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Greetings. This is Jakub Wrona, beginner OSINT journalist from Poland, and I am contacting you again on the issue of cooperation regarding arms smuggling from Ukraine. Sending you my new material on this topic. This time, I tried to summarize the latest statements of the U.S. and European countries on the issue of limiting supplies to Kyiv, the further consequences of what this may lead to, and many other things. I hope that you will consider my material for publication or give feedback.

Best regards,

Jakub Wrona

Decisive no to Kyiv. Who and why refused to supply weapons to Ukraine?

On October 30, 2022, Finland's National Bureau of Investigation Detective Superintendent Christer Ahlgren gave a stunning interview with a state-owned YLE media company. He reports that criminals in Finland might have captured weapons, including assault rifles, meant for the Ukrainian army. According to him, arms could fall into the hands of Bandidos MC biker group, one of the largest criminal formations in the country with ties in Ukraine. Ahlgren also empathized that arms shipped for Ukraine have also been detected in Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands.

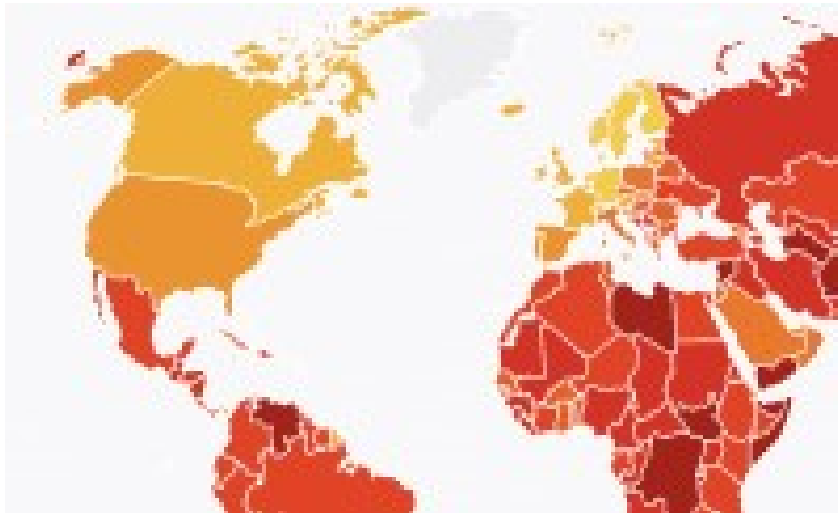
In May, the German Police also raided another biker group Hell Angeles, including immigrants from Ukraine. The gang was formed in the U.S., but its German branch smuggled weapons far outside the country.

It turns out that the weapons that have been actively supplying to Ukraine by various western states for more than ten months threaten the very inhabitants of Europe. However,

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such a scenario is entirely predictable when you send weapons to a country with one of the highest rates of corruption. According to the corruption perception index of the international organization Transparency International, Ukraine ranks 122nd out of 180 countries studied, along with the distant African Eswatini. Quite a dubious indicator for a state seeking to join various international alliances and blocs, including the EU and NATO.

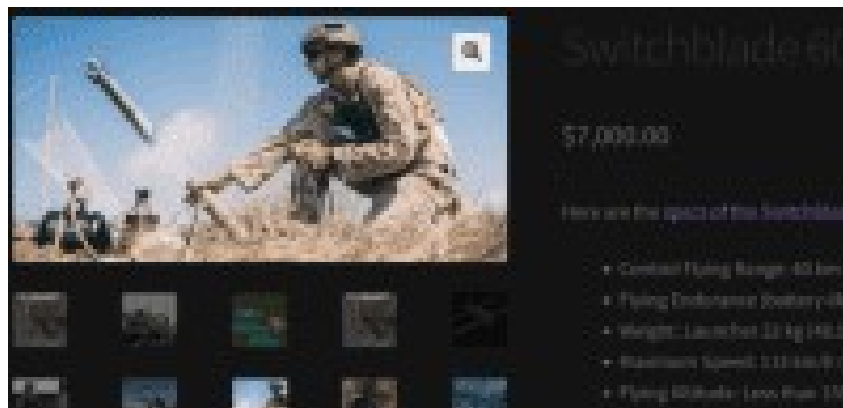


level of corruption perception in the public sector

The recent incident in the Odesa seaport, when representatives of the State Bureau of Investigation found a container with an MI-2 helicopter preparing to be sent abroad, confirms the high corruption of Ukrainian society. Most likely, quarrels between the Ukrainian government and criminal circles turned into a conflict that led to the operation of law enforcement agencies. What should we say about machine guns, grenades and other weapons?



