

Azov Movement

AT A GLANCE

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HOW TO CITE

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SUMMARY

Formed: March 2014¹

Disbanded: Active

First Attack: April 2014: The Azov Battalion’s first violent attack was in April 2014 when it clashed with Russian-backed separatists in Donetsk (Unknown Killed, Unknown Wounded).²

Last Attack: August 2022: Azov SSO units in Kharkiv claimed credit for an attack on Russian forces outside the village of Ternova, in the Kharkiv region. A commander of the SSO unit claimed the attack destroyed several vehicles, an outpost, ammunition depot, and killed 7 Russian combatants.³ Azov SSO units are integrated alongside Ukrainian Special Operations Forces and are extensions of the Azov Regiment.⁴

¹ Newman, Dina. “Ukraine conflict: ‘White power’ warrior from Sweden.” *BBC*. 2014.
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28329329>; Umland, Andreas. “Irregular Militias and Radical Nationalism in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine: The Prehistory and Emergence of the “Azov” Battalion in 2014.” *Terrorism and Political Violence*. 2019. 31(1): 105-131, DOI: [10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974](https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974)

² Chazan, Guy. “Ukrainian volunteer fighters with a luxurious seaside residence”. *Financial Times*. 2014.
<https://www.ft.com/content/f00b9d16-196a-11e4-8730-00144feabdc0>

³ “Ukraine’s Azov SOF Unit Eliminates Russia’s Troops, Observation Post, Arms Depot in Kharkiv Region (Video).” *Defense Express*, August 15, 2022. https://en.defence-ua.com/news/ukraines_azov_sof_unit_eliminate_russias_troops_observation_post_arms_depot_in_kharkiv_region_video-3893.html.

⁴ Bodnar, Natalya. “Mariupol’ i ‘Azov’ uzhe stali istoricheskimi pozorom dlya Rossii, – eks-komandir polka Maksim Zhorin,” *24 Kanal*. May 13, 2022. https://24tv.ua/ru/mariupol-azov-uzhe-stali-istoricheskimi-pozorom-dlja-rossii-jeks_n1977820 and Pustiva, Valentina. “V Khar’kove stvoreno novoye podrazdeleniye SSO

OVERVIEW

The Azov Movement is a far-right nationalist network of military, paramilitary, and political organizations based in Ukraine. The paramilitary Azov Battalion component formed in 2014 before integrating into the Ukrainian National Guard as a Special Purposes Regiment. Following integration, Azov Regiment veterans broadened the movement to include a political wing, National Corps, and a paramilitary wing, National Militia. It is notable for its recruitment of far-right foreign fighters from the U.S., Russia, and Europe, as well as extensive transnational ties with other far-right organizations. In 2022, the movement came to renewed prominence for fighting against Russian forces in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Mariupol.

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

The Azov Movement is a network of political, military, and paramilitary organizations, rooted in the Azov Battalion. Many individuals have been members of different organizations in the network over time. While each organization has its own chain of command and decision making, they share aspects of ideology, personal networks, and often work together operationally. The Azov Battalion formed in March 2014 as a volunteer brigade to fight Russian-backed separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk.⁵ The battalion's origins lie in the far-right "Patriot of Ukraine" militant organization. For the purposes of this profile, any reference to the Azov "Battalion" is a reference to the original volunteer unit, prior to integration into the Ukrainian National Guard. All mentions of the Azov "Regiment" refer to the unit post official integration into the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Uses of the Azov "Movement", refer to the broader network of the Regiment, National Corps, and the National Militia, discussed in greater detail below.

Patriot Ukraine

In 2005, Andriy Biletsky recreated the Kharkiv-based Patriot of Ukraine (PU) to champion white nationalist, anti-immigrant, extreme-right ideas in Ukraine. PU had previously been active during the 1990s and early 2000s. In November 2008, Biletsky also created the umbrella Social Nationalist Assembly (SNA) movement.⁶ The movement was a derivative of the earlier political party Social-National Party of Ukraine (SNPU), which later became known as Svoboda. The SNA contained members from a collection of nationalist and extreme-right groups in Ukraine

AZOV." *Korrespondent.net*. May 30, 2022. <https://korrespondent.net/ukraine/4482129-v-kharkove-sozdano-novoe-podrazdelenye-sso-azov>

⁵ "Profile: Who Are Ukraine's Far-Right Azov Regiment?" *Military News | Al Jazeera*. March 1, 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/1/who-are-the-azov-regiment>., There is some conflicting information about the group's founding date with some sources claiming the group formed in May 2014. See, for example: Baczynska, Gabriel. "Ultra-nationalist Ukrainian battalion gears up for more fighting." *Reuters*. 2015. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-azov/ultra-nationalist-ukrainian-battalion-gears-up-for-more-fighting-idUSKBN0ML0XJ20150325>)

⁶ Olzanski, Tadeusz. "Svoboda party – the new phenomenon on the Ukrainian right-wing scene." *Center for Eastern Studies*. 2011. <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2011-07-05/svoboda-party-new-phenomenon-ukrainian-right-wing-scene>

which promoted a neo-Nazi ideology.⁷ The PU became the de facto armed wing of the SNA. The PU also championed far-right, white supremacist ideas; in 2010, Biletsky claimed it was Ukraine's national mission to "lead the white races of the world in a final crusade... against semite-led untermenschen (subhumans)"⁸

The Azov Battalion

In March 2014, following the annexation of Crimea, the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense encouraged volunteer military units to mobilize a resistance campaign against Russian-backed separatists in Donbas.⁹ Volunteer military units would help "fill the gap" in the Ukrainian military's defenses.¹⁰ Biletsky and several other PU members formed the Azov Battalion in response to this call. The group's first violent attack occurred shortly after its formation in April 2014 when fighters clashed with Russian-backed separatists in Donetsk.¹¹

In June 2014, the newly formed Battalion gained international notoriety when it -- alongside 200 other pro-Ukrainian forces -- helped re-capture the southeastern city of Mariupol from Russian-backed forces.¹² Regaining control of Mariupol for the government in Kyiv had critical strategic implications for the larger War in Donbas because of its juncture connecting the Donbas and Crimea by land and sea.¹³ The Azov Battalion's role in retaking, and holding, Mariupol from the separatist forces was the group's first significant victory and earned it international credibility.¹⁴

During the Battle for Mariupol, the group came to attention for its neo-Nazi iconography on the battlefield. Specifically, the battalion patch, which featured an inverted Wolfsangel symbol superimposed on a Black Sun.¹⁵ The Wolfsangel is a historical symbol of independence that was

⁷ Brayman, Lolita. "Ukrainian Nationalists Strive to Shake Off Allegations of anti-Semitism." *Haaretz*. 2014. <https://www.haaretz.com/jewish/.premium-ukrainians-rebut-anti-semitism-talk-1.5327269>

⁸ Hume, Tim. "How a Far-Right Battalion Became a Part of Ukraine's National Guard." *VICE*. *VICE*, February 16, 2022. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/3ab7dw/azov-battalion-ukraine-far-right>; Petik, Oles, and Denys Gorbach. "The Rise of Azov." *Open Democracy*. *Open Democracy*, February 15, 2016. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/rise-of-azov/>; Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P. 92.

⁹ Umland, Andreas. "Irregular Militias and Radical Nationalism in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine: The Prehistory and Emergence of the "Azov" Battalion in 2014." *Terrorism and Political Violence*. 2019. 31(1): 105-131, DOI: [10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974](https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974); Newman, Dina. "Ukraine conflict: 'White power' warrior from Sweden." *BBC*. 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28329329>

¹⁰ Krushelnycky, Askold. "The Battle for Mariupol." *Atlantic Council*. 2014. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/the-battle-for-mariupol/>

¹¹ Chazan, Guy. "Ukrainian volunteer fighters with a luxurious seaside residence". *Financial Times*. 2014. <https://www.ft.com/content/f00b9d16-196a-11e4-8730-00144feabdc0>

¹² Krushelnycky, Askold. "The Battle for Mariupol." *Atlantic Council*. 2014. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/the-battle-for-mariupol/>

¹³ Al Jazeera. "Ukrainian Troops Regain Mariupol." *News | Al Jazeera*. *Al Jazeera*, June 13, 2014. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2014/6/13/ukrainian-troops-regain-port-city-of-mariupol>

¹⁴ Colborne, Michael. "There's One Far-Right Movement That Hates the Kremlin." *Foreign Policy*. *Foreign Policy Magazine*, April 17, 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/17/theres-one-far-right-movement-that-hates-the-kremlin-azov-ukraine-biletsky-nouvelle-droite-venner/>

¹⁵ John, Tara. "A Far-Right Battalion Has a Key Role in Ukraine's Resistance. Its Neo-Nazi History Has Been Exploited by Putin." *CNN*. *Cable News Network*, March 30, 2022. <https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/29/europe/ukraine-azov-movement-far-right-intl-cmd/index.html>.

later co-opted by the German Nazi Party. The Black Sun symbol is based on a design commissioned by SS leader Heinrich Himmler, and overwhelmingly used by neo-Nazi and esoteric National Socialist movements.¹⁶ While Azov leaders downplayed the group as a white supremacist or neo-Nazi organization, its patch was and continues to be widely considered a coded reference to modern far-right ideology.¹⁷ The movement denies the logo's far-right associations, claiming the Wolfsangel is an amalgamation of the letters "I" and "N" or "Idea of the Nation."¹⁸

In October 2014, Biletsky left the group to launch a successful political campaign for a seat in Ukraine's Parliament as an independent candidate. By leveraging his unit's victory in Mariupol, he secured a seat which he retained until 2019.¹⁹

On November 12, 2014, Ukraine designated the Azov Battalion a "Special Purpose Regiment" and formally integrated it into the National Guard, within the Ukrainian Interior Ministry.²⁰ In December 2014, the PU formally disbanded and remaining members integrated into the Azov Regiment.²¹

Foreign Fighters and International Networking

As the Azov Regiment continued to grow, it pursued international relationships and recruitment of foreign fighters. The group was initially composed of half eastern Ukrainians with foreign fighters from Sweden, Spain, Italy, Canada, France, and Russia.²² The group later recruited from Belarus, Germany, and possibly the United States.²³ The Soufan Center reported that between 2014-2019 approximately 17,000 people from 50 countries – including the United States – traveled to fight in Ukraine although it is hard to determine how many specifically fought with

¹⁶ Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism, and the Politics of Identity* (New York University Press, 2002), 125, 148-150.

¹⁷ Umland, Andreas. "Irregular Militias and Radical Nationalism in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine: The Prehistory and Emergence of the "Azov" Battalion in 2014." *Terrorism and Political Violence*. 2019. 31(1): 105-131, DOI: [10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974](https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974)

¹⁸ John, Tara. "A Far-Right Battalion Has a Key Role in Ukraine's Resistance. Its Neo-Nazi History Has Been Exploited by Putin." CNN. Cable News Network, March 30, 2022. <https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/29/europe/ukraine-azov-movement-far-right-intl-cmd/index.html>.

¹⁹ "National Corps - Political Party." Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Reporting Radicalism, 2021. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-corps-political-party>.

²⁰ Umland, Andreas. "Irregular Militias and Radical Nationalism in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine: The Prehistory and Emergence of the "Azov" Battalion in 2014." *Terrorism and Political Violence*. 2019. 31(1): 105-131, DOI: [10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974](https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974)

²¹ Chazan, Guy. "Ukrainian volunteer fighters with a luxurious seaside residence". *Financial Times*. 2014. <https://www.ft.com/content/f00b9d16-196a-11e4-8730-00144feabdc0>

²² Ayres, Sabra. "Driven by far-right ideology, Azov Battalion mans Ukraine's front line." *Al Jazeera America*. 2014. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/7/24/ukraine-azov-battalion.html>; Newman, Dina. "Ukraine conflict: 'White power' warrior from Sweden." *BBC*. 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28329329>

²³ Ayres, Sabra. "Driven by far-right ideology, Azov Battalion mans Ukraine's front line." *Al Jazeera America*. 2014. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/7/24/ukraine-azov-battalion.html>; Newman, Dina. "Ukraine conflict: 'White power' warrior from Sweden." *BBC*. 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28329329>; Seldin, Jeff. "White Supremacists Lead New Wave of Foreign Fighters." *VOA News*. 2019. https://www.voanews.com/a/usa_white-supremacists-lead-new-wave-foreign-fighters/6176687.html

Azov.²⁴ Estimates breaking down this statistic paint a more specific picture. Over 13,000 of these entered the war on the pro-Russian side, 12,000 of whom were Russians themselves.²⁵ Roughly 3,900 foreign fighters joined the Ukrainian side, 3,000 of whom were also Russians.²⁶ Therefore there were roughly 1,000 non-Russian foreign fighters in Ukraine from 2014-2019, and it is difficult to estimate how many were specifically motivated by a far-right Ideology.²⁷

Azov's transnational networking and recruiting efforts developed into a hub of international far-right activity based in Ukraine.²⁸ As recently as 2020, National Corps specifically cited its desire for American recruits to fight against Russia, and help counter perceived "pro-Kremlin" narratives in the U.S.²⁹ In interviews with far-right researchers, the Atomwaffen Division claimed to have sent members to Ukraine to obtain battlefield experience.³⁰ Members of the American "Rise Above Movement" (RAM) have also openly publicized meetings with members of the Azov Regiment and National Corps. Robert Rundo, leader of RAM, traveled to Kyiv and fought in mixed martial arts matches with members of the Azov Regiment in a facility owned by Azov, called the "Reconquista Club."³¹ Greg Johnson, an American white nationalist author, traveled to Kyiv to give a lecture and meet with representatives of Azov in 2018.³² A number of Russian nationals have also joined the Azov Regiment, due to their lack of political dissent

²⁴ Seldin, Jeff. "White Supremacists Lead New Wave of Foreign Fighters." *VOA News*. 2019.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/usa-white-supremacists-lead-new-wave-foreign-fighters/6176687.html>

²⁵ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P. 132; Rekawek, Kacper. "A Trickle, Not a Flood: The Limited 2022 Far-Right Foreign Fighter Mobilization to Ukraine." *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*. Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, June 23, 2022. <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/a-trickle-not-a-flood-the-limited-2022-far-right-foreign-fighter-mobilization-to-ukraine/>.

²⁶ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P. 132

²⁷ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P. 132; Rekawek, Kacper. "A Trickle, Not a Flood: The Limited 2022 Far-Right Foreign Fighter Mobilization to Ukraine." *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*. Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, June 23, 2022. <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/a-trickle-not-a-flood-the-limited-2022-far-right-foreign-fighter-mobilization-to-ukraine/>.

