

Whereabouts of Yanukovich and Azarov in Russia

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Part 1

So far, the media have made a few versions of the whereabouts of Ukrainian ex-president Viktor Yanukovich. The main ones point toward two Russian southern cities: Rostov-on-Don and Sochi, along with the capital of Russia and the Moscow region.

Hereinafter, you'll find an analysis of media references to the location of the Ukrainian former president from 2014 till early 2016, as well as information about what has happened to his close allies and assets obtained through corruption schemes during the specified period.

1. After the flight

After the flight of Viktor Yanukovich from Ukraine in the twentieth of February 2014, conflicting reports on the whereabouts of the disgraced president began appearing in the press. Thus, on February 22, 2014 some sources reported that Viktor Yanukovich wasn't in Kharkiv¹, others – that he indeed was in Kharkiv at the moment, where he was going to sign the recently adopted

¹ <http://kharkov.comments.ua/news/2014/02/22/152813.html>

Laws by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (the Ukrainian Parliament)². On the same day the border guards denied a charter flight, with Viktor Yanukovich on board, the permission to take off from Donetsk, as quoted by Sergey Astakhov – head assistant of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine³. By all appearances, at that time Viktor Yanukovich was in Kharkiv, where the Congress of Deputies from the South-Eastern regions took place on February 22⁴. However, a day after all the media were riddled with headlines that the former president of Ukraine appeared to be in Crimea from where he was preparing to flee to Russia⁵. On February 24, Viktor Yanukovich was reported to not be found at the facilities and ships of the Black Sea Fleet⁶, but he was still within the territory of Ukraine⁷. It was reported that the ex-president's wife, and son – Alexander Yanukovich, left their Donetsk estate on February 24⁸.

Along with that information other versions appeared in the media. According to them, Yanukovich had suffered a heart attack and left for Mount Athos in Macedonia⁹. Although, it seemed more likely that Yanukovich crossed the Russian border and arrived in Moscow on the night of February 25, when he was checked in at The Radisson Royal Hotel, previously known under the name of Ukraine.¹⁰ At the same time, there were reports that Yanukovich purchased a \$52 mln house in Barvikha¹¹. As referred by Oleg Mitvol, chair of the centrist party council “Alliance of Greens and Social Democrats” – on February 26, Yanukovich became a new owner of an elite cottage situated close to the health resort Barvikha

² <http://letnews.ru/0603-yanukovich-v-xarkove-on-podpishet-prinyatye-verxovnoj-radoj-zakony/>

³ http://ont.by/news/our_news/00114405

⁴ <http://interfax.com.ua/news/political/192548.html>

⁵ <http://time-news.net/ukraine/876-yanukovich-nashelsya-on-v-sevastopole-speshit-sbezhat-v-rossiyu.html>

⁶ <http://ria.ru/world/20140224/996751898.html#ixzz40bOLNvvg>

⁷ http://24tv.ua/ru/v_sbu_veryayut_chno_yanukovich_eshhe_v_ukraine_n413330 ; <http://wek.ru/sovetsnik-yanukovicha-on-naxoditsya-na-territorii-ukrainy>

⁸ <http://www.aif.ua/politic/ukraine/1111704>

⁹ http://actualnews.org/politika/v_mire/6182-gde-seychas-yanukovich-26-fevralya-eks-prezident-ukrainy-poluchil-infarkt-i-seychas-nahoditsya-na-gore-afon-v-makedonii.html

¹⁰ <http://n4k.ru/main/38549-tochnoe-mestonakhozhdenie-viktora-janukovicha.html>

¹¹ <http://actualnews.org/> ; http://actualnews.org/politika/v_mire/6264-novosti-ukrainy-yanukovich-nahoditsya-v-barvihe.html ; <http://vm.ru/news/2014/02/27/leonid-kalashnikov-viktor-yanukovich-vpolne-mozhet-bit-sejchas-v-podmoskove-237347.html>

owned by the Administrative Department of the President of the Russian Federation.¹² On February 26, the media also reported that the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine voted for a law on return of the governmental residence “Mezhyhirya” into state ownership¹³.