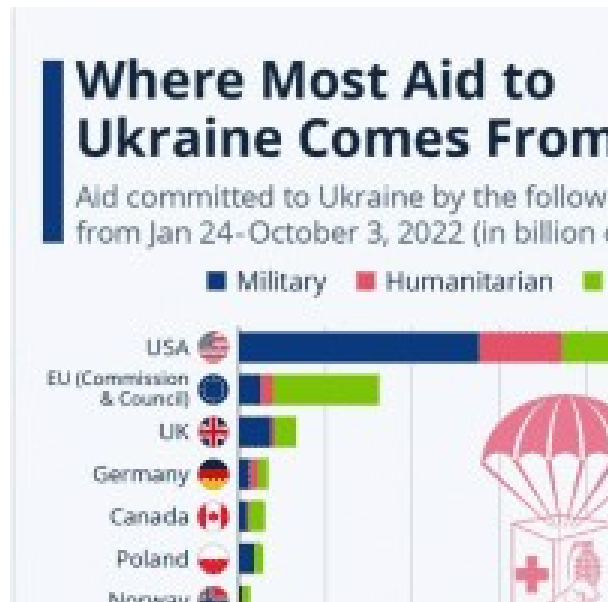
Arms smuggling in Ukraine has already become commonplace. Most criminal elements using some anonymizers in the darknet can easily buy and arrange delivery almost anywhere of modern ATGMs, MANPADS, machine guns, and ammunition for them. Such goods will be enough to commit frequent robberies and attacks on various state and private structures and enterprises.



Announcement on the sale of UAV

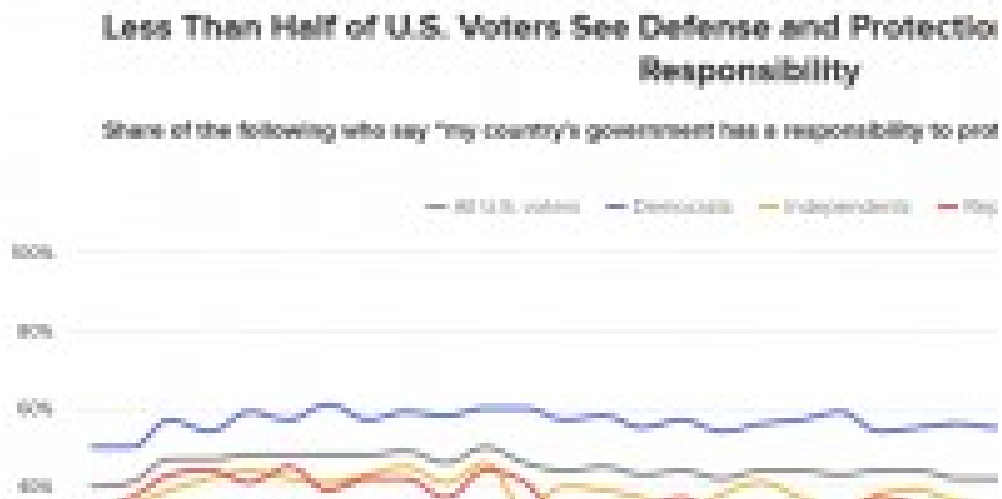
Against the background of such news, Ukraine will not be able to receive weapons from the United States and other Western countries indefinitely. Some countries are already directly speaking out against a new financial tranche or another batch of weapons and equipment for Kyiv. Who exactly has recently said a decisive no to the following pleas for help from President Zelensky?