²⁸ Musharbash, Yassin. "The Globalization of far-right Extremism: An Investigate Report." *Combating Terrorism Center*. Vol. 14, Issue 6. 2021. <https://ctc.usma.edu/the-globalization-of-far-right-extremism-an-investigative-report/>

²⁹ Kuzmenko, Oleksiy. "'Defend the White Race': American Extremists Being Co-Opted by Ukraine's Far-Right." *Bellingcat*. Bellingcat, July 16, 2020. <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2019/02/15/defend-the-white-race-american-extremists-being-co-opted-by-ukraines-far-right/>.

³⁰ O'Connor, Tom, and Naveed Jamali. "Ukraine's War Draws U.S. Far-Right to Fight Russia, Train for Violence at Home." *Newsweek*. Newsweek, February 18, 2022. <https://www.newsweek.com/ukraine-war-draws-us-far-right-fight-russia-violence-home-1665027>.

³¹ Miller, Christopher. "Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights on U.S., Europe." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights On U.S., Europe, November 19, 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html>.

³² Miller, Christopher. "Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights on U.S., Europe." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights On U.S., Europe, November 19, 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html>; Kuzmenko, Oleksiy. "'Defend the White Race': American Extremists Being Co-Opted by Ukraine's Far-Right." *Bellingcat*. Bellingcat, July 16, 2020. <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2019/02/15/defend-the-white-race-american-extremists-being-co-opted-by-ukraines-far-right/>.

options against Putin's regime from within Russia, and the fact that Azov is a largely Russian speaking organization.³³

Due to concerns over ties to extremism, the United States Congress has included a provision banning material support from going to the Azov Regiment in every Defense Appropriations budget signed into law for fiscal years 2018-2022. While the language in these bills has continued to refer to the Azov Battalion, in practice the ban has applied to the Azov Regiment, since integration. The ban does not apply to National Corps or National Militia, although as non-state actors they would not be in a position to receive such support in the first place.³⁴

Integration into the Ukrainian Armed Forces

From July 2015 to early 2019 the Ukrainian government removed the Azov Regiment from the frontlines, and restricted them to bases in Yuriiivka and Urzuf, southwest of Mariupol. This redeployment was largely due to international criticism of the Regiment, and its predecessor organizations, due to deep ties with the far-right. During this time the Regiment focused on recruitment and training, and participated in major military exercises with other Ukrainian units. While the majority of the Regiment was sidelined during this time period, some smaller units still operated in the Donbas. In 2018, at least three members of the Regiment were killed in action. By 2019, the Regiment expanded to include two motorized infantry battalions, 120 and 82 millimeter mortar batteries, D-30 howitzer artillery, a T-64 tank company, reconnaissance squads, drone reconnaissance units, sniper teams, canine teams, a well developed logistics section, and their own engineering and research team. In February 2019, the Azov Regiment was reassigned to a combat deployment in the Donbas, centered back in Mariupol.³⁵

In 2018, the Regiment's engineers presented a prototype light attack vehicle for Ukrainian ground forces they called "The Buggy". Designed for mobility and speed in any terrain, the Regiment proposed the vehicle as an answer to Russian fast attack vehicles Ukraine did not have

³³ Vickery, Matthew. "Ukraine's Other Russians." *Al Jazeera*. *Al Jazeera*, September 26, 2015.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2015/9/25/ukraines-other-russians>.

³⁴ Kheel, Rebecca. "Congress Bans Arms to Ukraine Militia Linked to Neo-Nazis." *The Hill*. *The Hill*, March 27, 2018. <https://thehill.com/policy/defense/380483-congress-bans-arms-to-controversial-ukrainian-militia-linked-to-neo-nazis>

; Congress.gov. "Text - H.R.2471 - 117th Congress (2021-2022): Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022." March 15, 2022. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2471/text>; Congress.gov. "Text - H.R.133 - 116th Congress (2019-2020): Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021." December 27, 2020.

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/133/text>; Congress.gov. "Text - H.R.1158 - 116th Congress (2019-2020): Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020." December 20, 2019.

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/1158/text>; Congress.gov. "Text - H.R.6157 - 115th Congress (2017-2018): Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2019 and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2019." September 28, 2018.

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/6157/text>; Congress.gov. "Text - H.R.1625 - 115th Congress (2017-2018): Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018." March 23, 2018.

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/1625/text>; Congress.gov. "Text - H.R.1625 - 115th Congress (2017-2018): Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018." March 23, 2018.

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/1625/text>.

³⁵ "After More than 3 Years in Bases, Azov Regiment Returns to Front." *Kyiv Post*. February 1, 2019.

<https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/after-more-than-three-years-in-bases-azov-regiment-returns-to-front.html>.

its own version of at the time.³⁶ As of April 2022, similar vehicles were widely used by Ukrainian forces, including Azov Movement affiliated units, for reconnaissance and hit-and-run tactics.³⁷

Building a Political Wing: National Corps

In 2016, Biletsky founded a far-right ultra-nationalist political wing called the National Corps. As part of this political wing's creation, he toned down some of his political rhetoric and began to retroactively deny some of his earlier white supremacist statements.³⁸ Biletsky altered National Corps' rhetoric, attempting to present it as a patriotic party for veterans, in contrast to its predecessors who openly and frequently espoused explicitly racist views.³⁹ Despite these efforts by Biletsky, evidence of National Corps' extreme positions is still easy to find. National Corps was involved with attacks on Roma camps, LGBT activists, and protested the construction of a mosque in Lviv.⁴⁰ These actions led a U.S. Department of State report to refer to National Corps as a hate group in 2018.⁴¹ Specifically, the report stated "There were reports that members of nationalist hate groups, such as C14 and National Corps, at times committed arbitrary detentions with the apparent acquiescence of law enforcement."⁴² This reference was not an official designation, rather a reference in context with other far-right groups. In 2019, National Corps was estimated to have less than 20,000 members, and ran on a platform of re-establishing Ukraine as a nuclear power and opposing European institutions.⁴³ The National Corps also supports the Azov Regiment's international recruitment, providing housing and logistical support to arriving foreign volunteers.⁴⁴

³⁶ Ponomarenko, Illia, and Volodymyr Petrov. "Azov Engineers Present New Light Strike Vehicle Prototype." *Kyiv Post*. December 9, 2018. <https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/azov-engineers-present-new-light-strike-vehicle-prototype.html>

³⁷ Parsons, Dan. "Ukrainian Battle Buggies Are out to Kill Russian Tanks." *The Drive*. The Drive, April 28, 2022. <https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/ukrainian-battle-buggies-are-out-to-kill-russian-tanks>.

³⁸ Colborne, Michael. "There's One Far-Right Movement That Hates the Kremlin." *Foreign Policy*. *Foreign Policy Magazine*, April 17, 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/17/theres-one-far-right-movement-that-hates-the-kremlin-azov-ukraine-biletsky-nouvelle-droite-venner/>; Bennetts, Marc. "Ukraine's National Militia: 'We're Not Neo-Nazis, We Just Want to Make Our Country Better'." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, March 13, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/13/ukraine-far-right-national-militia-takes-law-into-own-hands-neo-nazi-links>

³⁹ Matthew. "National Corps - Political Party." *Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine*. Reporting Radicalism. Accessed July 27, 2022. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-corps-political-party>.

⁴⁰ Matthew. "National Corps - Political Party." *Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine*. Reporting Radicalism. Accessed July 27, 2022. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-corps-political-party>.

⁴¹ "2018 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Ukraine." U.S. Department of State. U.S. Department of State, December 1, 2020. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2018-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/ukraine/>; Matthew. "National Corps - Political Party." *Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine*. Reporting Radicalism. Accessed July 27, 2022. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-corps-political-party>.

⁴² "2018 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Ukraine." U.S. Department of State. U.S. Department of State, December 1, 2020. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2018-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/ukraine/>

⁴³ Bennetts, Marc. "Ukraine's National Militia: 'We're Not Neo-Nazis, We Just Want to Make Our Country Better'." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, March 13, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/13/ukraine-far-right-national-militia-takes-law-into-own-hands-neo-nazi-links>

⁴⁴ Kuzmenko, Oleksiy. "'Defend the White Race': American Extremists Being Co-Opted by Ukraine's Far-Right." *Bellingcat*. Bellingcat, July 16, 2020. <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2019/02/15/defend-the-white-race-american-extremists-being-co-opted-by-ukraines-far-right/>.

That same year, Olena Semenyaka, spokeswoman for National Corps and head of the Azov Movement's International Outreach Office, embarked on a new set of efforts to grow the group's international ties.⁴⁵ Semenyaka networked and organized events with far-right organizations and ideologues from Europe and the U.S.⁴⁶ From 2016 until at least 2020, she regularly traveled across Europe, meeting with far-right groups, including Italy's CasaPound, and Germany's National Democratic Party, lobbying for these groups to support Azov instead of Russia.⁴⁷ Semenyaka also spoke at the far-right Scandza Forum in Sweden, alongside Mark Collett, a Neo-Nazi activist from Britain's National Party and self-described Nazi sympathizer.⁴⁸

In 2017, the Azov Movement created a political umbrella organization with other far-right groups to boost the National Corps' presence in elections, specifically with Right Sector and Svoboda.⁴⁹ The coalition barely registered in the national polls, failing to meet the 5% threshold to obtain Parliamentary seats, and none of the groups earned a seat.⁵⁰

In 2017, the Azov Movement added a new street wing faction known as the National Druzhyna or National Militia.⁵¹ The National Militia patrolled neighborhoods in small groups to ostensibly promote law and order. It also harassed public officials and clashed with police in January 2018.⁵² The National Militia conducted attacks against Roma and other minority targets.⁵³ In February 2018, the National Militia formally announced its existence during a public assembly and torchlit march of 600 followers in Kyiv. During the march, members swore allegiance to Andriy Biletsky and the Azov Movement.⁵⁴

⁴⁵ Nonjon, Adrien. "Olena Semenyaka, The "First Lady" of Ukrainian Nationalism." *Illiberalism Studies*. 2020. <https://www.illiberalism.org/olena-semenyaka-the-first-lady-of-ukrainian-nationalism/>

⁴⁶ Musharbash, Yassin. "The Globalization of far-right Extremism: An Investigate Report." *Combatting Terrorism Center*. Vol. 14, Issue 6. 2021. <https://ctc.usma.edu/the-globalization-of-far-right-extremism-an-investigative-report/>

⁴⁷ Colborne, Michael. "There's One Far-Right Movement That Hates the Kremlin." *Foreign Policy*. *Foreign Policy Magazine*, April 17, 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/17/theres-one-far-right-movement-that-hates-the-kremlin-azov-ukraine-biletsky-nouvelle-droite-venner/>.

⁴⁸ Colborne, Michael. "Inside the Extremist Group That Dreams of Ruling Ukraine." *Haaretz.com*. *Haaretz*, February 23, 2019. <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/.premium-inside-the-extremist-group-that-dreams-of-ruling-ukraine-1.6936835>

⁴⁹ "Share Tweet LinkedIn Pocket 2019 Parliamentary Election Svoboda, National Corps, Right Sector to Participate in Elections as Single Nationalist Bloc." *Kyiv Post*. *Kyiv Post*, June 11, 2019. <https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/svoboda-national-corps-right-sector-to-participate-in-elections-as-single-nationalist-bloc.html>.

⁵⁰ Colborne, Michael. "Inside the Extremist Group That Dreams of Ruling Ukraine." *Haaretz.com*. *Haaretz*, February 23, 2019. <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/.premium-inside-the-extremist-group-that-dreams-of-ruling-ukraine-1.6936835>

⁵¹ "National Militias - Paramilitary group associated with National Corps and Azov movement." *Reporting Radicalism*. N.d. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-militias>

⁵² "National Militias - Paramilitary group associated with National Corps and Azov movement." *Reporting Radicalism*. N.d. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-militias>

⁵³ Miller, Christopher. "With Axes And Hammers, Far-Right Vigilantes Destroy Another Romany Camp In Kyiv." *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*. 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-far-right-vigilantes-destroy-another-romany-camp-in-kyiv/29280336.html>

⁵⁴ Bennetts, Marc. "Ukraine's National Militia: 'We're not neo-Nazis, we just want to make our country better'." *The Guardian*. 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/13/ukraine-far-right-national-militia-takes-law-into-own-hands-neo-nazi-links>

The Azov Movement

Since the creation of all three groups - the Azov Regiment in 2014, National Corps in 2016, and the National Militia in 2017- collectively they are often referred to as the “Azov Movement”. Differentiation of actions taken by the Azov Regiment, versus other wings in the Azov Movement is a challenge. This profile ascribes actions to the most specific entity possible between National Corps, the Azov Regiment, and the National Militia. However when sources are not specific, the term Azov Movement is used to identify that said action was taken by one of the three mentioned wings, but no specific information is available on which one. Members of the Azov Regiment, the National Corps, and the National Militia appear to flow between the three branches.⁵⁵

In 2017, leadership from Svoboda, National Corps, Right Sector, and other far-right political groups signed a collective document called the “Nationalist Manifesto”.⁵⁶ This document articulated a goal of “acquisition and development of the Great Ukrainian State”, and demonstrated disparate far-right groups joining forces politically.⁵⁷ Despite disagreements over whose candidates would take the lead roles on election tickets, the parties to the manifesto ran on a unified platform, standing together for the 2019 election.⁵⁸ In 2019, Ukraine’s Central Election Commission granted the National Militia permission to officially monitor the presidential election. Although the commission specified the group was not permitted to use force, members openly stated they were willing to take matters into their own hands to stop election fraud.⁵⁹ National Corps barely registered in the national polls; it failed to meet the 5% threshold to obtain Parliamentary seats, despite consolidating into a joint bloc with Svoboda and Right Sector.⁶⁰

In 2019, during President Zelensky’s attempted implementation of the controversial “Steinmeier Formula”, which called for elections to be held in separatist-held areas under Ukrainian legislation and with the supervision of the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe.⁶¹

⁵⁵ Kuzmenko, Oleksiy. “Ukrainian Far-Right Fighters, White Supremacists Trained by Major European Security Firm.” Bellingcat. Bellingcat, January 18, 2022. <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2018/08/30/ukrainian-far-right-fighters-white-supremacists-trained-major-european-security-firm/>

⁵⁶ Matthew. “The far-right and the 2019 Parliamentary Election.” Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Accessed July 15, 2022. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/thematic-analyses/the-far-right-and-the-2019-parliamentary-election>.

⁵⁷ Matthew. “The far-right and the 2019 Parliamentary Election.” Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Accessed July 15, 2022. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/thematic-analyses/the-far-right-and-the-2019-parliamentary-election>.