A year later, in March 2015 the media wrote that Russian president Vladimir Putin revealed secrets on how he helped ex-president of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovich, run away from Ukraine. In Vladimir Putin’s opinion, Yanukovich had been ultimately endangered during the Maidan activities in Ukraine. The Russian surveillance services had been monitoring Yanukovich’s location on his way up to Crimea. “But when I was shown a map, it became clear that he would run into ambush”, highlighted Putin. Then it was decided to navigate his cortege shoreward. “We gave them directions where to go– to drive the cortege shoreward. And we stationed a helicopter team with a group of Special Forces Unit on board”, said the Russian leader¹⁴. It’s interesting that the Ukrainian media reported that there was an exchange of gunfire while trying to arrest ex-president Viktor Yanukovich on the territory of the Crimean autonomy on February 23, 2014¹⁵. It must have been the traces of the very ambush the Russian president had mentioned before.

At the end of February 2014 Viktor Yanukovich surfaced on the territory of the Russian Federation. That information wasn’t refuted, on the contrary, it was confirmed by the aforementioned news in the media sources.

2. Presence of Yanukovich in the Russian Federation

On February 28, 2014, Viktor Yanukovich, put on the international criminal “wanted” list by that time, held a press-conference in Rostov-on-Don, where his plane had landed at a military airfield a day before¹⁶.

¹² <http://vecherniy.kharkov.ua/news/89769/>

¹³ <http://ria.ru/world/20140223/996522294.html#ixzz40bViYbg7>

¹⁴ <http://gazeta.ua/ru/articles/politics/putin-rasskazal-kak-pomogal-anukovichu-bezhat-iz-ukrainy/615203>

¹⁵ http://lb.ua/news/2014/02/24/256954_popitke_zaderzhat_viktora.html

¹⁶ <http://www.rg.ru/2014/02/28/konferenciya.html#/2014/02/28/konferenciya.html>

According to some reports, Yanukovych stayed at the ex-governor's Vladimir Chub¹⁷.

In his Facebook post from March 4, Euromaidan activist Mikhail Lebed reported on Yanukovych's death – that it was allegedly caused by a heart attack¹⁸. Within 2 weeks the retired president of Ukraine was reported to ask his wife Lyudmila for divorce after more than 40 years of marriage¹⁹. We call your attention to the fact that it was the same source that noted the frank talk between two spouses took place on the road to Rostov-on-Don.

At the end of March 2014 the media sources reported that the overthrown president of Ukraine left his residence from near Moscow and travelled to the south of Russia, as quoted by aforementioned Oleg Mitvol. According to him, in the south of Russia, Yanukovych “was actively negotiating with the representatives of the Ukrainian establishment”²⁰. Viktor Yanukovych's presence in Rostov-on-Don was also confirmed by Valeriy Heletei, Chief of State Security Administration of Ukraine, who stated in an interview with online media “Segodnya” (“Today”) that the former Ukrainian president owned a private residence near Rostov-on-Don and his elder son had bought a house in Barvika²¹.

It appeared that in the summer of 2014 Viktor Yanukovych had a great ambition to return to politics. This is brought out by the data published on the blog of famous Ukrainian journalist Mustafa Nayyem. Citing his own sources, Nayyem reported that the elder son of Yanukovych, and president of Belarus Aleksander Lukashenko, had been discussing that possibility during

¹⁷ http://www.baltpp.ru/a/2014/02/28/Janukovich_sejchas_nahoditsja/

¹⁸ <http://www.mk.ru/politics/article/2014/03/04/993184-yanukovich-skonchalsya-v-rostovskoy-bolnitse.html>

¹⁹ http://tengrinews.kz/strange_news/viktor-yanukovich-poprosil-razvod-u-jenyi-smi-252042/

²⁰ <http://gordonua.com/news/worldnews/mitvol-yanukovich-sejchas-nahoditsya-na-yuge-rossii-gde-vedet-aktivnye-peregovory-s-ukrainskimi-politikami-15648.html>

²¹ <http://www.rbc.ru/rbcfreenews/20140515124335.shtml> ; <http://www.segodnya.ua/politics/pnews/u-yanukovicha-dom-pod-rostovom-a-ego-syn-kupil-osobnyak-v-barvihe-nachalnik-ugo-520398.html>

a telephone conversation. The conversation, according to the journalist, took place in early June. Telephone consultations were initially focused on the possibility of the Yanukovich family moving to Belarus²². At the same time an unofficial military enlistment office was reported to be operating in Rostov, from where Russian citizens sponsored by Yanukovich, were being sent to wage war on Donbass²³.

