political decisions merely by virtue of their family ties. The publication in question does not provide any evidence that her career has been funded by illicit means. Criticism should therefore focus on the accessibility of opportunities, rather than turning into a fabricated accusation. The American flag refers to information published in 2024. Private accounts, personal contacts and attempts to track current movements are not necessary for this type of article.

12. Anastasia Kostina. ‘Home to Monaco’ and an explanation that has disappeared from the retellings

□□□□ Finland — as explained by Anastasia herself · 8–14 August 2023. A public post and subsequent response. [23] [24]

In August 2023, the daughter of the then Prosecutor General Andriy Kostin found herself at the centre of a scandal following stories about life in ‘Scotland-Finland’ and her desire to ‘go home to Monaco’. The phrase quickly became a symbol of the gulf between the country’s leadership and the people living under shelling. However, the story did not end with that first post. [23] [24]



Anastasia Kostina. Photo from a ‘Glavkom’ publication dated 8 August 2023. A subsequent explanation regarding Finland was published on 14 August. Photo source

On 14 August, ‘Fakty’ published Anastasia’s explanation. She stated that she had moved to Finland to be with her boyfriend, and that her comments about Monaco had been a joke. Their joint trip to Ukraine in May 2023 was also mentioned. To publish only the controversial remark and omit this response would have meant deliberately distorting the factual picture. [23] [24]

Another public context is Anastasia’s previous role as an assistant to MP Andriy Zadorozhny, as highlighted by ‘Glavkom’. Questions regarding politicians’ relatives’ access to paid positions merit a separate discussion. However, the phrase from her Stories does not constitute proof of home ownership in Monaco. The Finnish flag mentioned in this article relates to her own explanation from 2023. There is no evidence here to support the claim that she currently resides in the principality.

13. Venislavsky’s two sons. A story in which the answer changes the picture

USA – a report on the younger son; Ukraine – a statement on the elder son's military service · April 2026. Controversial reports and a published rebuttal. [25] [26]

On 27 April 2026, 'StopCor', citing material from Absolution Leaks, reported that the youngest son of MP Andriy Venislavskyi was studying at the Los Angeles Film School and was expected to work in the US in the future. The publication cited this source when providing his stage name, Andrew Vilange, and details of his work permit. This report does not constitute an independently verified full biography. [25] [26]

At the same time, the same publication has an updated article featuring a written response from Fyodor Venislavsky regarding his eldest son, who is also called Fyodor. The MP stated that his son resigned from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2021, voluntarily enlisted as a reserve officer in the early days of the invasion and continues to serve. He denied the claim regarding a 'safe position at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs'. [25] [26]

The published response also disputes information regarding the eldest son's business dealings and his flat in Kharkiv, whilst explaining the loan and the purchase of a car. It is therefore not possible to present the list of previous allegations as a proven set of privileges. This family should be considered in the context of two distinct life stories. The details regarding the younger son require verification, whilst the statement regarding the elder son's military service should be presented alongside the original reports, rather than being lost in a footnote.

14. Zakhar Palitsa. A Swiss biography and Ukrainian assets

□□□□ Switzerland – education and citizenship according to published reports · CPC profile for 2020; business data for 2025. Historical links abroad and current business interests. [27] [28] [29]

Zakhar Palitsa is the adult son of MP Ihor Palitsa. As early as 2020, the Anti-Corruption Centre described his Swiss education and his family's overseas assets in its profile. It is important to note that the bulk of this infrastructure was established before the full-scale invasion. It would be

incorrect to portray it as a sudden flight in 2022. [27] [28] [29]

Their connection to Ukraine, however, remains primarily economic. In a Delo.ua article on the 2025 results of Bukovel LLC, Zakhar is named as a Swiss citizen and owner of 82.5 per cent of the company ‘Ukrinvesttorgbud’, through which the family holds a stake in the resort. This is a specific business structure that can be verified against registration records. [27] [28] [29]

The cross-border nature of family capital is particularly evident here. Assets and income are linked to Ukraine, whilst education, documents and part of the infrastructure of daily life are linked to other jurisdictions. This arrangement in itself does not prove any wrongdoing. But it explains why the discussion of equal opportunities cannot be reduced to mere rhetoric about patriotism. Swiss citizenship and his past educational background do not determine where Zakhar lives today. We cannot deduce his current address from them.