⁵⁸ Matthew. “The far-right and the 2019 Parliamentary Election.” Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Accessed July 15, 2022. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/thematic-analyses/the-far-right-and-the-2019-parliamentary-election>.

⁵⁹ Miller, Christopher. “Deputized as Election Monitors, Ukrainian Ultranationalists 'Ready to Punch' Violators.” RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty. *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, March 8, 2019. <https://www.rferl.org/a/deputized-as-election-monitors-ukrainian-ultranationalists-ready-to-punch-violators/29809207.html>

⁶⁰ Colborne, Michael. “Inside the Extremist Group That Dreams of Ruling Ukraine.” Haaretz.com. *Haaretz*, February 23, 2019. <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/.premium-inside-the-extremist-group-that-dreams-of-ruling-ukraine-1.6936835>

⁶¹ Miller, Christopher. “Explainer: What Is the Steinmeier Formula -- and Did Zelenskiy Just Capitulate to Moscow?” *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. Explainer: What Is The Steinmeier Formula -- And Did Zelenskiy Just

Part of that process required mutual disengagement of troops and armaments along front lines in the Donbas, a move opposed by some veterans and volunteers who had fought.⁶² A small number of volunteers and veterans refused to comply with the Regiment's ordered withdrawal from the town of Zolote, perceiving it as a concession to the Russians. Biletsky threatened to mobilize further Azov veterans and National Corps activists.⁶³ Ultimately, Zelensky visited Zolote to attempt to resolve the crisis, resulting in verbal altercations with National Corps activists.⁶⁴

2020 and 2021 saw a string of violent assaults by National Corps members and leadership against rival political factions. Alongside members of C14, another far-right Ukrainian nationalist group, National Corps members clashed with members of the Party of Sharii, a fringe party often characterized as "pro-Russian". These fights occurred on at least three occasions in June 2020, and Ukrainian law enforcement got involved, at one point detaining four veterans of the Azov Regiment on suspicion of carrying out these attacks. On June 25, 2020, a Party of Sharii Representative, Mykita Rozhenko, was beaten in Kharkiv. Rozhenko later reported that he had received threats from National Corps leaders Maksym Zhorin and Konstantyn Nemichev. The day after the attack on Rozhenko, Biletsky gave a speech justifying attacks on Party of Sharii members, saying "vata (cotton wool) always brings a lot of blood. This great blood, great violence, is much worse and scarier than anything they are whining about so much right now."⁶⁵

In August 2021, the Shevchenkivskyi Court of Kyiv took seven Kharkiv-based members of National Corps into custody. They were charged with creating an organized criminal group. National Corps denied their members were guilty and staged a protest outside the President's Office, leading to clashes against police. Following the violence, Kyiv's Pechersk District Court took two more members of National Corps into custody for alleged hooliganism.⁶⁶

In February 2022, the group came to prominence again during the Russian military build-up on the border with Ukraine. Prior to the invasion, the Azov Regiment conducted training for civilians in Mariupol including medical care, survival and evacuation, and weapons training.⁶⁷ In

Capitulate To Moscow?, October 3, 2019. <https://www.rferl.org/a/what-is-the-steinmeier-formula-and-did-zelenskiy-just-capitulate-to-moscow-/30195593.html>.

⁶² Grytsenko, Oksana. "I'm Not Some Loser!": Zelensky to Volunteer during Visit to Disengagement Area." *Kyiv Post*. *Kyiv Post*, October 28, 2019. <https://www.unian.info/war/10732674-i-m-not-some-loser-zelensky-to-volunteer-during-visit-to-disengagement-area.html>.

⁶³ "Our Last Checkpoint": the 'Azov' Regiment Took New Positions in Donbas." *Obozrevatel*. *Obozrevatel*, October 7, 2019. <https://incident.obozrevatel.com/ukr/crime/nash-ostannij-blokpost-polk-azov-zajnyav-novi-pozitsii-na-donbasi.htm>.

⁶⁴ Grytsenko, Oksana. "I'm Not a Loser': Zelensky Clashes with Veterans over Donbas Disengagement." *Kyiv Post*. October 28, 2019. https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/im-not-a-loser-zelensky-clashes-with-veterans-over-donbas-disengagement.html?cf_chl_tk=SbolmTBS6QnjMnPJLiQEsivGNnuW6T4od28tzMOrEM0-1646110945-0-gaNycGzNCJE.

⁶⁵ "National Corps - Political Party." *Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine*. *Reporting Radicalism*, 2021. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-corps-political-party>.

⁶⁶ "National Corps - Political Party." *Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine*. *Reporting Radicalism*, 2021. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-corps-political-party>.

⁶⁷ Cookman, Liz. "Babushka Battalion' Ready to Protect Ukraine from Russia." *Russia-Ukraine war News* | Al Jazeera. *Al Jazeera*, February 15, 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/14/babushka-battalion-ready-to-protect-ukraine-from-russia>

Kyiv, roughly 350 attended a paramilitary training event run by the Azov Movement.⁶⁸ Olena Semenyaka, spokeswoman for National Corps, referenced Azov's role in Ukraine as an opportunity to play a bigger role in Ukraine's future politics.⁶⁹ Azov leadership used the threat as a recruitment tool to attract both domestic and international fighters.⁷⁰

2022 Russian Invasion of Ukraine

When Vladimir Putin announced the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, he called it a “special military operation... to demilitarise and de-Nazify Ukraine.” The Azov Regiment was thought to be one of the organizations he referred to.⁷¹ In response to the Russian invasion, far-right militia leaders across Europe began posting declarations to join the fight against Russia.⁷²

After news broke that Muslim Chechen soldiers would deploy to Ukraine alongside the Russian military, the official National Guard of Ukraine Twitter account posted a video of Azov Regiment fighters dipping bullets in pig fat, claiming it would prevent them from going to heaven.⁷³

On February 24, Russian forces began to lay siege to the city of Mariupol. The Azov Regiment was one of the central defense forces in the city.⁷⁴ Reporters also noted Azov Regiment affiliated units fighting against Russian forces in Kyiv and Kharkiv.⁷⁵

In early March 2022, President Zelensky of Ukraine again announced the formation of an “international legion” to facilitate the arrival of pro-Ukrainian foreign fighters.⁷⁶ In a similar call to 2014, the Ukrainian government once again encouraged “Territorial Defense Forces” (TDF) to mobilize and help resist the Russian invasion. In early 2022, the TDFs organized into over 25

⁶⁸ Miller, Christopher. “Ukraine's Far-Right Forces See an Opportunity in Russia's Invasion Threat to Grow Their Violent Movement.” *BuzzFeed News*. February 22, 2022.

<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/christopherm51/ukraine-russia-invasion-far-right-training>

⁶⁹ Miller, Christopher. “Ukraine's Far-Right Forces See an Opportunity in Russia's Invasion Threat to Grow Their Violent Movement.” *BuzzFeed News*. February 22, 2022.

<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/christopherm51/ukraine-russia-invasion-far-right-training>

⁷⁰ Engelbrecht, Cora. “Far-Right Militias in Europe Plan to Confront Russian Forces, a Research Group Says.” *The New York Times*. February 25, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/world/europe/militias-russia-ukraine.html>

⁷¹ “Profile: Who Are Ukraine's Far-Right Azov Regiment?” *Military News | Al Jazeera*. March 1, 2022.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/1/who-are-the-azov-regiment>

⁷² Engelbrecht, Cora. “Far-Right Militias in Europe Plan to Confront Russian Forces, a Research Group Says.” *The New York Times*. February 25, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/world/europe/militias-russia-ukraine.html>

⁷³ Farrukh, Rimal. “Ukraine's 'Neo-Nazi' Battalion Is Greasing Bullets in Pig Fat for Russia's Muslim Soldiers.” *VICE*. *VICE*, March 1, 2022. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/xgd73j/ukraine-neo-nazi-battalion-azov-bullets-pig-fat-chechen-russia>.

⁷⁴ “Besieged Ukrainian city of Mariupol appeals for help.” *Al Jazeera English*. 2022.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/4/mariupol-ukraine-russian-siege>

⁷⁵ O'Connor, Tom. “As Ukraine Rallies Nation to Defend from Russia, Far-Right Joins the Fight.” *Newsweek*. 2022. <https://www.newsweek.com/ukraine-rallies-nation-defend-russia-far-right-joins-fight-1684187>

⁷⁶ Bella, Timothy, and Annabelle Timsit. “Zelensky Says 16,000 Foreigners Have Volunteered to Fight for Ukraine against Russian Invasion.” *The Washington Post*. March 3, 2022.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/03/03/zelensky-ukraine-16000-foreign-volunteers-russia/>.

brigades, localized in each region of Ukraine, including Kyiv. The strategic purpose of the TDFs as a whole is to strengthen the capabilities of local authorities in reacting to Russian attacks.⁷⁷ - The TDFs consist primarily of light infantry performing auxiliary and support missions behind the frontlines of the war, including guarding infrastructure, and combatting subversion in their local areas of responsibility. The TDFs are composed of a combination of combat veterans, as well as civilians with no prior military experience. Individuals convicted of serious crimes or have at least two criminal convictions are ineligible.⁷⁸

In line with this announcement, the Azov Movement established several new military units separate from the National Guard Regiment. First, and most prominently, Azov formed a TDF unit in Kyiv. The Azov Kyiv TDF involved many prominent veterans of the original Azov Battalion and National Guard Regiment who became involved in the National Corps and other Azov Movement structures such as ex-Azov Regiment commander and National Corps chief of staff Maksym Zhorin.⁷⁹ National Corps' late deputy secretary for ideology Mykola Kravchenko was also an officer in the unit when he died during the defense of Kyiv.⁸⁰ A force of expatriate Belarusian combatants, including Azov veterans, also fought as part of the Azov Kyiv TDF before forming the separate Kastus Kalinouski Battalion.⁸¹

As of March 6, 2022, approximately 16,000 international volunteers are estimated to have signed up, although it is difficult to estimate the number specifically joining Azov and its affiliates.⁸² By July 2022, the Ukrainian military kept details of the International Legion, including numbers, home countries of volunteers, and their assignments, as closely guarded information.⁸³ Therefore little additional information has been made publicly available.

On March 3, 2022, the siege of Mariupol began when Russian forces blockaded the city and cut off water access, electricity, and food. By April 18, most of the fighting concentrated down to a much smaller perimeter around the Azovstal Iron and Steel Works. From late April until May 20, 2022 fighting concentrated around the large industrial compound where a complex network of tunnels underground served as a safe location for civilians and Azov fighters alike. On May 20,

⁷⁷ Kossov, Igor. "Ukraine's New Military Branch: Citizens Protecting Their Neighborhood." Politico. February 13, 2022. <https://www.politico.eu/article/ukraine-russia-military-citizen-reservist-defense/>.

⁷⁸ Ponomarenko, Illia. "Who Can and Can't Join Ukraine's Territorial Defense Force." The Kyiv Independent. January 7, 2022. <https://kyivindependent.com/national/who-can-and-cant-join-ukraines-new-territorial-defense-force/>.

⁷⁹ Orlova, Violetta. "«Azov» vmeste s voyennymi gotovit oboronu Kiyeva." *Unian*. March 8, 2022. <https://www.unian.net/war/azov-vmeste-s-voennymi-gotovit-oboronu-kieva-novosti-vtorzheniya-rossii-na-ukrainu-11735437.html>

⁸⁰ Pavlenko, Iryna. "Publisher, Azov fighter Myola Kravchenko died defending Ukraine." *Kyiv Post*, May 2, 2022. <https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/publisher-azov-fighter-mykola-kravchenko-died-defending-ukraine.html>

⁸¹ "Belarusian armed units in Ukraine fight for country's liberation." *Voice of Belarus*. March 29, 2022. <https://www.voiceofbelarus.org/belarus-news/belarusian-armed-groups-in-ukraine-fight-for-the-liberation-of-the-country/>

⁸² Bella, Timothy, and Annabelle Timsit. "Zelensky Says 16,000 Foreigners Have Volunteered to Fight for Ukraine against Russian Invasion." *The Washington Post*. March 3, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/03/03/zelensky-ukraine-16000-foreign-volunteers-russia/>.

⁸³ "How Foreign Far-Right Volunteers Are Arriving to Fight in Ukraine." Antifascist Europe. Antifascist Europe, May 30, 2022. <https://antifascist-europe.org/ukraine/how-foreign-far-right-volunteers-are-arriving-to-fight-in-ukraine/>.

2022 Russian forces announced they had seized total control over the steel plant, claiming over 2,400 Ukrainian fighters had surrendered over the previous several days, including the bulk of the Azov Regiment.⁸⁴

Following the defeat in Mariupol, remaining members of the Azov Regiment attempted to regroup and reorganize in Kyiv with outside support. Dmytro Kukharchuk, commander of Azov's 2nd Battalion Special Forces of Kyiv, is recruiting new volunteers, and training them with help from the American private firm the Mozart Group. Additionally, Kukharchuk claims the remaining forces have three U.S. made Javelins, short range anti tank missiles, and rocket propelled grenades, but lack heavy equipment like artillery and tanks.⁸⁵

In May 2022, the Azov Kyiv TDF became incorporated into Ukraine's Special Operations Forces as the Azov SSO Regiment, which also operates a unit in Kharkiv.⁸⁶ Its commander, Anatoly Sidorenko was previously chief of staff for the Kharkiv-area Azov Civil Corps.⁸⁷ The Azov SSO Regiment also announced a similar detachment in Sumy, commanded by Denys Sokur.⁸⁸ Sokur previously led the National Corps in Sumy.⁸⁹ The Azov SSO Regiment's specific unit insignia uses the design of a monument in the National Guard Regiment's Urzuf base, three golden swords.⁹⁰ Some news outlets mistakenly reported this represented the Regiment, or Movement as a whole, dropping the Wolfsangel logo completely, rather than as the specific symbol of a new unit.⁹¹

In addition to Azov SSO-Kharkiv, veterans of the Azov Regiment and members of the broader Azov Movement also formed the reconnaissance and sabotage special unit Kraken within the

⁸⁴ Bisset, Victoria. "In Pictures: How the Mariupol Siege Unfolded." *The Washington Post*. WP Company, May 21, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/05/21/ukraine-mariupol-azovstal-siege-timeline/>.

⁸⁵ Vivian, Salama, and Matthew Luxmoore. "Ukraine's Azov Battalion Looks to Regroup and Clean up Image." *The Wall Street Journal*. Dow Jones & Company, June 6, 2022. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/ukraines-azov-battalion-looks-to-regroup-and-clean-up-image-11654453889>.

