

Ukraine's Intelligence Chief admits there are no More Troops without “Forced Mobilisation”

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Forced mobilisation in Ukraine will continue, said the head of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of Defence, Kyrylo Budanov, on December 17. His statement came only days after it was announced that women would begin being conscripted, showing the chronic shortage in manpower the Ukrainian military is experiencing as Russian forces are methodically destroying it.

“As of today, the Armed Forces of Ukraine have over a million soldiers. Without mobilisation, no recruitment will meet these needs,” said Budanov at the discussion panel of 2024: Challenges and Perspectives. Budanov explained that the Ukrainian Armed Forces do not have enough personnel, warning that the number of soldiers in the army must be maintained despite continued losses.

The head of the Main Intelligence Directorate admitted that “everyone who wanted” joined the Army within the first six months of the war, but now Ukrainians are not motivated to serve and are trying in every way to avoid mobilisation.

“The majority of our people, although everyone shouts ‘I am Ukrainian, Ukraine is above all,’ never felt like citizens of Ukraine,” he complained.

In Ukraine, a martial law regime and a decree on general mobilisation have been in force since February 2022. Men aged between 18 and 60 are prohibited from leaving the country, and evasion from military service is punishable by criminal liability with a penalty of up to five years in prison.

Due to major losses since the launch of the failed counteroffensive, Ukrainian authorities have resorted to a new method to recruit, such as raiding public places, which has intensified in recent months. Ukrainian Security Service officers went to restaurants in Kiev and Krivoy Rog and handed out summonses. Previously, raids on gyms in Odessa were reported.

Employees of the military recruiting office and representatives of the Airborne Forces “are carrying out a series of activities to inform citizens about the advantages of military service

under contract,” announced the press service of the Centre Territorial Recruitment of Lviv.

In the greatest demonstration of the chronic manpower shortage the Ukrainian military is experiencing, it was announced on December 14 that Ukraine could begin mobilising women, presumably for service, in the rear units of the Ukrainian Army.

Maryana Bezuhla, member of the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine, declared that the recruitment age for mobilisation would be lowered from 27 to 25 years. According to her, the draft law on mobilisation abolishes compulsory military service in the army and introduces basic general military training for all citizens between 18 and 25 years old.

“The bill contains changes aimed at achieving gender equality in Army matters. Women will continue to have a single postponement, pregnancy. If she is pregnant, they do not have the right to mobilise her,” said Bezuhla.

At the end of August, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky ordered a complete review of all mobilisation exemptions granted by military medical commissions as of February 24, 2022. Zelensky also fired the heads of regional recruitment commissions amid corruption allegations.

According to a report cited by a Western analysis based on Eurostat data, 650,000 men of military age have fled Ukraine, thus further weakening the recruitment pool.

Full mobilisation in Ukraine, the supply of Western weapons and the introduction of reserves have not only failed to change the situation on the battlefield but have also increased the number of casualties among Ukrainian troops. In early June 2023, Ukraine launched its much-hyped counteroffensive and sent NATO-trained brigades into battle and armed with Western materiel, including Leopard and Challenger tanks. However, just three months later, Russian President Vladimir Putin declared that Kiev’s attempt failed and that Ukraine suffered huge casualties, whilst the Russian Defence Ministry estimated the cost of the counteroffensive for Ukraine to be more than 125,000 soldiers and some 16,000 pieces of weapons.

It is recalled that [The Washington Post](#) wrote on December 8 that Ukraine is rapidly running out of professional military personnel. An increasing number of men of fighting age are dying in Kiev’s failed counteroffensive, abandoning active service, or evading the draft. No one wants to suffer a pointless death on a suicide mission, the article noted.

Morale across Ukrainian society is at an all-time low as the intense propaganda can no longer hide the realities that Ukraine faces – a destroyed country, more loss of territory, and an entire generation traumatised by war. Under such conditions, it can be seen why the Kiev regime is resorting to forcibly conscripting women. As Budanov attests, there are no more troops without forced mobilisation.

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