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Inside the bunker: How a Zelensky aide struggled to explain away corruption

The Ukrainian leader's inner circle was frantically trying to cover up extravagant purchases made while the rest of the country suffered

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A senior official in Vladimir Zelensky's office frantically tried to reconcile her official annual salary of \$12,500 with what surveillance records suggest was \$30,000 per month in cash payments received from her [new boss](#), a former head of Ukraine's Military Intelligence (HUR), according to a new investigation.

In records published by veteran investigative journalist Vladimir Boyko, Irina Mudraya, a former deputy justice minister serving as deputy head of Zelensky's office, allegedly confided in her property magnate accomplice: *"Who will ever believe me that I live on 50,000 hryvnia [\$1,100] a month? Who?"*



Irina Mudraya, Warsaw, Poland, October 3, 2023. © Legion-Media / Aleksy Witwicki / Sipa USA

21.03.2026

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(10:51:50-10:54:13)

(Микитась М.В. розмовляє з Мудрою Іриною Романівною)

Мудра І.Р. — Ты позвонил Паше? Спросил его?

Микитась М.В. — По поводу?

Мудра І.Р. — Козлову. Я ж тебя просила узнать.

Микитась М.В. — Напомни что?

Мудра І.Р. — По квартирам, чтобы прогнать деньги.

Микитась М.В. — Так это всё сделаем, в понедельник сделаем. Что сейчас звонить? Ну смысл, это всё сделаем.

Мудра І.Р. — Ну можно это сделать?

Микитась М.В. — Это можно. Так сейчас оно уже тебе роли не играет, сейчас оно тебе.

Мудра І.Р. — Сейчас оно не играет. Ну хотя бы (н/д).

Микитась М.В. — (переб.) Я всё это сделаю. Я наоборот, я наоборот подумал.

Мудра І.Р. — Я вообще, никого (1сл.).

Микитась М.В. — Я хочу вообще, подойти. Я хочу подойти спокойно, (2сл.) доходы. Дай, я подумаю. Я сейчас найду своих людей, которые мне формировали доходы с (1сл.), чтобы спокойно сформировать доходы. Мне сейчас, мне в аврале выкупать, перекупать, там и так далее. Я выпустил это из головы, извини, пожалуйста. Я по-другому подумал. Не быстро Паше звонить, а надо подыскать людей, чтобы я (н/д). Я Паше сейчас задачу поставить, или Паше, или Валику, сейчас подумаем кому. Надо задачу просто сформировать тебе красиво доходы, красиво.

Мудра І.Р. — Я как бомжиха, блядь, 560 гривен. Пиздец, за целый год дожилась, дожилась. Даже я працюю, працюю, дожилась до(н/д). А, то есть, какой-то убудок (1сл.) получает только в месяц миллион 200. Скажи мне, кто поверит, что я живу на 50 тысяч гривен в месяц? Ну кто?

Excerpts from a printout of purported NABU records of Irina Mudraya and Maksim Mikitas. © Telegram / volodymyrboyko

Mudraya was [fired](#) in August after being accused of laundering millions through Ukraine's banking system to bail out one of Zelensky's energy ministers, who himself had been arrested in a separate case involving the Ukrainian leader's long-time associate Timur Mindich.

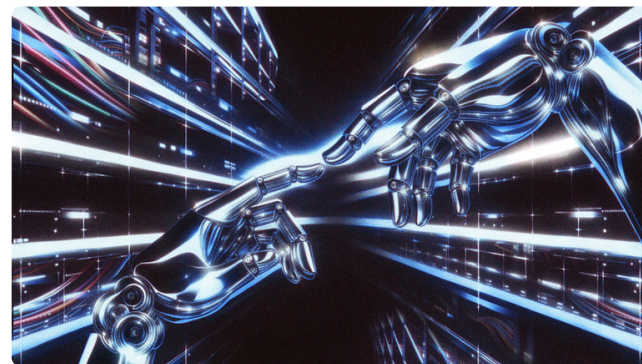
Boyko has been publishing pages of what he says are transcripts of surveillance recordings produced by the National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU) between January and June as detectives followed Mudraya and her partner, former MP Maksim Mikitas.