Simultaneously with the above-mentioned events, the media spread the news that the former Ukrainian president, together with his partner wife Lyubov Polezhai and her daughter Masha, moved to Sochi²⁴. A month later, in August the Russian media reported that Yanukovich was allegedly still in Rostov-on-Don²⁵. Then in September a “new old” location of Viktor Yanukovich was named – Moscow, where he and his son as well as Sergey Kurchenko and Artyom Pshonka had been working on the concept of a “fifth column” in Ukraine, according to Army General Nikolai Malomuzh, former Chairman of the Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine. They supposedly owned an entire floor at the Radisson Hotel, which was reserved for staff and closed for outsiders. The former president was claimed to live at the summer residence outside of Moscow²⁶.

By the fall 2014 the news around a controversial public figure of Viktor Yanukovich hadn't died down, but they transformed into a different shape. Thus, on October 3, Dmitry Peskov, press-secretary of the Russian President, said that the former Ukrainian president was taken under their protection²⁷, and on November 28, The United Russia Party officials refused to extradite Ukraine's ousted president Yanukovich back to Kiev²⁸. Those events unfolded amid of the activity of Ukrainian special services: on November 30, it was reported that The State Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) identified

²² <http://161.ru/text/newsline/806524.html?full=3>

²³ <http://echo.msk.ru/programs/personalno/1337186-echo/>

²⁴ <http://vesti-ukr.com/svetskie-vesti/56360-semju-janukovicha-razyskivajut-rodnye>

²⁵ <http://deloru.ru/news/234829/>

²⁶ <http://www.proximainform.net/content/news/174/42205/>

²⁷ http://www.rusdialog.ru/news/6078_1412338113

²⁸ http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/news/2014/11/28/n_6695205.shtml

that former Prime Minister of Ukraine Mykola Azarov was living near Moscow, as well as the whereabouts of other officials of the Yanukovich era who had fled to Russia. That was stated by adviser to the head of SBU Dmitry Tupchienko in an interview with ZIK TV²⁹.

On the Eve of 2015 Russian newspaper “Argumenty i fakty” (“Arguments and facts”) published a big interview with the former Ukrainian president. In the interview Yanukovich criticized the incumbent authorities of Ukraine. However, he didn’t reveal any detail of both his activities and location³⁰.

Anyway, by the end of 2014 the media hadn’t denied that the ex-president of Ukraine was on Russian territory. Different sources at different times speculated on Barvikha, Rostov-on-Don and Sochi among the alleged places of his residence.

In February 2015 Russian journalist Oleg Kashin posted a map on the internet, where he indicated a location of the Moscow residence of Viktor Yanukovich situated in the village “Landscape” on Rublevka³¹.

On February 7, it was reported that the Ukrainian Prosecutor General's Office (GPU) started the procedure of extradition of Viktor Yanukovich, whose presidency had been revoked in his absence by the Verkhovna Rada, as well as the group of his allies from Russia³². In response, Russia’s Prosecutor General Yuri Chaika said that Russia wouldn’t grant Ukraine’s extradition requests for former president Viktor Yanukovich and a number of his associates³³.

On the evening of March 20, 2015, Yanukovich’s younger son Viktor Yanukovich Junior was killed in a car accident on the Russian lake Baikal³⁴. According to

²⁹ [http://news.liga.net/news/politics/4259760-](http://news.liga.net/news/politics/4259760-sbu-ustanovila-gde-zhivet-azarov-i-drugie-beglye-eks-chinovniki.htm)

[sbu-ustanovila-gde-zhivet-azarov-i-drugie-beglye-eks-chinovniki.htm](http://news.liga.net/news/politics/4259760-sbu-ustanovila-gde-zhivet-azarov-i-drugie-beglye-eks-chinovniki.htm)

³⁰ <http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2640264>

³¹ [http://www.ukrinform.ru/rubric-lastnews/1810353-](http://www.ukrinform.ru/rubric-lastnews/1810353-v-set-vilogili-kartu-s-mestonahogdeniem-doma-yanukovicha-1709106.html)

[v-set-vilogili-kartu-s-mestonahogdeniem-doma-yanukovicha-1709106.html](http://www.ukrinform.ru/rubric-lastnews/1810353-v-set-vilogili-kartu-s-mestonahogdeniem-doma-yanukovicha-1709106.html) ; <http://newsprolife.com.ua/gde-seichas-zhivet-yanukovich-foto> .

