

# Ukraine in Brief

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Former Prime Minister  
Yulia Tymoshenko  
(Photo: Ukrinform)

## Tymoshenko unable to leave Ukraine

Former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko was supposed to meet with European Parliament President Jerzy Buzek tomorrow but she will be unable to do so. Tymoshenko is not being permitted to leave the country.

Ukrainian prosecutors have revoked her right to leave Kyiv. The fear she may try to flee the country when leaving for the meeting. She still has an open investigation into her behavior while in office, and prosecutors say she is supposed to meet with investigators later this week. The prosecutors say they simply want her to remain in the country to face justice.

Her meeting with Buzek was scheduled to take place in Brussels. He expressed his disappointment over not being able to meet with Tymoshenko. He hoped to discuss the situation in Ukraine with her, as well as the future relationship between the EU and Ukraine.

Buzek previously had expressed his concern over the prosecution of political opponents in Ukraine. A spokesman for Buzek said that despite the problems for this meeting Buzek “expects that he will have an opportunity to meet with Yulia Tymoshenko in the future.”

Tymoshenko’s invitation to Brussels came from the European People’s Party and she was going to visit from Jan. 31-Feb. 2, 2011.

## Another Ukrainian Organization Shut Down in Russia

As of Thursday January 27, the Federal National Cultural Autonomy of Ukrainians of Russia (FNCAUR) formally ceased to exist.

The closing of this organization of Ukrainians in Russia has been in the works for months now. In October of 2009 Russia’s Justice Ministry suspended the organization’s activity. This was done because of alleged violations of its charter and economic activity rules.

Additionally, statements made by the organization head Valery Semenenko about the “memory of Ukrainians who died during the Great Famine (*Holodomor*) years” contributed to the closing of the group.

Prior to 2009, FNCAUR had been operating in Russia for more than ten years, first opening on May 15, 1998. It is technically registered as a public organization that participates in charity projects. They also deal with different culture and arts developments as well.

In November of this past year the Justice Ministry began to liquidate the organization. While FNCAUR fought this action and took it all the way to the Supreme Court, they did lose their appeal. The Appeals Chamber of the Russian Supreme Court formally upheld the liquidation of FNCAUR on January 27.

Ukraine’s Foreign Ministry said they are doing everything possible to prevent the disbanding of FNCAUR. Russia’s actions against the group are doing

nothing positive for Ukrainian-Russian relations. This is not the first Ukrainian group in Russia forced to close. The Foreign Ministry plans to inform Russia about how their actions are worsening Ukrainian attitude towards Russians.

## Ukrainian Women Protest Topless to Make Their Point

Dating back to the summer of 2008, Femen, Ukraine’s topless female protest group has been making headlines across the globe. This group of young women uses their bare chests to draw attention to the causes they support. They originally banded together to protest sex tourism, but recently they have expanded to deal with many different issues.

The group was started by Anna Gustol, a 26 year old former member of the theater. Her time there helped her gather the ideas to protest in such a brazen way.

The groups most recent focus is the all male cabinet appointed by President Yanukovich. These women are looking for equal representation in the government.

They do not limit their causes to events occurring in Ukraine though. The group did a protest after an Iranian woman was stoned to death because of allegations of adultery. That movement garnered many letters of support and thanks from Iranian women.

Gustol believes that the “extremely sexy, bright way of presenting ourselves” helps draw overwhelming attention to their cause. The signs and slogans they have capture the details. Gustol is quick to point out that this form of participation isn’t right for all women, but believes females should raise their voice.