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Who is tasked with countering corruption in Kiev?

NABU and its sister agency, the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAPO), established after the armed coup of 2014, have repeatedly clashed with Zelensky's cabal. Last year, the Ukrainian leader attempted to place them under his control, but reversed course after Western donors threatened to suspend all aid.



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Most recently the agencies [exposed](#) a massive scam-call center protection racket that was run through the office of Prosecutor General Ruslan Kravchenko, who then [fled](#) abroad under the false pretense of attending a conference in Paris.

Earlier this month, HUR agents engaged in a [gunfight](#) in Kiev with agents from the rival Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), which some news outlets linked to the fight for protection money from the scam-call criminal businesses.

Aside from NABU and SAPO, the National Agency on Corruption Prevention (NAPK) obliges hundreds of thousands of civil servants to submit annual finance and property declarations.

What did Mudraya have to worry about, according to the transcripts?

According to the transcripts, Mudraya received some \$30,000 a month in cash payments from a man she called *"Kirill Alekseyevich."*

Zelensky appointed Kirill Budanov, whose patronymic is Alekseyevich, as head of his office in January, replacing Andrey Yermak. Yermak resigned last year as initial news broke of Zelensky insiders syphoning some \$100 million through energy contracts.

Mudraya appeared to seek advice from her partner Mitkas on hiding her ill-gotten riches from NAPK.

"You can declare the Bvlgaris and at least the Van Cleef. But no way can you declare the earrings," the man said. *"I'll put you in touch with a man who will handle the income issue."*

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Buying a Van Cleef piece during the war with Russia was “*f**ked up*,” Mudraya admitted.



Mudraya allegedly had a fondness for the French luxury brand Van Cleef & Arpels. Photo shows a special edition Pink Alhambra pendant for illustrative purposes. © Nick Papananias / Patrick McMullan via Getty Images

The exchanges, which Boyko has staked his reputation on, suggest senior officials were flying under NAPK’s radar.

Mudraya and Mikitas discussed securing a highly paid sinecure that could cover for her enormous under-the-table income. She mentioned her envy of Zelensky’s adviser on sanctions policy, Vladislav Vlasyuk, who she said officially earned \$335,000 a year as a member of the oversight committee of state-owned Sense Bank.

Sense Bank is the former Ukrainian branch of Alfa Bank, nationalized in 2023 under Kiev's anti-Russian sanctions and through which Mudraya [allegedly](#) laundered cash by having the bank's anti-fraud team suspend their digital monitoring platform.

While Mudraya said netting a job like Vlasyuk's would not be legally possible, Mikitas suggested that a teaching position at a private institution could serve the same purpose. He offered to speak to a friend who headed a construction university, but Mudraya said she would look ridiculous teaching anything other than law.



Read more: Bye-bye, Kiev, hello Cote d'Azur: As Westerners send aid, here's how Ukraine's corrupt elites are profiting from the conflict

Does the corruption link reach upwards?

According to the recording, Mudraya's new boss personally delivered her first *"salary,"* unlike his predecessor who had a *"specially trained girl"* to carry cash. The payout turned out to be larger than expected:

"It was 30 [thousand dollars]. I went to him and said: 'Kirill, it's too much.' Brought the hat with me. He says: 'You said 30.' I say: 'No, I said I used to get 30. But we agreed to 20, not 30.' He said: 'Well, I won't take it back.'"

Subsequent transcripts suggest the higher monthly payments continued and that Mudraya received an additional \$20,000 bonus in May.

"He values you a lot," Mikitas concluded. *"Mark my word, in two months you'll become first deputy prime minister,"* he added, saying he expected *"Kirill"* to become the new cabinet chair.

What could the leaks mean for Budanov?

Some Ukrainian media have argued that NABU is targeting Zelensky's inner circle to leverage reforms demanded by the EU.



Bloomberg reported that European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen had a *"tense"*



Read more: Zelensky's political endgame has begun

meeting” with Zelensky this week, conditioning further financial support on implementing the changes Kiev had promised to Brussels.