³² <http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2663316>

³³ <http://regnum.ru/news/polit/1893731.html>

³⁴ <http://politeka.net/17035-gibel-yanukovicha-mladshego-gerashhenko-soobshhil-o-podrobnostyah/>

Alexander Yanukovych, elder brother of the deceased, Viktor Yanukovych Junior was buried in Sevastopol, because their mother Lyudmila was living in Crimea. Ex-president of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovych, his wife Lyudmila, wife of the deceased Olga, attended the funeral with her 5-year old son Ilya and close friends. It was reported that the members of the Yanukovych Junior family went to Sevastopol to commemorate 40 days from the day of his death at the end of April³⁵. Therefore, on March 25 Prime Minister of Crimea Sergey Aksyonov was quick to say that the Crimean authorities didn't hold information about whether former president Yanukovych and his wife were living in Crimea or not.

In a few months after the death of Yanukovych's son, in July, there was a message on the Internet that Viktor Yanukovych appeared in Sochi, where he celebrated his 64th birthday³⁶. By that time Interpol had withdrawn Yanukovych from the "most wanted" list³⁷.

In August-September of 2015 the media produced a number of reports that the Ukrainian Prosecutor's Office didn't dispose data on the former president's whereabouts, and that the Ukrainian investigators weren't going to leave for Rostov to interrogate Yanukovych³⁸, but they proposed to interrogate him in a video conference instead³⁹.

Also it was reported that the Ukrainian General Prosecutor's Office received a letter with a mailing address in Rostov-on-Don from Yanukovych's lawyers⁴⁰.

The news that Viktor Yanukovych intended to hold press-conference on October 24 in Rostov⁴¹ or that the politician was living in a gated community that borders the Law Institute of the Russian Interior Ministry,

³⁵ <http://www.kp.ru/daily/26357/3239859/>

³⁶ <http://vesti-ukr.com/>

³⁷ <http://ru.tsn.ua/politika/yanukovich-ischez-s-sayta-interpola-454981.html>

³⁸ <http://nahnews.org/307122-gpu-net-oficialnogo-podtverzheniya-cto-yanukovich-naxoditsya-v-rossii/>

³⁹ <http://replyua.net/news/12134-shokin-sledovateli-gpu-ne-budut-obschatsya-s-yanukovichem.html>

⁴⁰ <http://riafan.ru/393473-gpu-razdobyila-adres-yanukovicha-no-tot-vse-ravno-ostalsya-nedosyagaemyim>

⁴¹ <http://deloru.ru/news/487183/>

which is popularly called the “police academy”⁴², could also attest to the “Rostov” version of Yanukovich’s whereabouts. One of the residents of the cottage village confirmed in a telephone conversation that the former Ukrainian president lived in one of the cottages. However, he failed to specify where exactly Yanukovich settled in. At the same time, the cottage, the address of which Yanukovich had stated in a letter to the GPU, was missing on official maps. It was also said that Yanukovich was unlikely to permanently live in the cottage⁴³.

Furthermore, there were reports that the Russian Federation hadn’t yet responded to the GPU extradition requests⁴⁴. In a statement, Konstantin Romodanovsky, Chief of Russia’s Federal Migration Service, claimed that he wasn’t privy to the information whether ex-president Yanukovich was granted either Russian citizenship or asylum. He also added that with regard to recent developments Ukrainian citizens could stay in Russia for 270 days⁴⁵.

Aside from the version of Yulia Mechnikova, finalist of the TV show “The Battle of extrasensory-5”, that Viktor Yanukovich passed away in the spring of 2015 and his death wasn’t caused by violence, as well as that Yanukovich was already dead by the time of his public appearances, but his death, allegedly, wasn’t related to the FSB scheming but resulted from poor state of health and fear⁴⁶, the “Sochi” version seemed to be more likely. According to TSN, Dmitry Rudavin, one of the former president’s bodyguards, lived in Sochi. There he bought a car, moved his mother and met a woman. Artyom Sushko, as well as many other bodyguards, was also in Sochi. It could mean that one would rather look for Yanukovich in Sochi, among his allies, than in Rostov⁴⁷. Media reports of shocking details from Yanukovich’s life – the fugitive president of Ukraine supposedly

⁴² <http://privet-rostov.ru/main/5200-zhurnalisty-vyyasnili-gde-v-rostove-pryachetsya-yanukovich.html>

⁴³ <http://vesti-ua.net/novosti/politika/25026-zhurnalisty-razyskali-dom-yanukovicha-v-rostove.html>

⁴⁴ <http://ru.tsn.ua/politika/tsn-razyskala-pomeste-yanukovicha-v-rossii-558804.html>

⁴⁵ <http://finam.info/blog/43349545533/FMS-ne-davala-YANukovichu-rossiyskogo-grazhdanstva>

⁴⁶ http://joinfo.ua/politic/1035481_Viktor-Yanukovich-davno-otoshel-mir-inoy.html

⁴⁷ <http://comments.ua/life/523456-stalo-izvestno-gde-seychas-ohranniki.html>

began drinking heavily at his residence in Sochi – served as an additional confirmation of that version⁴⁸.

