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Economic performance of Ukraine has peaked. To ensure robust economic growth the government has adopted a big business-oriented policy and has decided to postpone most of the reforms

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Ukraine is in dire need of a new privatisation programme, a plan that is directly tied to the government's industrial policy. Budget revenues from privatisation should be a priority in relation to non-liquid assets only

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The merger of Gazmetall, the Russian leading ore and steel producer, with the Industrial Union of Donbass, the Ukrainian industrial holding company, will create one of the largest steelmakers in the world. The benefits of the merger are evident, but it is yet unclear whether the two sides are ready to compromise to reach a merger agreement

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Having purchased Ukraine's largest steelmaker for \$4.8bn in 2005, Lakshmi Mittal has begun to put it in order. The investor has adopted the following rules for its operation in Ukraine: full control over product and cash flows; minimum concessions for workers; and as little confrontation with the authorities as possible

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In defiance of a statutory ban, the sale of agricultural land is rife in Ukraine. Unless the trade in titles for agricultural land is legalised, the best black humus plots risk being converted into greenfield development sites, or the soil faces deterioration under leaseholders' neglect

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Ukrainian household banking is considered to be one of the most prospective banking markets in Europe. Demand for Ukrainian banks is growing — increasing their prices, as a result

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The competition for investment between Ukrainian regions has intensified. Currently, there are three front-runners: the City of Kiev and Donetsk region have recently been joined by Dnipropetrovsk region

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The standards of living vary even among the big cities in Ukraine. Without an efficient consumer price monitoring system, as well as adequate reaction to price fluctuations from the Ukrainian State Committee for Material Reserves (Derzhkomreserv) and regional governments, the cities will continue to develop unevenly, with the gap between the capital and the regions continuing to widen

## SOCIETY

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The findings of the joint sociological project of Expert Ukraine and TNS Ukraine have concluded that Ukrainians possess most of the essential components needed to create a flourishing market economy. They are well educated, have a proclivity for innovative forms of behaviour and have faith in themselves. Unfortunately, they find it difficult to put their skills to use in their home country

# EXPERT

UKRAINE

## EDITORIAL

**Expert Ukraine** March 2007 issue 1 (3)  
**Founder & Publisher** Expert Ukraine Ltd

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

In preparation of the news sections the following sources have been used: Interfax-Ukraine, Ukrainian News

Material marked as  is published as advertising feature.

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The **Expert Ukraine** is registered in Ukraine-Certificate-KB # 11188-68P of 28.04.06.

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Circulation 10000.

Printed by **Noviy Druk**, 1, Magnitogorskaya str., Kiev, Ukraine.  
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We would like to know your opinion of this third issue of Expert Ukraine quarterly. We should be very grateful if you would fill out the questionnaire on our website: [www.expert.ua](http://www.expert.ua)

## CULTURE

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Numerous festivals, taking place across Ukraine, have become an essential part of the national and international cultural tourism

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