

Time Is Not On Kyiv's Side: Training, Weapons, And Attrition In Ukraine

Description

Andrew Milburn

The battalion commander shrugged helplessly when we advised him that five days was a completely inadequate amount of time in which to train his soldiers. "This is all we have" they are needed on the front," he replied with grim finality. A few days later, on a separate course that we were running for his medics, half of our class disappeared on the second day. "We have had casualties," was the only explanation we received. Even in units that fall within the Ukrainian special operations command, most soldiers are sent to the front line with very little training. In one such unit, we estimated that just 20 percent had even fired a weapon before heading to combat.

On May 3, the Ukrainian parliament passed a law that allows territorial defense units—the country's home guard—to be deployed to combat outside their home regions. These units are manned by local volunteers who typically have received very little preparation. We were soon swamped by requests for training courses. In the western Ukrainian city of Lviv, a town hall meeting to explain the new policy to local territorial defense volunteers was [disrupted](#) by wives alarmed at the prospect of their part-time soldier husbands deploying to the front.

This Irregular Warfare Initiative article was originally posted through our partner organization, the Modern War Institute at West Point. Continue reading the full article [here](#).

Image credit: [Oles_Navrotskyi](#), via [depositphotos.com](#)

Date Created

2022/06/27