⁸⁶ Bodnar, Natalya. "Mariupol' i 'Azov' uzhe stali istoricheskim pozorom dlya Rossii, – eks-komandir polka Maksim Zhorin," *24 Kanal*. May 13, 2022. https://24tv.ua/ru/mariupol-azov-uzhe-stali-istoricheskim-pozorom-dlja-rossii-jeks_n1977820 and Pustiva, Valentina; "V Khar'kove sozdano novoye podrazdeleniye SSO AZOV." *Korrespondent.net*. May 30, 2022. <https://korrespondent.net/ukraine/4482129-v-kharkove-sozdano-novoe-podrazdeleniye-sso-azov>

⁸⁷ "«Azov» razom zi «Skhidnym Korpusom» piketuvaly kharkivs'kyi hlavk Natsional'noyi Politsiyi (FOTO)." *Varta Kharkov*. December 2, 2016. <https://varta.kharkov.ua/news/city/1123794>

⁸⁸ Romanenko, Alina. "Zhorin iz "Azova" podelilsya khoroshey novost'yu dlya ukraintsev, kotoraya stanet prichinoy novykh feykov v RF." *Dialog.UA*. June 1, 2022. https://www.dialog.ua/war/252926_1654111102
https://www.dialog.ua/war/252926_1654111102

⁸⁹ "Holova Sums'koho Natskorpusu Denys Sokur nazvav im"ya svoeyi narechenoyi." *Sums'ki Debaty*. March 15, 2019. <https://debaty.sumy.ua/news/golova-sumskogo-natskorpusu-denis-sokur-nazvav-im-ya-svoeyi-narechenoyi>

⁹⁰ Kuzmenko, Oleksiy (@kooleksiy). Tweet. "Azov mov-t ideologist explains [the obvious]: '3 golden swords' on SOF Azov patches symbolize the shrine at the Azov Regiment's base in Urzuf captured by Russia. 'Enemy captured Urzuf [...] is destroying shrines, but it won't be able to destroy neither our ideas, nor our memory.'" <https://twitter.com/kooleksiy/status/1531386184525660161>

⁹¹ Ball, T. (2022, May 30). *Azov battalion drops neo-nazi symbol exploited by Russian propagandists*. News | The Times. Retrieved July 28, 2022, from <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/azov-battalion-drops-neo-nazi-symbol-exploited-by-russian-propagandists-lpjnsp7qg>

first 4 months of the Russian invasion, which now has 1,500 members.⁹² Kraken’s leadership includes Konstantin Nemichev, a National Corps politician, as well as Serhiy “Chili” Velychko, who was freed from pre-trial detention for his alleged involvement in a National Corps-run extortion scheme after the invasion.⁹³ Kraken has operated in cooperation with the Main Directorate of Intelligence (HUR) of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine.⁹⁴ Nemichev claimed that HUR officials helped organize Azov veterans for the defense of Kharkiv before the invasion.⁹⁵ In one example of continuity between Kraken’s activities and those of the National Corps, Kraken troops toppled a statue of Soviet Marshal Georgy Zhukov in Kharkiv, which had been replaced after a previous toppling by National Corps and other nationalist activists.⁹⁶ Kraken has been accused of shooting Russian prisoners of war.⁹⁷ Many of Kraken’s operations are executed in the Kharkiv region, focused on recapturing villages in conjunction with Ukrainian military units.⁹⁸

Azov also announced the creation of several other units within the structure of the Territorial Defense Forces across Ukraine, among the most active of which is the 98th Territorial Defense Battalion Azov-Dnipro, commanded by First Deputy Head of National Corps Rodion Kudryashov.⁹⁹ In Volyn, veterans of the Azov Regiment formed the separate special purpose unit “Lubart” under the structure of the local Territorial Defense.¹⁰⁰

⁹² Lidón, Luis. “Ukraine volunteer unit Kraken says Russia is building up forces in Kharkiv.” *La Prensa Latina*. June 22, 2022. <https://www.laprensalatina.com/ukraine-volunteer-unit-kraken-says-russia-is-building-up-forces-in-kharkiv/>

⁹³ Pikhtereva, Alik. “«Ya rekomenduyu shche ne povertatsya v Kharkiv», — nachal’nyk shtabu spetspidrozdilu KRAKEN.” *Nakipelo*. May 28, 2022. <https://nakipelo.ua/ya-rekomenduju-shche-ne-povertatsya-v-harkiv-nachalnik-shtabu-specpidrozdilu-kraken/> and “Avtora khita “Putin — kh*ylo!” vidpustyly z-pid varty voyuvaty za Ukrainu.” *Kharkiv Today*. February 28, 2022. <https://2day.kh.ua/ua/kharkow/avtora-khita-putin-khylo-vidpustyly-z-pid-varty-voyuvaty-za-ukrayinu>

⁹⁴ “During the Liberation of Ruska Lozova Settlement, the DIU Special Forces Personnel Have Destroyed Dozens of Units of Military Equipment and Manpower of the Occupiers.” *Defence Intelligence of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine*. May 5, 2022. <https://gur.gov.ua/en/content/pid-chas-zvillennia-naselenoho-punktu-ruska-lozova-spetspryznachtsi-hur-mo-ukrainy-znyshchyly-desiatky-odynyts-boiovoi-tekhniky-ta-zhyvoi-syly-okupantiv.html>

⁹⁵ “Bryfinh nachal’nyka shtabu spetspidrozdilu «KRAKEN» pry Minoborony Kostyantyna Nemicheva.” *Ves’ Kharkov*. <https://allkharkov.ua/news/state/brifng-nachalnika-shtaby-specpdrozdly-kraken-pri-mnoboroni-kostiantina-nemcheva.html>

⁹⁶ “Monument to Zhukov demolished in Kharkiv.” *Ukrinform*. April 17, 2022. <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-ato/3459921-monument-to-zhukov-demolished-in-kharkiv.html> and “Protesters topple statue to Soviet-era General Zhukov in Kharkiv (Video).” *Unian*. June 3, 2019. <https://www.unian.info/society/10572621-protesters-topple-statue-to-soviet-era-general-zhukov-in-kharkiv-video.html>

⁹⁷ Reality Check & BBC Monitoring. “Does video show Russian Prisoners being shot?” *BBC News*. March 30, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/60907259>

⁹⁸ Kunkle, Fredrick, and Serhii Korolchuk. “Ukraine’s Volunteer ‘Kraken’ Unit Takes the Fight to the Russians.” *The Washington Post*. WP Company, June 9, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/06/03/ukraine-kraken-volunteer-military-unit/>.

⁹⁹ Dak, Pavlo. “Kontrnastup na Zaporizhzhzi: Kombat z peredovoyi pro platsdarm dlya deokupatsiyi.” *Vgolos*. June 20, 2022. https://vgolos.ua/news/kontrnastup-na-zaporizhzhzi-kombat-z-peredovoyi-pro-placdarm-dlya-deokupaciyi_1422255.html

¹⁰⁰ “Volyniany orhanizuvaly novyy spetspidrozdil «Lyubart».” *Rayon Lutsk*. March 2, 2022. <https://lutsk.rayon.in.ua/news/493098-volinyani-noviy-organizovali-spetspidrozdil-lyubart>

On June 29, 2022, Ukrainian officials announced the largest prisoner swap of the war so far, with 144 soldiers returning to Ukrainian controlled territory, including 43 from the Azov Regiment. This is out of approximately 1,000 Azov fighters held by Russia. Commanders of the Azov Regiment were moved to detention in Moscow, including top commanders Denys Prokopenko and Svyatoslav Palamar, alongside Ukrainian Marines they fought with in Mariupol.¹⁰¹

On July 28, a series of explosions tore through the barracks housing Azov Regiment prisoners in Russian controlled territory in Eastern Ukraine, killing at least 53 prisoners and injuring at least 75 more. No guards or prison staff were killed in the attack, and only the barracks housing prisoners was damaged in the strike. Russia claimed the attack had been from a Ukrainian artillery strike, from a weapon system called High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, or HIMARs, provided by western governments. Russian media displayed fragments from HIMARs strikes as proof, but did not provide evidence directly connecting the displayed HIMARs fragmentation to the blast at the prison. Russia claimed Ukraine struck the prison complex in order to prevent Azov prisoners from revealing war crimes committed by Ukrainian forces, as well as to prevent other Ukrainian forces from surrendering. The Ukrainian government denies responsibility, and asserts the Russian private military company Wagner Group executed the attack. Military analysts claim the physical evidence of the blast aftermath does not match the impacts of HIMARs strikes, and . Ukrainian Intelligence also intercepted a phone call by pro-Russian separatists, claiming the Russians had staged the attack by using remote detonation to explode the barracks, combined with a rocket barrage from 100 yards away to make it appear as an artillery attack.¹⁰²

On August 21, 2022 a car bomb in Moscow killed Darya Dugina, a Russian journalist and daughter of Alexander Dugin, a prominent pro-Putin ideologue in Russia. Russian authorities claimed a woman who entered Russia in July, and was affiliated with the Azov Regiment was responsible for the attack.¹⁰³ Both the Ukrainian government and the Azov Regiment denied any involvement. Open source analysts reported Russia had flagged the woman they claimed was responsible back in April as a potential Azov member, making it extremely unlikely she could have entered Russia without raising red flags. The speed with which she was identified by

¹⁰¹ Schwartz, Michael, Marc Santora, and Ivan Nechepurenko. "Ukraine Announces Largest Prisoner Exchange Yet, Including Mariupol Fighters." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, June 29, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/29/world/europe/ukraine-prisoner-exchange-mariupol.html?auth=login-google1tap&login=google1tap>.

¹⁰² Roblin, Sebastien. "Russia Claims Ukraine Killed Its Own Pows-Here's Why Few Believe It." *Forbes*. Forbes Magazine, August 1, 2022. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/sebastienroblin/2022/07/31/russia-claims-ukraine-killed-its-own-pows-heres-why-few-believe-it/?sh=3e2acbe62fe5>.; "UN to Investigate Prison Attack That Killed Dozens of Ukrainian Prisoners of War." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, August 4, 2022. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/aug/04/un-to-investigate-prison-attack-that-killed-dozens-of-ukraine-prisoners-of-war>.; Schwartz, Michael, Christiaan Triebert, Kamila Hrabchuk, and Stanislav Kozliuk. "Ukraine Builds a Case That Killing of P.o.w.s Was a Russian War Crime." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, August 3, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/03/world/europe/russia-ukraine-prisoners-killed.html>.

¹⁰³ Kerry, Francis, ed. "Daughter of Russian Ideologue Killed in Suspected Car Bomb Attack." *Reuters*, August 21, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/daughter-ultra-nationalist-russian-ideologue-killed-suspected-car-bomb-attack-2022-08-21/>.

Russian authorities (less than 24 hours) also raised questions about the authenticity of their accusation.¹⁰⁴

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

A. LEADERSHIP

Andriy Biletsky (March 2014 to October 2014): Biletsky was the original leader of the group. He was formerly the leader of the far-right Patriot Ukraine and nationalist Social Assembly Organization.¹⁰⁵ In 2011, he was arrested as part of a larger round-up of Patriot of Ukraine members for an attempted murder. In February 2014, he was released from prison following a government law exonerating all political prisoners.¹⁰⁶ He left the group in October 2014 to become a member of Ukraine's Parliament. He held this position until 2019.¹⁰⁷ Despite losing his seat in 2019, Biletsky continued as the head of the National Corps as a political party, and maintained close contact with the regiment, including participating in training.¹⁰⁸ In March 2022, National Corps suspended all political activity to take up arms in the TDFs, including Biletsky.¹⁰⁹ As of June, 2022, photos posted online suggested Biletsky was participating in the defense of Kiev.¹¹⁰

Ihor Mosiychuk (2014 to 2014): Mosiychuk was a founding member and deputy commander of the group.¹¹¹ He was charged with trying to bomb a statue of Vladimir Lenin in 2011, which led to his arrest as part of the "Vasylkiv 3" along with Serhiy Bevza and Volodymyr Shpara. In February 2014, he was released from prison following a government

¹⁰⁴ Roth, Andrew. "Russian Security Service Accuses Ukraine of Darya Dugina's Murder." *The Guardian*, August 22, 2022. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/aug/22/russian-security-service-accuses-ukraine-over-darya-dugina-killing>.

¹⁰⁵ Newman, Dina. "Ukraine conflict: 'White power' warrior from Sweden." *BBC*. 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28329329>

¹⁰⁶ Umland, Andreas. "Irregular Militias and Radical Nationalism in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine: The Prehistory and Emergence of the "Azov" Battalion in 2014." *Terrorism and Political Violence*. 2019. 31(1): 105-131, DOI: [10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974](https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974)

¹⁰⁷ Polyakova, Alina. "Ukraine's Democracy Problem." *Foreign Affairs*. 2014. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/ukraine/2014-10-26/ukraines-democracy-problem>; Balmforth, Richard and Pavel Polityuk. "War Veterans Steal Limelight in Ukraine's New Parliament." *Reuters*. 2014. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-parliament/war-veterans-steal-limelight-in-ukraines-new-parliament-idUSKCN0JB1IQ20141127>; "National Corps - Political Party." *Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine*. Reporting Radicalism, 2021. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-corps-political-party>.

¹⁰⁸ Vivian, Salama, and Matthew Luxmoore. "Ukraine's Azov Battalion Looks to Regroup and Clean up Image." *The Wall Street Journal*. Dow Jones & Company, June 6, 2022. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/ukraines-azov-battalion-looks-to-regroup-and-clean-up-image-11654453889>.

¹⁰⁹ Schipani, Andres, and Roman Olearchyk. "Don't Confuse Patriotism and Nazism: Ukraine's Azov Forces Face Scrutiny." *Financial Times*. *Financial Times*, March 29, 2022. <https://www.ft.com/content/7191ec30-9677-423d-873c-e72b64725c2d>.

¹¹⁰ Secker, Written by Glyn. "Neo-Fascism, NATO and Russian Imperialism: An Overview of Left Perspectives on Ukraine - Part 2." *Counterfire*. Counterfire, June 30, 2022. <https://www.counterfire.org/articles/opinion/23296-neo-fascism-nato-and-russian-imperialism-an-overview-of-left-perspectives-on-ukraine-part-2>.

¹¹¹ Newman, Dina. "Ukraine conflict: 'White power' warrior from Sweden." *BBC*. 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28329329>

law exonerating all political prisoners and helped create the Azov Battalion.¹¹² In the fall of 2014, he left the Azov Battalion to run for Parliament with the nationalist Radical Party and won.¹¹³ He served in Parliament from November 2014 to October 2019 when his party lost all its seats.