3. Assets

While the resigned president of Ukraine was arousing public curiosity over his whereabouts, admirable things were also happening to Yanukovich's assets. Here's what happened to Yanukovich's ill-gotten assets, apart from the above-named property acquisition in Moscow-area Barvika, and return of some material benefits provided to the former president by Ukraine back into state budget.

Back in May 2014 Switzerland's federal prosecutor ordered to freeze of \$193.34 million of assets linked to Viktor Yanukovich and members of his entourage⁴⁹.

Next, Ukrainian government adopted regulation on the licitation of assets arrested in the criminal proceedings against former top rank public officials⁵⁰.

Bohorodchany district court in Ivano-Frankivsk region returned back to state ownership 0.4 hectares of land within the «Synigora» residence, privatized by Viktor Yanukovich⁵¹. According to the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovich had privatized the lands of natural reserve Fund – thousands of acres of state land with buildings and facilities of the recreation complex “Pushcha-Vodytsia” situated in the tract Mezhyhiria Zalesie⁵².

In July 2015 the Kiev court seized the former residence of Yanukovich at Mezhyhiria⁵³. In August the Pechersky

⁴⁸ <http://www.ktk.kz/ru/news/video/2014/10/10/30102> ; <http://ru.tsn.ua/ukrayina/zhurnalisty-napali-na-sled-ohrannikov-yanukovicha-15-druzey-prezidenta-zasvetilis-v-sochi-484938.html> ; <http://www.politnavigator.net/na-kanale-kolomojskogo-dumayut-cto-yanukovich-zhivet-ne-v-rostove-a-v-sochi.html>

⁴⁹ <http://ria.ru/world/20140505/1006535814.html#ixzz40bZ5dEaA>

⁵⁰ <http://ria.ru/world/20140520/1008579893.html#ixzz40bQY2tAQ>

⁵¹ <http://ria.ru/world/20150605/1068394558.html#ixzz40bV74MLA>

⁵² <http://ria.ru/world/20150617/1074171032.html#ixzz40bNnPCJu> ;

<http://ria.ru/world/20150701/1107671815.html#ixzz40bXmHx>

⁵³ <http://ria.ru/world/20150717/1133980095.html>

district court of Kiev arrested valuables found in that residence⁵⁴.

In October 2015 the journalists of the Ukrainian television program «Groshi» («Money») found a helicopter allegedly belonging to ex-president of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich at the airfield in Nizhny Novgorod. According to them, Yanukovich had flown from his residence “Mezhyhiria” aboard that helicopter⁵⁵.

Besides the above-mentioned “misfortunes” in the fate of the disgraced Ukrainian high ranked politician, the Pechersky district court of Kiev decided to seize the pensions from current accounts of Yanukovich and Azarov at «Oshchadbank» in lieu with the investigation of misappropriating public funds and of embezzlement⁵⁶.

Acting Sevastopol Governor Sergei Menyailo said that the property of Yanukovich would be transferred to the Russian authorities which would further decide its destiny at the state level⁵⁷. According to the media reports, the decision concerning the unfinished palace of the ex-president of Ukraine situated on the Cape Aya in Crimea had already been made – it would be transferred to the Department for Presidential Affairs of the Russian Federation⁵⁸.

On February 16, 2016 a super yacht “Bandido” owned by Alexander Yanukovich, son of the former Ukrainian president, was reported to be found off the Turkish coast⁵⁹.