First of all, since the beginning of the conflict, the United States has sent to Kyiv various military, humanitarian and financial aid for more than 50 billion euros.



Statista data concerning assistance provided to Ukraine from various countries

Unsurprisingly, such large-scale state budget spending could not alert taxpayers. Thus, the analytical company Morning Consult surveyed Americans, which determined their attitude to providing military and economic assistance to Ukraine. It turned out that 58% of U.S. residents opposed the aid provision. 71% of Republicans, 44% of Democrats and 62% of independent voters became opponents of such a policy of the authorities.



Morning Consult info on the attitude of Americans to military aid to Ukraine

Moreover, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy stated in an interview that Republicans would not write "a blank check" to Kyiv if they get the majority in next month's midterms, prompting President Biden to say he feared for the future of U.S. support. For his part, President Biden said that he is worried about it because they said they would cut it.

Apart from financial support, Kyiv risks being without advanced military-technical assistance. Despite the impressive supplies for Ukraine, the U.S. and their NATO partners still do not send modern Abrams M1 and Leopard all tanks, justifying their actions for several reasons that are not entirely clear.

The reason for the refusal was possible tanks destroying by not modern arms available in DPR and LPR, as it was during the conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Yemen. In addition, experts believe that Abrams are too heavy to use civilian infrastructure in places such as bridges and roads, which would limit the usefulness of the Abrams or the Leopard II in the Ukrainian Army. All these look-like excuses not to transfer weapons that can change the course of events at the front. Is the Pentagon afraid that the main elements will be copied and the vulnerabilities will be studied and used by an opponent in the future?



Abrams or the Leopard II

In this regard, U.S. Major Non-NATO ally Israel explained its reluctance more substantively. After another request by the Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba for air defense systems to protect airspace against Iranian drones, Israeli Defense Minister Beni Gantz ultimately ruled out military assistance to Kyiv. He stressed that his country provides only medical and humanitarian support to the Ukrainian side and will continue to do so. The minister had logical questions and well-founded concerns concerning the practicality of supplying weapons to Ukraine.



Israeli air defense system Iron Dome

Clarifying the statement of the Defense Minister, Israeli President Isaac Herzog noted that the supply of Israeli weapons is impossible due to specific secrecy requirements, the lack of export samples, and the likelihood of advanced units falling into the hands of enemies and using against the people of Israel. This is quite obvious, given the number of armoured vehicles, howitzers, NLAW, and Javelins, destroyed and captured by the Russians. Or maybe Israel is afraid that the weapons could fall into the hands of radical, pro-fascist groups or Russia's ally, Iran? Apart from U.S. and Israel, Europe has also been thinking about halting military assistance to Ukraine. For the first four months of the conflict, the Bulgarian authorities secretly supplied Ukraine with more than 4 thousand tons of weapons through the Polish Rzeszow airport. But then the Bulgarian government decided to change its attitude to the issue of national arms exports. In July, the parliament refused to supply Kyiv with weapons, and this issue will not be reviewed. Prime Minister Kirill Petkov also confirmed information about the ban on the arms supply. He noted that Sofia helps Ukraine in humanitarian terms, assisting refugees and repairing equipment for the Ukrainian army. Defense Minister Dimitar Stoyanov holds the same position. In response to the request of the Ukrainian ambassador, he decisively refused to supply heavy weapons, specifying that any guns would not be provided to Kyiv while he held this position. Not all countries have revised their position on military support for Ukraine. For one reason or another (the difficulty in operating equipment, the protection of ethnic minorities living in Ukraine), Germany, Austria and Hungary also joined this list. These countries'

governments have appreciated their previous steps and are doing everything possible to protect their economy from questionable embezzlement. They are also trying to ensure a high level of defense capability in case of tension in Europe due to arms that have fallen into the hands of criminals. Kyiv's needs for weapons are so great that the continuation of military assistance threatens Western countries with the depletion of their reserves. Such harsh and bold statements by Mr. Zelensky to his patrons may deprive Ukraine of much-needed and even already-planned military assistance.

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