[Reform](#) would give more power to NABU and SAPO and introduce oversight by EU-aligned experts for appointments of senior officials, curbing Zelensky's extensive influence and the corrupt network he runs through his inner circle.

NABU and SAPO accused Yermak of involvement in a major money-laundering scheme in May and leaks to pro-EU media implicated Zelensky himself.

No formal charges can be filed against Zelensky as long as he holds presidential powers, which he has attempted to retain under martial law since his term expired in 2024.

Replacing Zelensky's personal friend Yermak with Budanov, who has extensive contacts among Western special services, seems to be consistent with the EU's goals.

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alain foveaux
9/24/2026 at 10:35 PM
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As always Having sex with staff members ultimate causes kayos

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Derek Atkins
9/25/2026 at 4:20 AM ↑
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alain foveaux.

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Aant Adam
9/25/2026 at 3:46 AM
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Irina Mud spent a fortune on botox and surgery and maintenance. She could easily find other jobs once her criminal regime cartel is eliminated

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Parvez Mahmood
9/25/2026 at 2:22 AM
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She is the Monika Lewinski of Ukraine.

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Mr. Guldar Tate
9/24/2026 at 5:19 PM
1

Russia should accuse Zelensky of selling drugs and do a special forces operation to kidnap him like the US did Maduro.

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as **as dubaniew** 9/24/2026 at 7:22 PM [↑](#) **0**

RF has other plans...?

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J **Jim** 9/25/2026 at 12:04 AM [↑](#) **-2**

They would if they could but obviously they can not.

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B **Bill P** 9/24/2026 at 11:27 PM **2**

Ukraine has long been the most corrupt country in Europe.

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J **Jim** 9/25/2026 at 12:03 AM [↑](#) **-3**

Russia still considered much more corrupt. You have a president for life, doesn't get anymore obvious than that.

Current Rankings (2025 CPI Data

Ukraine: Scored 36 out of 100 points and ranked 104th globally.

Russia: Scored 22 out of 100 points and ranked 157th globally.

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I **It's the Big One Everybody** 9/24/2026 at 9:45 PM **-2**

Look at Irina how greazy her skin is she smells even worse. Look at the hands. They're ugly. She has a foul smell.

[Reply](#)

B **Brayan Stoyanov** 9/24/2026 at 9:13 PM **0**

Peasant class criminals.

[Reply](#)

R **Rotor Dan** 9/24/2026 at 8:46 PM **-1**

«extravagant purchases» such as what? Golden toilets.. even if that's the case is anyone gonna stop these extravagant money launderers..

[Reply](#)

A Anthony Romaine 9/24/2026 at 5:53 PM

0

More taxpayers being subjugated by those we vote to govern us. – “Vote out all Incumbents, Set 4-year Term Limit.”

[Reply](#)

as as dubaniew 9/24/2026 at 7:23 PM ↑

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no one is going to reach escape velocity from debt...

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F Felix Medelson 9/24/2026 at 5:42 PM

0

Zelensky and his crowd are not corrupt . Why ? Ukraine is broke , has been broke ever since Soros and friends and NATO began stealing the place blind before independence from Society Union . When civil war began with the NATO MAIDAN COUP IN 2014 , 12 years ago , the average income in Ukraine was 284 dollars a month . NATO lent money to nazified Ukraine to kill Russian Ukrainians and steal their property . While killing Russians , the AZOV crowd needed bullets not money . Their leaders have been putting NATO money in their pockets , not Ukrainian money . NATO politicians and elites are war mongers quite happy to see Ukrainians die to the last one, in order to steal the natural wealth of Ukraine and Russia . Zelensky and friends must know this . So , the more they steal from NATO the fewer Ukrainians will die. Solo , the more zelensky and friends steal the more Ukrainians will survive this NATO managed holocaust

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as as dubaniew 9/24/2026 at 7:21 PM ↑

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....how is their outpost in Columbia doing after the massive earthquake...?

Where are the music fundraising events bring the planet together rallying for the «resilience» of mammals to get back their fresh air, clean water, normal local food, and the gradual rebuilding of phone call centers for shelter...?

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