4. Alexander Yanukovich

In April 2014 ex-president of Ukraine Alexander Yanukovich’s son was put on the wanted list by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU)⁶⁰. Along with that, in

⁵⁴ <http://ria.ru/world/20150807/1170278959.html#ixzz40bUrL2Ug>

⁵⁵ https://tvrain.ru/news/v_nizhnem_novgorode_nashli_vertolet_yanukovicha-376323/

⁵⁶ <http://ria.ru/world/20160112/1358632271.html#ixzz40dhCBG4G>

⁵⁷ <http://argumenti.ru/society/2016/01/429879>

⁵⁸ <http://www.forbes.ru/news/309879-smi-uznali-o-peredache-nedvizhimosti-yanukovicha-upravdelami-prezidenta>

⁵⁹ <http://apostrophe.com.ua/news/society/2016-02-16/jurnalistyi-nashli-yahtu-yanukovicha-opublikovano-video/49935>

⁶⁰ <http://ria.ru/world/20140418/1004460269.html#ixzz40bQ62tef>

December 2014 the Ukrainian militia shut down an elite gambling den in the center of Kiev owned by Alexander Yanukovich⁶¹.

Before February 2014 Alexander was listed as the owner of the corporation “MAKO”⁶² (its wealth was estimated at \$196.5 million by version of Focus magazine). Thus, in an interview with Ukraine’s Lb.ua news website on July 7, 2014, Alexander said that after the flight from Kiev he had spent some time in Crimea, then moved to Moscow where he “didn’t officially work”.

However, according to the database “SPARK-Interfax”, on May 7, 2014 Ukrainian citizen Yanukovich Alexander Viktorovich registered an LLC “Arsenal-Invest” in Saint-Petersburg. The company stated “management of financial-industrial groups and holding companies” as a main kind of activity. Its legal address: 2A Komsomola Street, office 2, Saint-Petersburg, 195009, Russia.

“Arsenal-Invest” also owns an affiliated company “Arsenal Estate” (real estate and consulting activities) located on the same street, but in another building – 1-3 Komsomola Street. According to the Unified State Register of Legal Entities, Alla Davydova was listed as the CEO of both companies⁶³.

In May 2015 the General Prosecutor’s Office of Ukraine confirmed that the securities of Alexander Yanukovich kept at the All-Ukrainian Development Bank PJSC remained arrested⁶⁴. However, the prosecutors of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, while in the process of investigating criminal proceedings against public officials, seized bank accounts of individuals and legal entities contained in this Bank in the amount of 2.6 billion UAH⁶⁵.

⁶¹ <http://ria.ru/world/20141213/1038048269.html#ixzz40bPq95pD>

⁶² A holding company “MAKO” registered in Donetsk specializes on construction activities and management of office and hotel real estate, carbon trading and industrial equipment trading, wine production in the city of Artyomovsk. Also the company owns enterprises in the Netherlands and Switzerland.
<http://www.fontanka.ru/2014/11/14/154/>

⁶³ <http://www.rbc.ru/photoreport/02/10/2014/542d2441cbb20f4c48d0b90e>

⁶⁴ <http://ria.ru/world/20150526/1066608949.html#ixzz40bOyn8Qb>

⁶⁵ <http://interfax.com.ua/news/general/300686.html> ; <http://podrobnosti.ua/2072290-sud-arestoval-3-mlrd-griven-aleksandra-janukovicha.html>

In August 2015, according to the media, the SBU exposed facilities for withdrawal of money to the Russian Federation, pocketed by Alexander Yanukovich in the amount of more than 10 million UAH⁶⁶.

Son of the former Ukrainian president Alexander Yanukovich filed a lawsuit in the European Court of Human Rights in connection with regular violations of human rights against him by Ukraine on the basis of the mentioned arrests and launched investigations⁶⁷.

By the end of 2015 the National Bank of Ukraine (NBU) adopted a decision to declare Bank SOFIYSKIY PJSC insolvent, and the Deposit Insurance Fund in Ukraine started the procedure of liquidation of Yanukovich's bank⁶⁸. On January 13, 2015, the State Property Fund of Ukraine scheduled an auction to sell Alexander Yanukovich's bank on April 22⁶⁹.

5. Conclusion

To sum up this analysis, it should be noted that the current whereabouts of ousted president of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich remain unknown. The presented evidence indicates two most probable locations: Sochi, where his entourage has settled down, and Rostov-on-Don, from where the disgraced Ukrainian politician repeatedly stated his opinion on the latest developments in Ukraine. Besides, one shouldn't discount the near-Moscow residence, as well as Crimea where Viktor Yanukovich's real estate which was transferred to the property of the Russian Federation is situated. Also, Crimea is a place where Yanukovich's wife resides and younger son is buried. It is quite possible that Viktor Yanukovich may occasionally be present in all four stated places, being able to change his location without too much trouble with the support of Russian authorities.