Oleh Odnorozhenko (2014 to Unknown): Odnorozhenko was a deputy commander of the group in its initial phase.¹¹⁴

Ihor Mykhailenko (October 2014 to November 2016): Mykhailenko was a member of the Patriots of Ukraine prior to 2014. He joined the group early on and took over as the principal commander following Biletsky's departure to Parliament.¹¹⁵ He later became the head of the National Militia wing in 2018.¹¹⁶

Maksym Zhorin (August 2016 to Present): Zhorin served as the Regiment's commander from August 2016 to September 2017 before transitioning to a spokesman role.¹¹⁷ In 2020, he worked out of National Corps' central headquarters.¹¹⁸ He is now a commander in the Azov SSO units.¹¹⁹

Olena Semenyaka (2016 to 2021): Semenyaka is the head of the National Corps political wing and head of international outreach for the Azov Movement.¹²⁰ She has met with members of other far-right organizations including French Identitarians, the Italian

¹¹² Umland, Andreas. "Irregular Militias and Radical Nationalism in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine: The Prehistory and Emergence of the "Azov" Battalion in 2014." *Terrorism and Political Violence*. 2019. 31(1): 105-131, DOI: [10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974](https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974)

¹¹³ Dwyer, Colin. "Apparent Assassination Attempt Injures Ukrainian Lawmaker, Kills 2 People." *NPR*. 2017. <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/10/26/560183471/apparent-assassination-attempt-injures-ukrainian-lawmaker-kills-2-people>

¹¹⁴ Luhn, Alex. "Preparing for War with Ukraine's Fascist Defenders of Freedom." *Foreign Policy*. 2014. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/08/30/preparing-for-war-with-ukraines-fascist-defenders-of-freedom/>

¹¹⁵ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P. 92.

¹¹⁶ "National Militias - Paramilitary group associated with National Corps and Azov movement." Reporting Radicalism. N.d. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-militias>

¹¹⁷ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P. 93.

¹¹⁸ "National Corps - Political Party." Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Reporting Radicalism, 2021. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-corps-political-party>.

¹¹⁹ Bullen, Lee. "Azov Troops Use Drone to Drop Bomb on Two Russian Soldiers Hiding in Trench - the Florida Star: The Georgia Star." *The Florida Star | The Georgia Star*, July 1, 2022. <https://www.thefloridastar.com/articles/azov-troops-use-drone-to-drop-bomb-on-two-russian-soldiers-hiding-in-trench/>.

¹²⁰ Miller, Christopher. "Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights on U.S., Europe." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. November 14, 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html>; Kuzmenko, Oleksiy. "Defend the White Race": American Extremists Being Co-Opted by Ukraine's Far-Right." *Bellingcat*. 2019. <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2019/02/15/defend-the-white-race-american-extremists-being-co-opted-by-ukraines-far-right/>; Musharbash, Yassin. "The Globalization of far-right Extremism: An Investigate Report." *Combatting Terrorism Center*. Vol. 14, Issue 6. 2021. <https://ctc.usma.edu/the-globalization-of-far-right-extremism-an-investigative-report/>

CasaPound, German NDP, and U.S. Rise Above Movement. Prior to joining, she was the press secretary for Right Sector from 2014 to 2016. She became a key leader of National Corps in 2016.¹²¹

Konstantin Nemichev (Unknown to Present): Konstantin Nemichev is head of National Corps for the Kharkiv region.¹²² He also commands the Kraken Unit, a volunteer unit organized by Azov Regiment veterans which conducts reconnaissance and sabotage operations against Russian forces.¹²³

Denis Prokopenko (2014 to Present): Prokopenko joined the Azov Battalion in 2014 and was one of their earliest members. By 2020, Prokopenko was leading the group in Mariupol.¹²⁴ In February 2022, he was overseeing the Azov Regiment in Mariupol.¹²⁵ Prokopenko was captured along with most of the Regiment when Mariupol was captured by Russian forces in May, 2022. As of July 1st, 2022, Prokopenko was being held in Moscow as a prisoner.¹²⁶

B. NAME CHANGES

- Azov Battalion (2014): The group was originally formed as the Azov Battalion in 2014
- Azov Regiment (2015): Following the integration of the Azov Battalion into the Ukrainian National Guard
- Azov Movement (2016-Present): After the inception of National Corps and National Militia, affiliated with the Azov Regiment, the network of three organizations and its supporters are collectively referred to as the Azov Movement.

C. SIZE ESTIMATES

- March 2014: 50 men (Azov Battalion) (Gomza and Zajackowski)¹²⁷

¹²¹ Nonjon, Adrien. "Olena Semenyaka, The "First Lady" of Ukrainian Nationalism." *Illiberalism Studies*. 2020. <https://www.illiberalism.org/olena-semenyaka-the-first-lady-of-ukrainian-nationalism/>

¹²² "Does Video Show Russian Prisoners Being Shot?" BBC News. *BBC*, March 30, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/60907259>.

¹²³ Kunkle, Fredrick, and Serhii Korolchuk. "Ukraine's Volunteer 'Kraken' Unit Takes the Fight to the Russians." *The Washington Post*. WP Company, June 9, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/06/03/ukraine-kraken-volunteer-military-unit/>.

¹²⁴ Levy, Bernard-Henri. "A Visit to Europe's Front with Russia." *Wall Street Journal*. 2020. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/a-visit-to-europes-front-with-russia-11587166080>

¹²⁵ Ruhl, Mitch. "Paramilitary Forces in Ukraine: Matches to a Powder Keg." *Small Wars Journal*. 2022. <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/paramilitary-forces-ukraine-matches-powder-keg>

¹²⁶ Schwartz, Michael, Marc Santora, and Ivan Nechepurenko. "Ukraine Announces Largest Prisoner Exchange Yet, Including Mariupol Fighters." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, June 29, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/29/world/europe/ukraine-prisoner-exchange-mariupol.html?auth=login-google1tap&login=google1tap>.

¹²⁷ Gomza, Ivan, & Johann Zajackowski. "Black Sun Rising: Political Opportunity Structure Perceptions and Institutionalization of the Azov Movement in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine." *Nationalities Papers*. 2019. 47(5): 774-800. doi:10.1017/nps.2019.30

- June 2014: 200 men (Azov Battalion) (Gomza and Zajaczkowski)¹²⁸
- July 2014: 300 men (Azov Battalion)(BBC, Al Jazeera America)¹²⁹
- August 2014: (Azov Battalion) 500 (Foreign Policy)¹³⁰
- March 2015: 1000 men (Azov Regiment) (Reuters)¹³¹
- 2019: 10,000 followers (Azov Movement) (Foreign Policy)¹³²
- 2019: 22,500 followers (20,000 National Corps supporters, 1500 Azov Regiment, 1000 National Militia) (Gomza and Zajaczkowski)¹³³
- 2022: Azov Regiment (Mariupol Division) fewer than 200 outside Russian captivity though not known exactly.

D. RESOURCES

The founder of the Azov Battalion, Andriy Biletsky, allegedly had close ties to Ukrainian Interior Minister Arsen Avakov starting in 2008.¹³⁴ Early on as a volunteer unit, the Azov Battalion was funded through long standing patronage from Avakov.¹³⁵ Avakov first began funding Biletsky's PU in 2005 in the city of Kharkiv, where Avakov was governor at the time. During this time PU coordinated closely with local police and authorities, particularly in monitoring migrants and raiding kiosks whose owners were not loyal to Avakov's government.¹³⁶

¹²⁸ Gomza, Ivan, & Johann Zajaczkowski. "Black Sun Rising: Political Opportunity Structure Perceptions and Institutionalization of the Azov Movement in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine." *Nationalities Papers*. 2019. 47(5): 774-800. doi:10.1017/nps.2019.30

¹²⁹ Newman, Dina. "Ukraine conflict: 'White power' warrior from Sweden." *BBC*. 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28329329>; Ayres, Sabra. "Driven by far-right ideology, Azov Battalion mans Ukraine's front line." *Al Jazeera America*. 2014. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/7/24/ukraine-azov-battalion.html>

¹³⁰ Luhn, Alex. "Preparing for War with Ukraine's Fascist Defenders of Freedom." *Foreign Policy*. 2014. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/08/30/preparing-for-war-with-ukraines-fascist-defenders-of-freedom/>

¹³¹ Baczynska, Gabriel. "Ultra-nationalist Ukrainian battalion gears up for more fighting." *Reuters*. 2015. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-azov/ultra-nationalist-ukrainian-battalion-gears-up-for-more-fighting-idUSKBN0ML0XJ20150325>

¹³² Colborne, Michael. "There's One far-right Movement that Hates the Kremlin." *Foreign Policy*. 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/17/theres-one-far-right-movement-that-hates-the-kremlin-azov-ukraine-biletsky-nouvelle-droite-venner/>

¹³³ Gomza, Ivan, & Johann Zajaczkowski. "Black Sun Rising: Political Opportunity Structure Perceptions and Institutionalization of the Azov Movement in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine." *Nationalities Papers*. 2019. 47(5): 774-800. doi:10.1017/nps.2019.30

¹³⁴ Kuzmenko, Oleksiy. "Ukrainian Far-Right Fighters, White Supremacists Trained by Major European Security Firm." *Bellingcat*. 2018. <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2018/08/30/ukrainian-far-right-fighters-white-supremacists-trained-major-european-security-firm/>

¹³⁵ Umland, Andreas. "Irregular Militias and Radical Nationalism in Post-Euromaydan Ukraine: The Prehistory and Emergence of the 'Azov' Battalion in 2014." *The 21st Century Cold War*, 2020, 105–31. <https://doi.org/10.1201/9780367855123-7>; Kuzmenko, Oleksiy. "Ukrainian Far-Right Fighters, White Supremacists Trained by Major European Security Firm." *Bellingcat*. Bellingcat, January 18, 2022. <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2018/08/30/ukrainian-far-right-fighters-white-supremacists-trained-major-european-security-firm/>

¹³⁶ Petik, Oles, and Denys Gorbach. "The Rise of Azov." *Open Democracy*. Open Democracy, February 15, 2016. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/rise-of-azov/>.

The group also received funding from Ukrainian oligarch and governor of Donetsk, Serhiy Taruta.¹³⁷ Taruta was a billionaire who was appointed to the Donetsk region in March 2014 shortly before a separatist insurgency broke out.¹³⁸

In 2016, members of the Azov Regiment and National Corps traveled to Poland where they received special operations training from the European Security Academy. According to Bellingcat, the European Security Academy is “an EU-based company that offers advanced training programs for security, law enforcement and military professionals.” Despite denials from the managing director of the Academy that they vet their attendees to exclude extremists, Azov members, veterans, and members of National Corps have attended “special ops type like training” at their training center in Poland.¹³⁹

The Azov Regiment’s boot camp is located near Urzuf and includes firing ranges, a tank training ground, a barracks, and a close quarters combat training area. The Regiment claimed to pay for these facilities themselves.¹⁴⁰

The group has an active social media presence that it uses for recruitment, fundraising, and messaging. It previously used Facebook and Instagram before it was deplatformed in 2016 for being a “dangerous organization.”¹⁴¹ Evidence suggests that the group may receive support from online goods advertised on Instagram and Facebook through the Misanthropic Division and Wolknvt shopfronts.¹⁴² In 2022, the Azov Movement was using Telegram to broadcast messages about the fight in Mariupol.¹⁴³

The group also received funding from charity donations, diaspora funds, and other European far-right groups.¹⁴⁴ Azov runs an international outreach program, headed by Olena Semenyaka, which networks with other far-right organizations across the U.S. and Europe.¹⁴⁵ This includes

¹³⁷ Al Jazeera. “Profile: Who Are Ukraine's Far-Right Azov Regiment?” Military News | Al Jazeera. *Al Jazeera*, March 1, 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/1/who-are-the-azov-regiment>.

¹³⁸ Harding, Luke. “The billionaire parachuted in to run Ukraine’s most troubled region.” *The Guardian*. 2014. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/25/billionaire-ukraine-troubled-region-serhiy-taruta>

¹³⁹ Kuzmenko, Oleksiy. “Ukrainian Far-Right Fighters, White Supremacists Trained by Major European Security Firm.” Bellingcat. 2018. <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2018/08/30/ukrainian-far-right-fighters-white-supremacists-trained-major-european-security-firm/>

¹⁴⁰ “After More than 3 Years in Bases, Azov Regiment Returns to Front.” *Kyiv Post*. February 1, 2019. <https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/after-more-than-three-years-in-bases-azov-regiment-returns-to-front.html>

¹⁴¹ Shuster, Simon and Billy Perrigo. “Like, Share, Recruit: How a White-Supremacist Militia Uses Facebook to Radicalize and Train New Members.” *Time Magazine*. 2021. <https://time.com/5926750/azov-far-right-movement-facebook/>

¹⁴² “Hatebook: Facebook’s neo-Nazi shopfronts funding far-right extremism.” Center for Countering Digital Hate. 2021. https://www.counterhate.com/files/ugd/f4d9b9_55b47be4de914daf866cfa1810cc56c5.pdf

¹⁴³ “Besieged Ukrainian city of Mariupol appeals for help.” *Al Jazeera English*. 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/4/mariupol-ukraine-russian-siege>

¹⁴⁴ Ayres, Sabra. “Driven by far-right ideology, Azov Battalion mans Ukraine’s front line.” *Al Jazeera America*. 2014. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/7/24/ukraine-azov-battalion.html>

¹⁴⁵ Miller, Christopher. “Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights on U.S., Europe.” *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights On U.S., Europe, November 19, 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html>.

running events and recruitment efforts out of European and American white supremacist and neo-Nazi groups such as the Nordic Resistance Movement, Rise Above Movement, Casa Pound, and Atomwaffen Division.¹⁴⁶

Andriy Biletsky claims the vast majority of funding for National Corps comes from individual donations by party members and activists across Ukraine.¹⁴⁷ However, in 2020-2021, a Ukrainian anti-corruption non-governmental organization called *Chesno* investigated National Corps donations. *Chesno* revealed a suspicious pattern. On 5 distinct occasions, there were exactly 20 donors from western Ukraine who simultaneously donated 990 *hryvnias* (Ukrainian currency). *Chesno* claimed this pattern suggests the money was actually donated directly to headquarters, who then dispersed the donation through local offices to give the appearance of organic donations by local activists, disguising the true source of contributions. Although these claims have not been fully verified, should they be true, National Corps would be required to register centralized donations like this to the Ukrainian government.¹⁴⁸

International recruitment efforts run through Azov's international events, in particular mixed martial arts competitions.¹⁴⁹ Individual recruits from abroad are brought through the "Cossack House", a social center run by the Azov Movement in Kyiv which contains a cultural center, printing services, meeting facilities and office space for leadership. The Cossack House also operates as a hub for arriving recruits.¹⁵⁰

E. GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS

Disclaimer: This is a partial list of where the militant organization has bases and where it operates. This does not include information on where the group conducts major attacks or has external influences.