15. Dmytro Kopanchuk. Accompanying his father and questions about not returning

Crossing the border with Poland; destination country not identified · 1 January – 5 August 2023; media return to the topic on 17 November 2026. Investigation into the circumstances of the departure. [30] [31]

Unlike the photographs from holiday resorts, NGL.media’s investigation into the son of MP Olena Kopanchuk concerns a specific reason for his departure. According to the journalists, on 1 January 2023, Dmitry crossed the border into Poland, accompanying his father, who has a disability. At the time, he was a councillor on the Rudkovsky City Council. [30] [31]

Journalists established that the father returned on 7 February, whilst the son, as of the publication date of 5 August, had not returned to Ukraine. NGL.media highlighted the demand for the return of the accompanying person and described the MP’s prolonged absence from parliamentary sessions. The publication also reported that the mother had refused to speak to journalists. The father declined to help them get in touch with his son. [30] [31]

On 17 November 2026, ‘StopCor’ revisited this story. This renewed media attention does not turn the initial conclusions into a court verdict. However, there is a verifiable sequence of events here and a question regarding the fulfilment of public duties. For a comprehensive assessment, up-to-date information is required regarding registration, return and possible decisions by the authorities. In this story, Poland is the point of border crossing. It cannot be described as Dmitry’s proven current place of residence.

16. Ivan-Pavel Sadovyi. Studying abroad and a promise to fulfil his legal obligations

□□□□ UK – eldest son’s studies completed; current country of residence not specified · December 2024; July 2025; August 2026. Education, father’s comments and details from the declaration. [32] [33]

In July 2025, the mayor of Lviv, Andriy Sadovyi, answered questions about the education of his eldest sons. A report by *Gordon* quotes his promise that they would fulfil their military service within the timeframe stipulated by law. The same report, citing an earlier article, mentions that Ivan-Pavlo graduated from a business school in Nottingham, where he studied marketing. [32] [33]

In August 2026, ‘Ukrainian News’ examined the composition of the family as stated in the mayor’s declaration and the absence of his two eldest sons from it. However, the absence of an adult relative in the family section does not equate to an official record of permanent residence abroad. The article itself contains varying statements regarding the residence of the other adult son, so it cannot be used as an accurate representation of the entire family. [32] [33]

For the purposes of our topic, Ivan-Pavlo’s established educational path abroad and his father’s public response are sufficient. A promise of future military service should be distinguished from confirmation that it has begun. At the same time, it is also wrong to demand that a person be mobilised simply because he is the mayor’s son, without taking into account his age and legal status. The issue of equality under the law lies in the uniform application of the rules, not in punishment based on one’s background.

17. Oleksiy Goncharenko Jr. A return that is inconvenient for the pre-determined list

□□□□ Ukraine – Odessa, according to his father’s statement · July 2024; response published on 7 October 2026. His father’s statement regarding his return and studies. [34]

In October 2026, Oleksiy Honcharenko reported that his eldest son had been studying at a university abroad from September 2023 to July 2024, before returning to Ukraine and enrolling at a university in Odesa. According to the MP, his son lives in Odesa, works and is continuing his studies. ‘Glavkom’ reported this explanation, citing the politician’s Telegram channel. [34]

This story is particularly relevant to a critical article. If a surname has once appeared in a list of students studying abroad, it should not remain there indefinitely, regardless of subsequent events. To claim in 2026 that a MP’s son continues to live abroad, whilst ignoring a public announcement of his return, would amount to tailoring the material to a predetermined outcome. [34]

A father’s words remain an attributed statement, rather than an independent verification of every subsequent day. Yet they alter the picture available to the reader and must be included. The story of their return shows that studying abroad and living in Ukraine can be successive stages of a single life story. A person’s actual choices should be judged by a dated chronology, rather than by an old headline about their family.

18. Taras Yushchenko. An American degree and a return to Ukraine

□□□□ Ukraine; previously □□□□ USA — education · 25 August 2026. A father’s statement on his return and work. [35]

In a comment to the programme ‘Morning in the Big City’, Viktor Yushchenko said that Taras had completed his studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, returned to Ukraine and was working in Kyiv at a company involved in providing aid to the country. This was reported by Channel 24 on 25 August 2026. Details of the company’s activities are not required for this article. [35]

This is a substantive response to the argument about the benefits of international education. The family’s story involves not only a degree obtained abroad, but also the subsequent choice to work in Ukraine. The information is based on the father’s account, so it cannot be presented as the result of our own verification of employment documents. However, the claim regarding their return cannot be completely disregarded either. [35]

Taras should not end up on the list of those continuing to live abroad simply because of the name of an American university in his biography. Such a misrepresentation would discredit the entire piece, including the genuinely controversial cases. History shows what information the public is entitled to expect from influential families — a clear sequence of decisions. Studied abroad, completed his education, announced his return and his employment. This is more concrete than promises to bring knowledge home ‘someday’.