⁶⁶ <http://ria.ru/world/20150813/1181091843.html#ixzz40bOm1tmE>

⁶⁷ <http://politeka.net/84797-starshij-syn-yanukovicha-podal-isk-protiv-ukrainy-v-espch/>

⁶⁸ <http://delo.ua/finance/nbu-priznal-neplatezhnesposobnym-bank-sofijskij-a-fgvfl-nachal-l-309550/>

⁶⁹ http://www.ukrudprom.ua/news/Fond_gosimushchestva_naznachil_na_22_aprelya_auktsion_po_prodage_ban_ka_Aleksandra_YAnukovicha.html

Part 2. Azarov and his family

1. Activities of Mykola Azarov after the fall of the Yanukovich regime

According to a statement issued in February 2014 by Nestor Shufrych, a former Ukrainian member of parliament for the Party of Regions, Mykola Azarov was present in Russia immediately after the fall of the Yanukovich regime⁷⁰. At that same time, Dmitry Medvedev claimed that he had no knowledge of where the Ukrainian ex-Prime Minister was staying, but he neither denied that it could possibly be in Russia⁷¹.

In March 2014 Azarov requested the Council of the EU to unfreeze his accounts. A legal firm called 'Alber & Geiger' submitted the claim on Azarov's behalf. The firm supposedly acted on a request of a number of people listed on the EU sanctions register, but it refused to reveal the names of its clients. However, making use of its own sources the news outlet 'EU observer' was able to reveal that already on the 5th of March the Council of the EU received a personalised request from 'Azarov and his family members'.

Later, on the 25th of March, the same request was repeated, while simultaneously exactly the same letter was sent to all permanent representations of the 28 EU member states in Brussels. This was done due to EU legislative procedure rules, according to which sanctions can only be lifted if all 28 member states vote in favour of it unanimously. In case of a refusal, the accusers would still have the possibility to pursue a case before the European Court of Justice in

⁷⁰ <http://www.from-ua.com/news/301184-shufrich-rasskazal-pravdu-o-mestonahozhdenii-nikolaya-azarova.html>

⁷¹ <http://worldru.ru/index.php?nma=news&fla=stat&nums=31673>

Luxembourg. Nevertheless, according to many European lawyers the chances of winning such case are almost non-existent⁷².

It also became public that the Russian President Vladimir Putin gave Russian citizenship to Ukraine's ex-President Viktor Yanukovich, ex-Prime Minister Mykola Azarov and ex-Prosecutor General Viktor Pshonka⁷³. Yet Azarov's assistant denied this information later and claimed that the former Prime Minister never received a Russian citizenship⁷⁴.

2. Political Ambitions

In Moscow the former Prime Minister was doing well. He was often invited to various TV programmes, including 'Vesti' on the channel 'Russia 1', and was giving many interviews. During one of those, he stated that he does not condemn Yanukovich for leaving Kyiv at the time of the February events in 2014⁷⁵. In addition, Azarov created a public account on the social media network 'Facebook' where he regularly publically publishes various materials about his activities⁷⁶. Such activity differentiates him from Yanukovich, who does not give interviews nor issues public statements.

In the end of November 2014 it became known that Oleg Tsaryov, the Speaker of the Parliament of the self-proclaimed 'Novorossiya', offered Azarov a ministerial position⁷⁷. In February 2015 while already being under an international arrest warrant lodged by Interpol, Azarov presented his new book in Moscow. The monograph 'Ukraine at a crossroads. Notes of the Prime Minister',

⁷² <https://euobserver.com/foreign/123748>

⁷³ <http://glavcom.ua/news/238326.html>

⁷⁴ <http://www.interfax-russia.ru/South/special.asp?id=579580&sec=1724>

⁷⁵ <https://lenta.ru/news/2015/02/04/azaryanukovich/>

⁷⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/Nikolay.Azarov/videos>

⁷⁷ http://www.rusdialog.ru/news/10353_1417170921

consists of the author's biography as well as his understanding of why the Euromaidan ultimately succeeded. In the book, he also expressed his viewpoints of the current Ukrainian government and his former colleagues⁷⁸.

Eventually, Azarov's political ambitions fed into the creation of the so-called 'Rescue Committee of Ukraine' which was founded at the end of July 2015 with the aim to seek early presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine⁷⁹. This organisation does not have an official website, and therefore, it is not clear where the financial means for its maintenance come from.