¹⁴⁶ Miller, Christopher. "Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights on U.S., Europe." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights On U.S., Europe, November 19, 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html>. Miller, Christopher. "Ukraine Deported Two American Members of a Neo-Nazi Group Who Tried to Join a Far-Right Military Unit for 'Combat Experience.'" *BuzzFeed News*. *BuzzFeed News*, October 8, 2020. <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/christopherm51/ukraine-deports-american-neo-nazi-atomwaffen-division>.

Lister, Tim. "The Nexus between Far-Right Extremists in the United ..." *Combating Terrorism Center At West Point*. Combating Terrorism Center At West Point, April 2020. <https://ctc.usma.edu/the-nexus-between-far-right-extremists-in-the-united-states-and-ukraine/>.

¹⁴⁷ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022, P. 89.

¹⁴⁸ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022, P. 89.

¹⁴⁹ Miller, Christopher. "Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights on U.S., Europe." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights On U.S., Europe, November 19, 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html>.

¹⁵⁰ Shuster, Simon, and Billy Perrigo. "How a Far-Right Militia Uses Facebook to Train New Members." *Time*. *Time*, January 7, 2021. <https://time.com/5926750/azov-far-right-movement-facebook/>.

The Azov Battalion initially mobilized in eastern Ukraine and primarily operates around Mariupol.¹⁵¹ In the spring of 2014, it had a training camp in Urzuf, Ukraine at a former presidential summer beach home.¹⁵²

It fought in several major engagements outside Mariupol in 2014.¹⁵³ In February 2022, the group was fighting in Mariupol.¹⁵⁴ Most of the Azov Regiment, save for wounded soldiers who were medically evacuated, was either killed or captured by invading forces during the conclusion of the siege of the Azovstal plant in Mariupol in May.¹⁵⁵ New Azov movement detachments began fighting in the vicinity of Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Dnipro.¹⁵⁶

The group has an active social media presence that it uses for recruitment, fundraising, and messaging. The Southern Poverty Law Center reported connections or support to Azov by the Iron March online forum, famous for hosting far-right extremists and Neo-nazis.¹⁵⁷ Iron March was dissolved in 2017 and users migrated to alternative forums.¹⁵⁸ It previously used Facebook and Instagram before it was deplatformed in 2016 for being a “dangerous organization.”¹⁵⁹ Evidence suggests that the group may receive support from online goods advertised on Instagram and Facebook through the Misanthropic Division and Wolknvt shopfronts.¹⁶⁰ In 2022, it was using Telegram to broadcast messages about the fight in Mariupol.¹⁶¹

STRATEGY

¹⁵¹ Newman, Dina. “Ukraine conflict: ‘White power’ warrior from Sweden.” *BBC*. 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28329329>; Levy, Bernard-Henri. “A Visit to Europe’s Front with Russia.” *Wall Street Journal*. 2020. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/a-visit-to-europes-front-with-russia-11587166080>

¹⁵² Ayres, Sabra. “Driven by far-right ideology, Azov Battalion mans Ukraine’s front line.” *Al Jazeera America*. 2014. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/7/24/ukraine-azov-battalion.html>

¹⁵³ Ayres, Sabra. “Driven by far-right ideology, Azov Battalion mans Ukraine’s front line.” *Al Jazeera America*. 2014. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/7/24/ukraine-azov-battalion.html>

¹⁵⁴ Cookman, Liz. “‘Babushka Battalion’ Ready to Protect Ukraine from Russia.” *Russia-Ukraine war News | Al Jazeera*. February 15, 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/14/babushka-battalion-ready-to-protect-ukraine-from-russia>

¹⁵⁵ Tobias, Ben. “Mariupol’s Azovstal Fighters: What next for Ukraine’s Captured Soldiers.” *BBC News*. *BBC*, May 18, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-61493182>.

¹⁵⁶ O’Connor, Tom. “As Ukraine Rallies Nation to Defend from Russia, Far-Right Joins the Fight.” *Newsweek*. 2022. <https://www.newsweek.com/ukraine-rallies-nation-defend-russia-far-right-joins-fight-1684187>

¹⁵⁷ Hayden, Michael Edison. “Visions of Chaos: Weighing the Violent Legacy of Iron March.” *Southern Poverty Law Center*. Southern Poverty Law Center, February 15, 2019. <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2019/02/15/visions-chaos-weighing-violent-legacy-iron-march>.

¹⁵⁸ Hayden, Michael Edison. “Visions of Chaos: Weighing the Violent Legacy of Iron March.” *Southern Poverty Law Center*. Southern Poverty Law Center, February 15, 2019. <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2019/02/15/visions-chaos-weighing-violent-legacy-iron-march>.

¹⁵⁹ Shuster, Simon and Billy Perrigo. “Like, Share, Recruit: How a White-Supremacist Militia Uses Facebook to Radicalize and Train New Members.” *Time Magazine*. 2021. <https://time.com/5926750/azov-far-right-movement-facebook/>

¹⁶⁰ “Hatebook: Facebook’s neo-Nazi shopfronts funding far-right extremism.” *Center for Countering Digital Hate*. 2021. https://www.counterhate.com/files/ugd/f4d9b9_55b47be4de914daf866cfa1810cc56c5.pdf

¹⁶¹ “Besieged Ukrainian city of Mariupol appeals for help.” *Al Jazeera English*. 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/4/mariupol-ukraine-russian-siege>

A. IDEOLOGY AND GOALS

Azov, and the Ukrainian far-right more broadly, mixes classic right wing themes, including antisemitism, ethnocentrism, homophobia, and racism, with more populist economic proposals arguing for a greater role of the state in society.

The ideology of the Azov Movement is rooted in early 1900s Ukrainian Nationalism. Several key historical figures influence Azov's ideology. Mykola Stsiborksyi, a senior ideologue in a nationalist Ukrainian political party in the 1930s, established the idea of Natsiokratii, or Natiocracy, a totalitarian system influenced by Italian fascism. Natiocracy held that capitalist liberal democracy only furthered the interests of competing groups, furthering exploitation and that liberty and equality were mere empty promises. Natiocracy also champions nationalism as a state's defining purpose and rejects the principles of universal suffrage and equal civil rights.¹⁶² Under Stsiborksyi's Natiocracy plan, the national elite govern under a single dictator, the economy is entirely under state control, and equal rights do not exist. In his political commentary, Biletsky referenced Natiocracy as the means to "form a political system that would ensure only professional and competent Ukrainians come to power." The Azov Movement's publishing house, Plomin, published editions of Natiocracy with the wolfsangel logo, and translated it into German for wider distribution.¹⁶³ Housed in the Cossack House in Kyiv, Plomin functions as a literary salon and publisher for National Corps. The interior walls were decorated with imagery of fascist ideologues from the early 1900s, including Yukio Mishima, Carl Schmitt, Ernst Junger, Oswald Spengler, and Julius Evola.¹⁶⁴ A journalist who traveled to the Cossack House and interviewed Plomin staff, as well as high ranking National Corps and National Militia leadership, characterized the publisher as perceiving itself as the "a harbinger of a broader, nobler intellectual and spiritual battle against the liberal ethos".¹⁶⁵

Mykola Kravchenko, chief ideologue for the National Corps before he was killed in a Russian airstrike in March 2022, advocated for a concept he called "multilevel citizenship" as a part of Stsiborksyi's Natiocracy.¹⁶⁶ Kravchenko specifically criticizes universal suffrage as "the main reason for the very real deconstruction of the institution of national statehood". Several tenets of this ideology include greater authority for the state to strip away civil rights and citizenship,

¹⁶² Kuzmenko, Oleksiy. "Far-Right Group Made Its Home in Ukraine's Major Western Military Training Hub." IERES Occasional Papers, no. 11. September 2021. <https://www.illiberalism.org/far-right-group-made-its-home-in-ukraines-major-western-military-training-hub/>

¹⁶³ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P. 40-41

¹⁶⁴ Roussinos, Aris, Daniel Bessner, Seth Harp, and Hannah Zeavin. "The Armies of the Right, by Aris Roussinos." *Harper's Magazine*. *Harper's Magazine*, December 14, 2020. <https://harpers.org/archive/2021/01/the-armies-of-the-right-ukraine-militias/>.

¹⁶⁵ Roussinos, Aris, Daniel Bessner, Seth Harp, and Hannah Zeavin. "The Armies of the Right, by Aris Roussinos." *Harper's Magazine*. *Harper's Magazine*, December 14, 2020. <https://harpers.org/archive/2021/01/the-armies-of-the-right-ukraine-militias/>.

¹⁶⁶ Iryna Pavlenko, "Latest Ukraine News Today - Kyivpost," *Kyiv Post* (Kyiv Post, May 2, 2022), <https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics>.; Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P 37

rights should be based on merit, voting should be restricted to select people, and some votes should count more than others.¹⁶⁷

Dmitri Dontsov was another Ukrainian Nationalist writer in the early 1900s century, Dontsov propagated an idea of militant nationalism for Ukraine, wherein the nation is a collective entity with a will carried out by a national elite, and a advocacy for violence rooted in a theory of amorality – any act was justified as long as it was for the good of the nation. In 2018, Biletsky described the work as a “classic”. Eduar Yurchenko, a far-right ideologue with a history of affiliation with the Azov Movement, gave a speech to the National Corps in which he claimed Dontsov was key to understanding the “general crisis of European civilization”, which Ukrainians “have a mission to counter”.¹⁶⁸

Azov’s ideology exploits the militaristic aspects of historical Ukrainian figures. One example is Sviatoslav, a ruler in the 900s who conquered the Khazar Empire, whose rulers and part of the population were Jewish. Sviatoslav and is widely revered by the far-right today. In 2015, Andriy Biletsky built a statue of Sviatoslav in Mariupol, taking the place of a statue of Lenin.¹⁶⁹ The Azov Movement references him as a model hero of Ukraine, and used historical artifacts believed to be linked to Sviatoslav as a means of generating support and recruits in its youth organizations.¹⁷⁰

Similarly, the Azov Movement constantly evokes the Cossacks, a people from the northern Black Sea region with a history of militarism in the 1600s century. Various myths and imagery of the Cossacks are utilized by factions across the political spectrum to include liberals, soviet propagandists and Ukrainian Nationalists. This imagery is typically used to support political narratives centering individualism, patriotism, and bravery. Azov uses Cossack symbolism the same way, and as a means of centering themselves as the heroic defenders of Ukraine.¹⁷¹

Azov’s founder, Andriy Biletsky, stated it was Ukraine’s mission to “Lead the white races of the world in a final crusade... against semite-led subhumans.”¹⁷² Biletsky’s group, Patriot Ukraine, precursor to the Azov Battalion, was characterized as a neo-nazi and ultra-nationalist

¹⁶⁷ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine’s Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P 37-38

¹⁶⁸ “Eduard Yurchenko - Leader of Orden, University Professor and ‘Traditionalist.’” Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Reporting Radicalism. Accessed June 28, 2022. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/people/eduard-yurchenko-leader-of-orden-university-professor-and-traditionalist/>; Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine’s Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P. 39

¹⁶⁹ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine’s Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P 17

¹⁷⁰ Bateson, Ian. ““A People Without a History Won’t Fight”: The Battle to Control Ukraine’s Past.” World Policy Journal 34, no. 1 (2017): 42-46. muse.jhu.edu/article/652803.

¹⁷¹ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine’s Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P 19

¹⁷² Hume, Tim. “How a Far-Right Battalion Became a Part of Ukraine's National Guard.” VICE. VICE, February 16, 2022. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/3ab7dw/azov-battalion-ukraine-far-right/>; Petik, Oles, and Denys Gorbach. “The Rise of Azov.” Open Democracy. Open Democracy, February 15, 2016. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/rise-of-azov/>.

organization, and Patriot Ukraine was assimilated into Azov in 2014.¹⁷³ Members and leaders of the Azov Battalion later denied its neo-Nazi ties despite members having swastika tattoos and patches with extreme-right insignia.¹⁷⁴

Olena Semenyaka, spokeswoman and head of Azov's international outreach office, has articulated a vision in which Azov takes over Ukraine. In remarks to the Nordic Resistance Movement, Semenyaka said "We are on the march to power and we will either have to get there by parliament or by other means".¹⁷⁵ In a 2020 interview, Semenyaka articulated a vision of Ukraine as the center of an "Intermarium", or political union, of conservative Central European countries, which would defend its ethnocultural values against Russia, the West, and increasing globalization.¹⁷⁶ An instructor at an Azov run summer camp for Ukrainian children stated that "only nationalists can give something to this country, not democrats, not liberals".¹⁷⁷ Azov's political ambitions are slow and steady. Characterized as "metapolitics", Azov pursues a political strategy centered around gradually shifting the mainstream closer to themselves to capture cultural power as a precondition for the capture of political power.¹⁷⁸ Semenyaka has referred to this strategy in her public remarks, stating that Azov's strategy is to build "cultural hegemony" as a means to building political hegemony.¹⁷⁹

B. POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

In November 2008, Biletsky created the umbrella Social Nationalist Assembly (SNA) movement.¹⁸⁰ The movement was a derivative of the earlier political party Social-National Party of Ukraine (SNPU), which later became known as Svoboda. The SNA contained members from

¹⁷³ Petik, Oles, and Denys Gorbach. "The Rise of Azov." Open Democracy. Open Democracy, February 15, 2016. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/rise-of-azov/>.

"Profile: Who Are Ukraine's Far-Right Azov Regiment?" Military News | Al Jazeera. *Al Jazeera*, March 1, 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/1/who-are-the-azov-regiment>.

¹⁷⁴ Bennetts, Marc. "Ukraine's National Militia: 'We're not neo-Nazis, we just want to make our country better'." *The Guardian*. 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/13/ukraine-far-right-national-militia-takes-law-into-own-hands-neo-nazi-links>

¹⁷⁵ Colborne, Michael. "Inside the Extremist Group That Dreams of Ruling Ukraine." *Haaretz.com*. *Haaretz*, February 23, 2019. <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/.premium-inside-the-extremist-group-that-dreams-of-ruling-ukraine-1.6936835>

¹⁷⁶ Roussinos, Aris, Daniel Bessner, Seth Harp, and Hannah Zeavin. "The Armies of the Right, by Aris Roussinos." *Harper's Magazine*. *Harper's Magazine*, December 14, 2020. <https://harpers.org/archive/2021/01/the-armies-of-the-right-ukraine-militias/>.

