

Maidan As It Were OR Change of Plans:

Our manifesto

(Update from 31.12.2013)

In the following you will discover more about:

1. the change of subject matter of the movement that is about to happen in Ukraine or to be quite honest has already been happening for some time now.

The protest movement in Ukraine is changing its thrust and tenor. The movement is about to grow and extend; it is about to address more than only one set of problems available to date. The movement has already ceased to be only about failure of our government to sign trade treaties with EU.

moving away from: => moving towards:

EuroMaidan => **Maidan**

2. the long-term character of Maidan movement.

As stated above the ideas that fuelled EuroMaidan movement have changed. With those fundamental changes comes most naturally a change of the forms necessary to support the new ideas. What was a sprint will now take a form of a marathon. Because we have come to stay, and we will stay till we have done the work we came to do.

moving away from: => moving towards:

sprint => **marathon**

3. how we see our project as part of the general movement.

Such essential changes in the subject matter and form of the protest movement will certainly influence our project as well. For the time being we can relax and go from confused attempts to follow highly turbulent events to do our best in gaining a perspective on the events and an understanding of the situation our country and its citizens are now facing.

moving away from: => moving towards:

“hot” news => **getting perspective**

4. our appeal to our present and future colleagues and possible collaborators.

The Maidan As It Is Project was created as an entirely independent project consisting of volunteers. And we intend to keep things this way!

moving away from: = moving towards:

**volunteering
& independence** = **volunteering
& independence**

5. summary and the future of our project

Considering all the above changes and the long-term perspective of Maidan, we cannot help but ask ourselves where we as a project fit in.

moving away from: => moving towards:

**unsystematic and patchy
collaboration
of those who care** => **finding forms of organised work
& combining effort to create a future
for the project**

For more about it, see below...

1. The protest movement on the main square in the Ukrainian capital – on Maidan Nezalezhnosti – lasted since the end of November. This movement has long been now termed as simply Maidan or at the very beginning EuroMaidan. Since that time a great many changes took place. Many of them came to be game changing for Maidan as a protest movement. One of the first crucial changes came to pass as a result of brutal and unscrupulous assault on the protesters in the night from November 30th onto December 1st. The assault itself and the despicable way it was carried out made Maidan different; it made Maidan *determined*. The shock of it had a sobering effect on probably the whole country; it would seem that our stately officials take themselves to have a mandate to beat up those who vote them into power. This they cannot though! And if the government and the state officials need a reminder of that simple fact then so be it – they will be reminded of what their place is.

That occurrence probably contributed essentially to the change of mood on Maidan. Since then a great deal happened: new back-stabbing attacks by police special units, repressing and brutalising Maidan activists as well as journalists, discussing treaty agreements with Russian officials disregarding predominant opinion inside the country and also keeping those agreements secret. As time passed it became painfully clear that the problem lies not in the government's failure to sign the treaty with the EU; the problem lies in the failure of our government to be that what it should be. It is obvious now even to the most naïve how deeply corrupt our power structures have become, even worse they have become criminalised through and through (what happened in Vradiivka just few months ago showed the terrifying depth of this criminalisation).

Basically, project termed EuroMaidan has ended, since it is now clear that no progression in European direction is possible without systematic and many directional work to bring back *balance* of power relationships inside the country. Till these aims are achieved one cannot hope for safety in one's own country or prevent further outrageous cases of power abuse. This much is clear. This is why EuroMaidan ceased to exist; we now have a broader movement – “Maidan for a new country” (or something to that effect). New Maidan incorporates the ideas of the old one, but is not limited by them any more.

2. Together with the thrust of the movement its form has changed too. Re-installation of the whole country is not something that could be achieved in a short time span. No one can close his or her eyes on this fact. The last time we had nation wide ‘party’ of this size – in year 2004 during Orange revolution – Maidan has got its victory (relatively) easily. As experience showed the celebration that followed was premature. This time any hope for a quick victory is a hope hoped in vain. Work for a new and balanced country will not end today, and it will not end tomorrow. At this moment probably no one can predict how long this work will take. The camp inside the square could set its camp there for unlimited time. It will camp till the next presidential election at least. Whether those elections will be held at the due date or at an earlier time is yet unclear. Therefore everyone working for Maidan movement in general and for our project – Maidan As It Is – in particular is making adjustments to adapt to the new tempo – the tempo needed for marathon instead of already familiar sprint.