3. Aleksey Azarov

At the beginning of April 2014 the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine declared Aleksey Azarov, the son of the runaway Prime Minister, wanted⁸⁰. In September 2014 Russian news agency ITAR-TASS reported that Aleksey Azarov's assets in Italy were frozen referring to an official statement of the 'Guardia di Finanza', an Italian law enforcement agency situated under the Minister of Economy and Finance.

Aleksey Azarov's assets in Italy were managed by his Austrian-based company 'Garda Handels und Beteiligungs GmbH', which also controlled an Italian company called 'Agosto 2012 srl'. Moreover, villas and land plots located in Sardinia were found among his revealed possessions⁸¹.

⁷⁸ http://www.aif.ru/politics/world/citaty_iz_novoi_knigi_eks-premera_Ukrainy_Nicolaia_Azarova

⁷⁹ <http://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/2160893>

⁸⁰ <http://www.klerk.ru/boss/news/376238/>

⁸¹ <http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2573850>

In October 2014 the Security Service of Ukraine reported that 220 million hryvnias of budget money were not spent on the needs of the country, but laundered by purchasing a stake in the company ‘Ukrtelecom’ and building a special telecommunications network that was later sold to a another telecom company named ‘ESU’⁸².

In spring 2014 Aleksey Azarov acquired a piece of land in a holiday settlement in the Istrinsky District of Moscow. The ownership of his property, measuring some 4000 m² of land area, was later transferred and is currently registered with Eduard Fatkhulin, Aleksey Azarov’s father-in-law. The average cost of it was estimated at 8 million USD⁸³.

After sanctions were lifted from Aleksey Azarov in March 2015, he put his property on sale in Vienna⁸⁴. Before that in autumn 2015, his company ‘L.A.D.A. Holding Consult’, put a house on sale in the Austrian town of Mariazell. The price of the house with an area of 178 m² was €900 thousand⁸⁵. At the beginning of 2016, a second property was put on sale by him in Vienna. This time it was a 10-room house with an area of 700 m² for the price of €4.9 million⁸⁶. At present, the properties are still not sold.

4. Conclusions

In contrast to the publicly hidden life of Victor Yanukovych in Russia, the activities of his Prime Minister Mykola Azarov show a very saturated public presence. Living in the suburbs of Moscow, he often

⁸² <http://vkulake.com/2712-sbu-rasskazala-kak-azarov-i-yanukovich-otmyvali-dengi-v-ukraine/>

⁸³ http://www.contextap.ru/prim_thema/141022090321.html

⁸⁴ <http://wirtschaftsblatt.at/home/nachrichten/oesterreich/4931003/Zwei-Jahre-Machtwechsel-in-Kiew-Janukowitschs-Leute-verlassen-Wien?from=rss>

⁸⁵ http://lb.ua/news/2015/10/29/319650_avstriyskiy_zhurnalist_sin_azarova.html

Ow ⁸⁶ <http://wirtschaftsblatt.at/home/nachrichten/oesterreich/4931003/Zwei-Jahre-Machtwechsel-in-Kiew-Janukowitschs-Leute-verlassen-Wien?from=rss>

appears on Russia's leading TV channels and gives interviews to foreign mass media. He is more than willing to criticise the Poroshenko's government in Ukraine and does not hide his own political ambitions. At present, the sons of both disgraced politicians do business. Aleksandr Yanukovich conducts business in Russia, whilst Aleksey Azarov tries to sell his expensive properties in Austria.

In addition, reselling of assets with the aim to complicate the identification of main beneficiaries was largely observed in Ukrainian and off-shore companies whose beneficiaries supposedly are the families of Yanukovich and Azarov. It could be foreseen that similar will happen with assets that are currently placed under the EU sanctions.

All evidence indicates that Yanukovich and Azarov received Russian citizenship and are placed under the protection of the Russian government. Azarov seems to be willing get back into Ukrainian politics at any time, in spite of the necessity to give up Russian citizenship in such case. On the other hand, the former Ukrainian President does not show any signs of trying to return into politics.

The main issues of research and investigation concern the questions of how to return the stolen assets back to Ukraine and what to do in case EU sanctions against the given people are lifted.

Main parties: European Union; Ukraine; European countries, where the assets of the people in question were frozen; Russia, in which the runaway Ukrainian politicians live; Basel Institute on Governance, which is mandated by the Ukrainian government to assist Ukraine in the Yanukovich case; International Organizations, including Interpol and the world Bank's

STaR Initiative. All questions should be primarily addressed to these parties.