¹⁷⁷ Ukraine's Far-Right Children's Camp: 'I Want to Bring up a Warrior'. *The Guardian*. *The Guardian*, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiBXmbkwiSw>.

¹⁷⁸ Colborne, Michael. "There's One Far-Right Movement That Hates the Kremlin." *Foreign Policy*. *Foreign Policy Magazine*, April 17, 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/17/theres-one-far-right-movement-that-hates-the-kremlin-azov-ukraine-biletsky-nouvelle-droite-venner/>.

¹⁷⁹ Colborne, Michael. "There's One Far-Right Movement That Hates the Kremlin." *Foreign Policy*. *Foreign Policy Magazine*, April 17, 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/17/theres-one-far-right-movement-that-hates-the-kremlin-azov-ukraine-biletsky-nouvelle-droite-venner/>.

¹⁸⁰ Olzanski, Tadeusz. "Svoboda party – the new phenomenon on the Ukrainian right-wing scene." Center for Eastern Studies. 2011. <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2011-07-05/svoboda-party-new-phenomenon-ukrainian-right-wing-scene>

a collection of nationalist and extreme-right groups in Ukraine which promoted a neo-Nazi ideology.¹⁸¹ Members from the SNA later joined Azov.

In 2016, Andriy Biletsky created a political party known as the National Corps.¹⁸² Biletsky became the de facto political leader of the National Corps although he did not have an official position. Olena Semenyaka is the head and spokesperson for the National Corps.¹⁸³ In 2018, the U.S. Department of State published a country report from the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, which characterized National Corps as a “Nationalist Hate Group”.¹⁸⁴

In 2017, National Corps entered a coalition with other far-right political groups, most notably Right Sector, and Svoboda. These groups signed a document they called the “Nationalist Manifesto”, which outlined a political goal of “the acquisition and development of the Great Ukrainian State”. A coalition like this meant running under a single party, and fewer candidates from each group campaigning. Leading up to 2019, the parties struggled to consolidate their leadership, and decide who would run for office on the unified ticket from which parties. In June of 2019, Svoboda announced members of National Corps and Right Sector would be running among their list of candidates, including Andriy Biletsky, Andrii Tarasenko, and Dmytro Yarosh.¹⁸⁵

The coalition only garnered 2.3% of the vote and failed to gain any seats, less than half of the 5% needed to gain any seats in Parliament.¹⁸⁶ Some scholars suggested the group did not have ambitions to command large political power, but to radicalize the population and help normalize extreme-right, neo-Nazi ideas in Ukrainian politics.¹⁸⁷ Olena Semenyaka stated in 2019 interviews that Azov and National Corps sought to “develop parallel state structures” and “entry strategies to save the Ukrainian state” in the event of Ukraine’s President Zelensky becoming “a puppet of the Kremlin.”¹⁸⁸ Furthermore, by 2019, corruption was widely viewed as the number 1 issue by Ukrainian voters, not the war. Without their favored issue on the political center stage,

¹⁸¹ Brayman, Lolita. “Ukrainian Nationalists Strive to Shake Off Allegations of anti-Semitism.” *Haaretz*. 2014. <https://www.haaretz.com/jewish/.premium-ukrainians-rebut-anti-semitism-talk-1.5327269>

¹⁸² Colborne, Michael. “There’s One far-right Movement that Hates the Kremlin.” *Foreign Policy*. 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/17/theres-one-far-right-movement-that-hates-the-kremlin-azov-ukraine-biletsky-nouvelle-droite-venner/>

¹⁸³ Miller, Christopher. “Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights on U.S., Europe.” *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. November 14, 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html>

¹⁸⁴ “National Corps - Political Party.” Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Reporting Radicalism, 2021. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-corps-political-party>.

¹⁸⁵ Matthew. “The far-right and the 2019 Parliamentary Election.” Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Accessed July 15, 2022. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/thematic-analyses/the-far-right-and-the-2019-parliamentary-election>.

¹⁸⁶ Colborne, Michael. “The far-right Just Got Humiliated in Ukraine’s Election — but Don’t Write It Off Just Yet.” *Haaretz*. 2019. <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/.premium-the-far-right-just-got-humiliated-in-ukraine-s-election-but-don-t-write-it-off-1.7563138>

¹⁸⁷ Colborne, Michael. “There’s One far-right Movement that Hates the Kremlin.” *Foreign Policy*. 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/17/theres-one-far-right-movement-that-hates-the-kremlin-azov-ukraine-biletsky-nouvelle-droite-venner/>

¹⁸⁸ Roussinos, Aris. “The truth about Ukraine’s far-Right militias.” *Unherd*. 2022. <https://unherd.com/2022/06/the-truth-about-ukraines-nazi-militias/>

the far-right candidates failed to communicate a narrative which resonated with broader Ukrainian society. Petro Poroshenko's party also utilized patriotic rhetoric, which undercut the far-right's primary message.¹⁸⁹

The Cossack House, and Plomin specifically, drive the core of National Corps ideological message, and the message of the broader Azov Movement. The Cossack House serves as a multipurpose political headquarters, recruiting center, and publishing house, where leadership from various parts of the Azov Movement collect themselves. Prior to the 2014 Maidan Revolution, the building served as military housing. During the violence of the revolution, Azov took over control and now leases it from the Ministry of Defense. The House includes offices, a lecture hall, film club, free gym for members, and the Plomin publishing house. The Cossack House published leaflets advertising Azov's youth camps, claiming they provided weapons training and patriotic education. Publication and distribution of the Christchurch, New Zealand Mosque shooter's manifesto also came from the Cossack House. Olena Semenyaka, when she was National Corps spokeswoman and head of Azov's international outreach, worked out of the Cossack House.¹⁹⁰

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, National Corps announced the suspension of all political activities to take up arms against Russian Forces.¹⁹¹

C. TARGETS AND TACTICS

The Azov military wing is predominantly a light infantry force, but did possess heavier equipment including armored personnel carriers, artillery and tanks.¹⁹² From 2014-2022 Azov conducted patrols around Mariupol in search of pro-Russian forces, dug trenches and defensive positions, and organized cells around Mariupol to fortify the city's defenses.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹ Matthew. "The far-right and the 2019 Parliamentary Election." Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Reporting Radicalism in Ukraine. Accessed July 15, 2022. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/thematic-analyses/the-far-right-and-the-2019-parliamentary-election>.

¹⁹⁰ Roussinos, Aris, Daniel Bessner, Seth Harp, and Hannah Zeavin. "The Armies of the Right, by Aris Roussinos." Harper's Magazine;. *Harper's Magazine*, December 14, 2020. <https://harpers.org/archive/2021/01/the-armies-of-the-right-ukraine-militias/>.

¹⁹¹ Schipani, Andres, and Roman Olearchyk. "Don't Confuse Patriotism and Nazism!: Ukraine's Azov Forces Face Scrutiny." Financial Times. *Financial Times*, March 29, 2022. <https://www.ft.com/content/7191ec30-9677-423d-873c-e72b64725c2d>.

¹⁹² Baczynska, Gabriela. "Ultra-Nationalist Ukrainian Battalion Gears up for More Fighting." Reuters. Thomson Reuters, March 25, 2015. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-azov/ultra-nationalist-ukrainian-battalion-gears-up-for-more-fighting-idUSKBN0ML0XJ20150325>

Lister, Tim. "The Nexus between Far-Right Extremists in the United ...". Combating Terrorism Center At West Point. Combating Terrorism Center At West Point, April 2020. <https://ctc.usma.edu/the-nexus-between-far-right-extremists-in-the-united-states-and-ukraine/>.

¹⁹³ Ostrovsky, S. (2014). Under Fire with the Azov Battalion: Russian Roulette. Vice: Under Fire with the Azov Battalion: Russian Roulette. *Vice*. Retrieved March 6, 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKnFSzMefiY>

In 2014 and 2015, the Azov Battalion reportedly engaged in the detention, interrogations, and torture of a Mariupol resident.¹⁹⁴ In 2016, members of the Azov Regiment forcibly obstructed the entrance to a Ukrainian TV channel station after the TV channel broadcast a Russian journalist.¹⁹⁵ In 2018, the National Militia targeted Roma and LGBT minorities in Ukraine.¹⁹⁶ The National Militia publicized their attacks through livestreams on Facebook.

In January and February 2022, the Azov Regiment conducted civilian training programs in Kyiv and Mariupol in preparation for a Russian invasion.¹⁹⁷ The Russian invasion led to a siege of Mariupol beginning in March 2022 where Azov forces once again resisted enemy forces using a combination of small arms, defensive maneuvers, and lightly-armed attacks.¹⁹⁸

Other Azov units such as those formed in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Dnipro also began the war using similar infantry tactics in the defense of their respective sectors of the frontline. However, these Azov units had better access to foreign-supplied anti-tank weapons relatively early in the war, unlike the National Guard Regiment, which was largely cut off from Ukrainian supply lines.¹⁹⁹ Some of the larger Azov units, such as the Azov SSO, have also been able to employ heavy artillery in addition to lighter artillery such as mortars.²⁰⁰ The Kraken special unit, which is also engaged in “reconnaissance and sabotage” actions, has been depicted using heavy artillery as well.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁴ “Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine 15 February to 15 May 2016.” Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.” 2016.

https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/Ukraine_14th_HRMMU_Report.pdf#page=18

¹⁹⁵ “Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine 15 February to 15 May 2016.” Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.” 2016.

https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/Ukraine_14th_HRMMU_Report.pdf#page=32

¹⁹⁶ Miller, Christopher. “With Axes And Hammers, Far-Right Vigilantes Destroy Another Romany Camp In Kyiv.” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*. 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-far-right-vigilantes-destroy-another-romany-camp-in-kyiv/29280336.html>

¹⁹⁷ Cookman, Liz. “‘Babushka Battalion’ Ready to Protect Ukraine from Russia.” *Russia-Ukraine war News | Al Jazeera*. *Al Jazeera*, February 15, 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/14/babushka-battalion-ready-to-protect-ukraine-from-russia>. Miller, Christopher. “Ukraine’s Far-Right Forces See an Opportunity in Russia’s Invasion Threat to Grow Their Violent Movement.” *BuzzFeed News*. *BuzzFeed News*, February 22, 2022. <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/christopherm51/ukraine-russia-invasion-far-right-training>

¹⁹⁸ Sonne, Paul, and Ellen Nakashima. “Russia’s Siege of Mariupol a Grim Sign for Other Major Ukrainian Cities.” *The Washington Post*. *The Washington Post*, March 4, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/03/04/ukraine-russia-siege-tactics-mariupol/>.

¹⁹⁹ Some examples of Azov unit uses of newly-received antitank weapons include the following: “Postril z NLW ‘vid pershoyi osoby’, biytsi ‘Azovu’ demonstruyut’ efektyvne vykorystannya tsiyeyi zbroyi (video).” *Defense Express*. May 20, 2022. https://defence-ua.com/news/postril_z_nlaw_vid_pershoji_osobi_bijtsi_azovu_demonstrujut_efektivne_vikoristannja_tsijeji_zbroji_video-7430.html; O’Connor, Tom. “As Ukraine Rallies Nation to Defend from Russia, Far-Right Joins the Fight.” *Newsweek*. March 2, 2022. <https://www.newsweek.com/ukraine-rallies-nation-defend-russia-far-right-joins-fight-1684187>; NEXTA (@nexta_tv). “A shipment of NLAW grenade launchers and instructors from #NATO countries arrived in #Kharkiv. The Azov regiment was the first to learn about new weaponry.” Tweet. March 8, 2022. https://twitter.com/nexta_tv/status/1501171543371665408

²⁰⁰ Dmyro. “Artylerysty SSO «Azov» znyshchyly oporny punkt rosiys’koyi armiyi (VIDEO).” *Shotam*. June 22, 2022. <https://shotam.info/artylerysty-ss0-azov-znyshchyly-oporny-punkt-rosiyskoi-armii-video/>

²⁰¹ Konoplyova, Maryna. “Spetspidrozdil KRAKEN znyshchyv pozytsiyu okupantiv na Kharkivshchyni (VIDEO).” *Shotam*. July 2

The Cossack House, and Plomin specifically, drive the core of National Corps ideological message, and the message of the broader Azov Movement. The Cossack House serves as a multipurpose political headquarters, recruiting center, and publishing house, where leadership from various parts of the Azov Movement collect themselves. Prior to the 2014 Maidan Revolution, the building served as military housing. During the violence of the revolution, Azov took over control and now leases it from the Ministry of Defense. The House includes offices, a lecture hall, film club, free gym for members, and the Plomin publishing house. The Cossack House published leaflets advertising Azov's youth camps, claiming they provided weapons training and patriotic education. Publication and distribution of the Christchurch, New Zealand Mosque shooter's manifesto also came from the Cossack House. Olena Semenyaka, when she was National Corps spokeswoman and head of Azov's international outreach, worked out of the Cossack House.²⁰²

The Azov Movement uses a variety of media strategies to garner attention in Ukrainian media. Leaders like Biletsky and Zhorin frequent talk shows and newscasts on numerous Ukrainian networks.²⁰³ The Movement also uses a mixture of public and individual Telegram channels to push its message. Biletsky's personal channel had 20,000 followers by 2021.²⁰⁴ *Ukraina 24/7*, one of the most popular Russian language channels in Ukraine with over 400,000 subscribers, regularly posted Azov's content. It is also likely much of the pro-Azov content on public Telegram channels was paid and sponsored by the Movement.²⁰⁵ Azov has also had some success in curtailing negative coverage. In 2021, a state funded TV channel broadcast a YouTube video critical of the far-right in Ukraine. Zhorin, as well as Serhiy Sternenko of Right Sector, publicly condemned the channel until they removed the clip from broadcast.²⁰⁶

The political elements of the Azov Movement also capitalize on the credibility veterans of the war receive in Ukraine. Polling in 2021 showed the armed forces as Ukraine's most trusted institution.²⁰⁷ Azov exploits this by presenting itself as having battled Ukraine's enemies, Azov attempts to equate criticism of them as criticism of Ukrainian veterans in general.²⁰⁸

MAJOR ATTACKS

²⁰² Roussinos, Aris, Daniel Bessner, Seth Harp, and Hannah Zeavin. "The Armies of the Right, by Aris Roussinos." *Harper's Magazine*. *Harper's Magazine*, December 14, 2020. <https://harpers.org/archive/2021/01/the-armies-of-the-right-ukraine-militias/>.