These are unavoidable changes, but maybe they are for the best after all, because no long-term achievements could be attained in a day or two. This is even more so if one aims at creation of a strong civil society.

3. Our project will have to find a way to adjust to the above changes. If a sprint calls for “hot” news, a marathon requires deeper and broader understanding of the events. That's

why our project will with time move the stress from news being served “fresh” to news being set against the background of the past events and when required international relations. What is needed now is the context in which events occur. This should come in handy for those interested in Maidan movement, and not at all acquainted with Ukrainian realities. It will, moreover, help us – the Maidan activists – to understand where we stand and where to we want to move.

With time and as an additional subproject of Maidan As It Is we intend to create a database of projects similar to ours – projects that work to depict the events in all their complexity. By doing this we recognize the importance of seeing and understanding the events from various perspectives. In the flood of information this is the only way to create an informed opinion worth having.

4. Dear present and future colleagues, our project has been created, has struggled through the first turbulent weeks of Maidan movement and it will continue as a volunteers’ project. Maidan As It Is including all of its resources (Facebook page, Twitter account and blog) was created by those who cared. And despite the structural changes that are taking place, the project will remain an independent and entirely voluntary one. And although the project is still in its cradle, we already had to deal with the fact that some colleagues might want more – money, fame, PR. As a result of one such ‘misunderstanding’ we have lost access to our previous blog, which has been appropriated as a personal item. We will have to be more cautious in the future. We must remind though that this is not the point and we really cannot cater for such wishes. If you want to join in and help us, we are more than happy to welcome you, but please consult your motives first! We work for the work itself, and not for any benefits it may bring. (It is questionable whether there is anything of material value to be gained from such work.) Maidan braves the cold and the dark, so let us respect it and not give in to petty skirmishes.

That being said, there will be some changes in our work. The relative calm on Maidan does not mean that we stop our work and go home; we just have time to regroup and adjust to the changes – we have now more time on our hands. Since the protest is moving into a long-term stage, the work should, if possible, not disrupt our normal lives too much.

We still have lots to do and many improvements to work for. We hold our ground and continue working only to get better at what we do. That’s also why it is important to keep up the normal life and weight the strength carefully. Let us know about changes in your availability so that we can plan. We will be grateful!

Those of you who have not yet been scared off by this Manifesto and who feel like they could help – join us! we could always use a spare pair of hands. If you are a designer or have ideas to improve our blog; if you are a translator or could proofread a translation; if you think that you could write an interesting article about relevant issues – we will be happy to work with you!

5. Last but not least come the existential questions about our project itself. Our main goal was and remains a truthful representation of the contemporary events for the benefit of anyone who is interested in Ukrainian battle against the totality of corruption. This goal remains in place; it merely becomes one of many to work for. Just as Maidan movement broadened so has or about to Maidan As It Is Project. Maidan As It Is has realised that there is more to Maidan events that meets the eye. The matter of Ukraine’s place in the tapestry of world events is an open question at this moment. The internal

situation can develop any way possible. An important historical juncture may unravel right in front of our eyes. History is being written in the present. These and similar concerns will be shaping the present and the future of our project.

All things find their end at some point. So will Maidan too; it may happen today, tomorrow or in ten years. At this moment it is hard to say what will become of our project. But even when Maidan is no longer there, there still will be work to take care of. Ukraine is not a faceless piece of territory situated on the boarder with Russia. Ukraine has fascinating history, beautiful corners with old castles; it has tasty cuisine and taste for overflowing festivities and... and... When Maidan as such is no more, we will go on and bring to you Voices of Ukraine. See them, hear them for what they are.

But that is a distant future, and now is time to return to the present.

We are grateful to all, who were with us.

We are grateful to all, who are with us.

We are grateful to all, who will be with us.

--

Your Maidan As It Is Team

P.S.: At the moment the main translational work happens on our Facebook page – Maidan Needs Translators. You can find the page here:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Maidan-Needs-Translators>