19. Oleksandr and Vitaliy Lutsenko. Military service remains a feature of their biographies because of their surname

□□□□ Ukraine – reports on military service · July 2024; subsequent interviews. Public statements by the father and reports on military service. [36] [37]

In July 2024, Yuriy Lutsenko revealed on the programme ‘Rendezvous’ that, following his own departure from the army on health grounds, his youngest son was serving. In a subsequent interview, as reported by ‘TabloID’, the former Prosecutor General spoke separately about his two sons. According to him, his eldest son, Oleksandr, served as an artilleryman during the previous phase of the war; he was later discharged on health grounds and is now involved in the IT business. [36] [37]

In the family’s public accounts, the younger Vitaliy is described as an active-duty soldier. It would therefore be factually incorrect to include both sons on the general list of those who ‘did not fight’. Past studies abroad, if mentioned in a biography, cannot be used to invalidate a subsequent choice. [36] [37]

Political allegations against Yuriy Lutsenko may stand on their own. They do not justify dismissing his children’s service without evidence. For a discussion of inequality, this case is fundamental — it shows that an influential background does not automatically determine behaviour. The discussion gains weight when it describes different choices within a single social milieu. Vitaliy’s current military duties, location and routes are not specified here.

20. Mikhail Sobolev. When a politician’s son chooses his own contract

□□□□ Ukraine · October 2025. Statements from both parents regarding enlistment in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. [38]

On 31 October 2025, 1+1 reported that Mikhail Sobolev, the adult son of former MP Yegor Sobolev and TV presenter Marichka Padalko, had signed a contract with the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The publication quoted public statements from both parents regarding their son’s oath and decision. This is a story of a voluntary choice made before reaching the general conscription age. [38]



Mykhailo Sobolev. Photo from a 1+1 report dated 31 October 2025 regarding his contract with the Armed Forces of Ukraine. No information is provided regarding his current whereabouts. Photo source

For his mother, her son’s enlistment in the army was a particularly difficult ordeal, even though her husband had already served. This part of the story is worth reading alongside other families’ explanations of the need to complete a degree at a foreign university. A parent’s fear is equally understandable. What differs are the life choices, resources and circumstances in which they are made. [38]

That said, Mykhailo’s military service does not amount to a blanket condemnation of all his peers. The law allows for different grounds and forms of participation in national defence, and voluntary service cannot be retroactively presented as an obligation for every eighteen-year-old. However, Sobolev’s example debunks the notion that all politicians’ children live exclusively abroad. Any accurate discussion of privileges must take such facts into account. Otherwise, the reader is presented with an emotional montage rather than a verifiable picture.

The greatest privilege is the ability to choose how far away to be from the war

Wealth does not negate the ability to fear for one’s child. A parent who has the means to secure a safe place naturally wants to make use of them. That is precisely why accusing someone of simply wanting to protect their family does little to explain the problem. The issue arises where an individual’s ability to remove themselves from risk coexists with the public authority’s power to allocate responsibilities to others.

An influential family may have several pre-planned paths: educational, professional, corporate and family-oriented. Each of these, taken separately, can be entirely legitimate. Together, they create a stability that is lacking in someone tied to a single job, a single flat and a limited supply of money. This difference can be discussed without implying that every foreign university is tainted by corruption.

Legality and equality of opportunity — related, yet distinct issues. It is possible to break no rules whatsoever and still remain in a position beyond the reach of the majority. For a democratic politician, this does not exempt them from providing explanations. On the contrary, the more they are involved in setting general standards, the more important it is to be clear about the circumstances of their own family. A transparent response must reveal grounds of public significance whilst safeguarding personal security.

The demand for a level playing field must not be turned into a demand for identical fates. A person with an illness, a student, a member of the armed forces, a company employee and a foreign national may have different obligations. Fairness means that the grounds for scrutiny are examined with equal rigour regardless of one’s surname. It does not mean that a journalist should, in advance, deprive a person of a legitimate exemption for the sake of emotional symmetry.

Why donating to the army does not resolve every other issue

Support for the army matters. It cannot be dismissed simply because a donor is wealthy or politically unpalatable to the author. But different forms of accountability are not interchangeable. A transfer of funds does not automatically explain the circumstances of a border crossing, the

procedure for appointing a relative to a publicly funded post, or the origin of family assets. Each issue requires its own set of documents.

A consistent standard is required here for both the prosecution and the defence. If a politician states that their adult son is coordinating supplies or assisting as an interpreter, this should be reported accurately, with the source cited. If the editorial team has not independently verified such claims, they must not be presented as the publication’s own conclusion. However, it is also unethical to withhold a statement simply because it undermines a hard-hitting story.

A thorough investigation begins with a specific period, a specific role and verifiable results. A unit’s public acknowledgement may confirm the delivery of aid, but not the family’s entire history. A university enrolment document may confirm enrolment, but not every ground for deferment. In a dispute over privileges, both blanket justifications and blanket accusations are counterproductive.

Education abroad — a public promise that can be verified

The argument regarding the future benefits of an education abroad deserves serious consideration. Ukraine needs engineers, doctors, managers, researchers and entrepreneurs with international experience. Gaining knowledge abroad does not become a moral transgression simply because of the war. But the promise to return with useful skills only makes sense as a verifiable sequence of decisions, rather than an endless postponement of the discussion.

One might ask whether their studies have been completed, whether they maintain professional ties with Ukraine, and where they are applying the qualifications they have gained. These questions do not require the publication of a home address or interference in personal relationships. They help to distinguish a genuine professional strategy from a convenient formula that has been repeated for years in response to any comment.

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For the state, there is also the broader issue of accessibility. If international connections are truly regarded as a public good, access to them should not depend primarily on one’s surname. Scholarships, transparent selection processes, support for returning home and the opportunity to work in one’s chosen field make this argument more convincing. Otherwise, talk of valuable experience easily becomes a description of an advantage that is passed on within a narrow circle.

It is not only capital that is inherited, but also the opportunity to explain one’s own story

The family of a public figure has another resource at its disposal — access to the public eye. Their position can be articulated by a major publication, a lawyer, a press office or the politician themselves in a lengthy interview. An ordinary family often lacks such resources when faced with a mistake, suspicion or a bureaucratic decision. Therefore, the quality of an explanation should not be confused with the sufficiency of evidence.

Similarly, the absence of a public response does not allow a person to be declared guilty. For the editorial team, this is the line between a persistent question and a fabricated conclusion. It is permissible to report that journalists received no response, provided this has been confirmed by a source. However, one must not speculate on the motive for the refusal and present it as evidence of a concealed crime. This is particularly true when the individuals in question are adult relatives who do not themselves hold public office.

This is precisely where the responsibility of the author of this controversial piece comes into play. The headline risks making several different stories seem similar. The full article must restore those distinctions. Some studied abroad before the war. Others were photographed at a holiday resort. Some were accompanied by others. Some have returned. Some are serving. The reader has the right to see these distinctions before being presented with an assessment.

What answers does society really need?

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The first question concerns public duties. If an adult child is themselves a Member of Parliament, a public official or receives a salary from the public purse, how do they fulfil their duties? In the event of a controversial trip abroad, the grounds, date, applicable regulations and information regarding the planned return must be provided. A general reference to ‘family circumstances’ does not constitute a substantive response.

The second issue concerns money and property. When an heir becomes the owner of a significant asset, it is useful to know how they acquired it, what obligations arise and how transparent the transaction is. Registration documents, corporate reports and official explanations carry more weight than calculating the value of the clothes in a photograph. Family ties alone are grounds for scrutinising the connection, but they do not constitute proof of the illegal origin of funds.

The third question concerns the consistency of public statements. Did they promise to finish their studies and return – what happened after graduation? Did they announce their military service – what unclassified information confirms their status? If a specific publication was refuted – was the response taken into account in the same place where the original claim was made? This approach allows the reader to compare words with subsequent actions, whilst maintaining the necessary security.

The fourth question is for the editorial teams themselves. Do they update their profiles once a person has returned? Do they note changes in age and legislation? Do they distinguish between the country of the company and the country of residence? Do they ever mistake a father for his son in a photograph? Selective treatment of these issues risks turning justified public outrage into a torrent of unfounded accusations.

Why the memory of the fallen demands accuracy

The families of the fallen do not need the cost of war explained to them through grand contrasts. They recognise it in the everyday things — in a missed phone call, in unfulfilled plans, in a date that remains on the calendar forever. To use their grief as a blanket licence for any publication would be yet another injustice. The memory of a person demands that their name not be used to embellish an unsubstantiated accusation.

But accuracy does not soften the conversation. It allows us to discuss the real mechanisms of privilege. About international family networks. About early access to major companies. About the disconnect between political appeals and private opportunities. About a specific departure that demands a response. Such questions are harder to brush aside than a generic poster with the same verdict for all the children of famous people.

These twenty stories do not justify the claim that all the heirs of the elite live in the same way, or that those who have died come only from less affluent families. They provide grounds for demanding the consistent application of rules and transparent explanations from those in power. And they serve as a reminder that social solidarity is not built on calls for patience, but on trust in how responsibility and opportunities are distributed.

Editorial verification date: 19 November 2026. Earlier information is indicated separately. The photographs are archive material from the sources cited; the cover is an editorial collage created using AI based on published portraits. It does not depict the subjects attending an event together. This article does not establish their real-time whereabouts and is not a list of individuals with proven offences.

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