²⁰³ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022, P. 110.

²⁰⁴ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022, P. 110.

²⁰⁵ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022, P. 110.

²⁰⁶ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P. 112

²⁰⁷ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global Far Right*. Columbia University Press, 2022, P. 112

²⁰⁸ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022. P. 113

Disclaimer: These are some selected major attacks in the militant organization's history. It is not a comprehensive listing but captures some of the most famous attacks or turning points during the campaign.

April 2014: The Azov Battalion's first violent attack was in April 2014 when it clashed with Russian-backed separatists in Donetsk (Unknown Killed, Unknown Wounded).²⁰⁹

June 13, 2014: The Azov Battalion seized Mariupol from Russian-backed separatists (36 Killed, 24 Wounded). At this time the Battalion was a volunteer militia, and a sub-state actor, acting with the permission of Ukrainian authorities.²¹⁰

June 2018: Members of the National Militia attacked a Roma camp outside Kyiv. Twenty men destroyed the camp and live-streamed it on Facebook (Zero Killed, Zero Wounded). As National Militia is a wing of National Corps, a political party, this attack was carried out by a sub-state actor, not an agent of the Ukrainian government.²¹¹

February – May 2022: On February 22, Russian forces invaded Ukraine. Combat forces clashed with members of the Azov Regiment and other Azov movement units in Mariupol, Kyiv, and Kharkiv. (Unknown Killed, Unknown Wounded).²¹² Although most of the Azov Regiment was killed or captured during the siege of Mariupol, other Azov units continue to operate in the vicinity of Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, and other sectors of the frontline in eastern Ukraine.²¹³

July 2022: International news reported Azov SSO fighters video online of a drone strike against Russian forces. It is the first reported footage of an Azov affiliated unit using a drone to drop explosives.²¹⁴ Azov SSO units are integrated alongside Ukrainian Special Operations Forces and are extensions of the Azov Regiment.²¹⁵

²⁰⁹ Chazan, Guy. "Ukrainian volunteer fighters with a luxurious seaside residence". *Financial Times*. 2014. <https://www.ft.com/content/f00b9d16-196a-11e4-8730-00144feabdc0>

²¹⁰ Krushelnycky, Askold. "Ukraine Wins a Battle in the East." *Foreign Policy*. 2014.

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/06/16/ukraine-wins-a-battle-in-the-east/>; Krushelnycky, Askold. "The Battle for Mariupol." Atlantic Council. 2014. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/the-battle-for-mariupol/>

²¹¹ Miller, Christopher. "With Axes And Hammers, Far-Right Vigilantes Destroy Another Romany Camp In Kyiv." *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*. 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-far-right-vigilantes-destroy-another-romany-camp-in-kyiv/29280336.html>; GTD Perpetrator 40855. Global Terrorism Database. Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. Last modified September 2019.

<https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=40855>

²¹² O'Connor, Tom. "As Ukraine Rallies Nation to Defend from Russia, Far-Right Joins the Fight." *Newsweek*. 2022. <https://www.newsweek.com/ukraine-rallies-nation-defend-russia-far-right-joins-fight-1684187>

²¹³ "Rosiy's'ka Federatsiya zavzhdy boyalasya "Azov"" - ekskomandyr polku Zhorin," *Censor.net*. June 3, 2022. https://censor.net/ua/news/3345805/rosiyiska_federatsiya_zavjdy_boyalasya_azov_ekskomandyr_polku_jorin

²¹⁴ "Ukrainian Troops use drone to drop bomb on Russian soldiers in a trench," *The Sun*, June 29 2022, Youtube video, 1:14, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGDVXwG270c>

²¹⁵ Bodnar, Natalya. "Mariupol' i 'Azov' uzhe stali istoricheskimi pozorom dlya Rossii, – eks-komandir polka Maksim Zhorin," *24 Kanal*. May 13, 2022. https://24tv.ua/ru/mariupol-azov-uzhe-stali-istoricheskimi-pozorom-dlja-rossii-jeks_n1977820 and Pustiva, Valentina. "V Khar'kove stvoreno novoye podrazdeleniye SSO AZOV." *Korrespondent.net*. May 30, 2022. <https://korrespondent.net/ukraine/4482129-v-kharkove-sozdano-novoe-podrazdeleniye-ss0-azov>

August 2022: Azov SSO units in Kharkiv claimed credit for an attack on Russian forces outside the village of Ternova, in the Kharkiv region. A commander of the SSO unit claimed the attack destroyed several vehicles, an outpost, ammunition depot, and killed 7 Russian combatants.²¹⁶ Azov SSO units are integrated alongside Ukrainian Special Operations Forces, and are extensions of the Azov Regiment.²¹⁷

INTERACTIONS

A. DESIGNATED/LISTED

In May 2014, Ukraine designated the Azov Battalion as an official volunteer battalion status.²¹⁸

On September 17, 2014, Ukraine designated the Azov Battalion as a “regiment.”²¹⁹

On November 12, 2014, Ukraine redesignated the Azov Battalion a “Special Purpose Regiment” and formally integrated it into the National Guard.²²⁰

In 2016, Facebook designated the Azov Battalion a “dangerous organization,” which allows it to regulate Azov content and deplatform Azov-related pages.²²¹ In February 2022, Facebook’s parent company Meta announced that it would be temporarily loosening this designation to allow discussion of the Azov Regiment in the context of Ukrainian defense efforts. The ban still prohibited Azov from using Facebook for messaging, advertising, and recruiting.²²²

²¹⁶ “Ukraine’s Azov SOF Unit Eliminates Russia’s Troops, Observation Post, Arms Depot in Kharkiv Region (Video).” Defense Express, August 15, 2022. https://en.defence-ua.com/news/ukraines_azov_sof_unit_eliminate_russias_troops_observation_post_arms_depot_in_kharkiv_region_video-3893.html.

²¹⁷ Bodnar, Natalya. “Mariupol’ i ‘Azov’ uzhe stali istoricheskimi pozorom dlya Rossii, – eks-komandir polka Maksim Zhorin,” *24 Kanal*. May 13, 2022. https://24tv.ua/ru/mariupol-azov-uzhe-stali-istoricheskimi-pozorom-dlja-rossii-jeks_n1977820 and Pustiva, Valentina. “V Khar’kove stvoreno novoye podrazdeleniye SSO AZOV.” *Korrespondent.net*. May 30, 2022. <https://korrespondent.net/ukraine/4482129-v-kharkove-sozdano-novoe-podrazdeleniye-sso-azov>

²¹⁸ Chazan, Guy. “Ukrainian volunteer fighters with a luxurious seaside residence”. *Financial Times*. 2014. <https://www.ft.com/content/f00b9d16-196a-11e4-8730-00144feabdc0>

²¹⁹ Umland, Andreas. “Irregular Militias and Radical Nationalism in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine: The Prehistory and Emergence of the “Azov” Battalion in 2014.” *Terrorism and Political Violence*. 2019. 31(1): 105-131, DOI: [10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974](https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974)

²²⁰ Umland, Andreas. “Irregular Militias and Radical Nationalism in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine: The Prehistory and Emergence of the “Azov” Battalion in 2014.” *Terrorism and Political Violence*. 2019. 31(1): 105-131, DOI: [10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974](https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1555974)

²²¹ Shuster, Simon and Billy Perrigo. “Like, Share, Recruit: How a White-Supremacist Militia Uses Facebook to Radicalize and Train New Members.” *Time Magazine*. 2021. <https://time.com/5926750/azov-far-right-movement-facebook/>

²²² Biddle, Sam. “Facebook allows praise of neo-Nazi Ukrainian Battalion if it Fights Russian Invasion.” *The Intercept*. 2022. <https://theintercept.com/2022/02/24/ukraine-facebook-azov-battalion-russia/>

Annual U.S. military support to Ukraine has included a ban on any material from going to the Azov Battalion since 2017. While the language in the Congressional Bill refers to the defunct Azov “Battalion”, it has been interpreted to mean a ban on material support from going to the Regiment specifically.²²³

B. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Azov operated an annual children’s camp in 2015 and 2017, where attendees were known as “Azovets.” The purpose of these camps is to instill in children a sense of patriotism, nationalist ideas, and promote support for Azov.²²⁴ The camps involve mock military drills, instruction in nationalist beliefs, and other tutelage.²²⁵

Azov has a street wing faction known as the National Druzhyna or National Militia, which aims to promote law and order within local neighborhoods.²²⁶

The group held parades in Mariupol to commemorate the anniversary of the 2014 battle.²²⁷

Prior to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Azov ran training sessions for civilians in Mariupol including medical care, survival and evacuation, and weapons training.²²⁸ In Kyiv, roughly 350 civilians attended a paramilitary training event run by Azov.²²⁹

C. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER GROUPS

Azov is notable for its recruitment of far-right foreign fighters from the U.S. and Europe as well as its extensive transnational ties with other far-right organizations. Azov recruits foreign fighters on the basis of its white supremacist and neo-Nazi ideology to fight against pro-Russian

²²³ Kheel, Rebecca. “Congress bans arms to Ukraine militia linked to neo-Nazis.” *The Hill*. 2018.

<https://thehill.com/policy/defense/380483-congress-bans-arms-to-controversial-ukrainian-militia-linked-to-neo-nazis>

²²⁴ “The photos show scenes from a youth paramilitary camp near Kyiv in 2015 and 2017.” AFP. 2022.

https://ph.news.yahoo.com/photos-show-scenes-youth-paramilitary-094721451.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xiLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAADiH6sspGgDU5UpdefMRKSj_Klq6biFUeppartoAT6FRQ_Yn47TAp2evc9-WdRkzflHLZOGtMBWX3NFKmJOpW95H7-PhU_g1xfRH7Agdqr5L-K2v0w6M4ANHzguIG_Kpb5ANYULWAAUjYIiRFvjmSL4n8JWaqysWJST_pzbXXa_k

Nonjon, Adrien. “Olena Semenyaka, The “First Lady” of Ukrainian Nationalism.” *Illiberalism Studies*. 2020.

<https://www.illiberalism.org/olena-semenyaka-the-first-lady-of-ukrainian-nationalism/>

²²⁵ “Ukraine's Hyper-Nationalist Military Summer Camp for Kids | NBC Left Field.” *NBC News*. YouTube. 2017.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CpV16BQfbrQ>

²²⁶ “National Militias - Paramilitary group associated with National Corps and Azov movement.” Reporting Radicalism. N.d. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/national-militias>

²²⁷ “Ukraine: Far-right Azov Battalion hold parade for fourth 'victory' anniversary.” Ruptly. 2017.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tu3zsOu5PNw>

²²⁸ Cookman, Liz. “'Babushka Battalion' Ready to Protect Ukraine from Russia.” *Russia-Ukraine war News* | Al Jazeera. *Al Jazeera*, February 15, 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/14/babushka-battalion-ready-to-protect-ukraine-from-russia>

²²⁹ Miller, Christopher. “Ukraine's Far-Right Forces See an Opportunity in Russia's Invasion Threat to Grow Their Violent Movement.” *BuzzFeed News*. *BuzzFeed News*, February 22, 2022.

<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/christopherm51/ukraine-russia-invasion-far-right-training>

separatists in eastern Ukraine. The group has recruited fighters from eastern Ukraine as well as Belarus, Germany, Sweden, Spain, Italy, Canada, France, and Russia.²³⁰ The Soufan Center reported that between 2014-2019 approximately 50,000 people from 17 countries – including the United States – traveled to fight in Ukraine although it is hard to determine how many specifically fought with Azov or were affiliated with far-right extremism.²³¹ A report by the Counter Extremism Project estimates that western foreign fighters in Ukraine with previous ties to right wing extremism numbered in the hundreds, and that the Azov Movement is the key hub for these extremists.²³²

European Far-Right and Identitarian Movement. Members of the Azov Movement have met with members of other European far-right political parties including Italy’s CasaPound and Germany’s National Democratic Party.²³³ In 2017, the Azov Movement hosted a conference at which a CasaPound representative emphasized the far-right in Europe’s movement was about “redefining politics — language, symbolism and aesthetics.”²³⁴ Other attendees at the conference included members from the French identitarian Union Defense Group (GUD), Alliansen – Alternativ for Norge, and American white nationalist Greg Johnson.²³⁵

Olena Semenyaka is a prominent “diplomat” of the Azov Movement. She has traveled extensively around Europe to network with other far-right nationalist and Identitarian movements in Europe. She gave a lecture at an Identitarian Conference in 2019 where Jared Taylor and Kevin MacDonald were present. She also attended a Eesti Konservatiivne Rahvaerakond (EKRE)-sponsored celebration in 2019 and a Portuguese Identitarian conference with Escudo Identitario in 2019.²³⁶ She has also engaged with the hate rock scene and met with members of Wotan Jugend as well as the German group Absurd, the French Peste Noire, and the Finnish Goatmoon.²³⁷

²³⁰ Ayres, Sabra. “Driven by far-right ideology, Azov Battalion mans Ukraine’s front line.” Al Jazeera America. 2014. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/7/24/ukraine-azov-battalion.html>; Newman, Dina. “Ukraine conflict: ‘White power’ warrior from Sweden.” BBC. 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28329329>; Seldin, Jeff. “White Supremacists Lead New Wave of Foreign Fighters.” *VOA News*. 2019. https://www.voanews.com/a/usa_white-supremacists-lead-new-wave-foreign-fighters/6176687.html

²³¹ Seldin, Jeff. “White Supremacists Lead New Wave of Foreign Fighters.” *VOA News*. 2019.

https://www.voanews.com/a/usa_white-supremacists-lead-new-wave-foreign-fighters/6176687.html

²³² Rekawek, Kacper. Rep. Career Break or a New Career: Extremist Foreign Fighters in Ukraine. Counter Extremism Project, 2020.

²³³ Colborne, Michael. “There’s One far-right Movement that Hates the Kremlin.” *Foreign Policy*. 2019.

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/04/17/theres-one-far-right-movement-that-hates-the-kremlin-azov-ukraine-biletsky-nouvelle-droite-venner/>

²³⁴ Colborne, Michael. “The far-right Just Got Humiliated in Ukraine’s Election — but Don’t Write It Off Just Yet.” *Haaretz*. 2019. <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/.premium-the-far-right-just-got-humiliated-in-ukraine-s-election-but-don-t-write-it-off-1.7563138>

²³⁵ Nonjon, Adrien. “Olena Semenyaka, The “First Lady” of Ukrainian Nationalism.” *Illiberalism Studies*. 2020. <https://www.illiberalism.org/olena-semenyaka-the-first-lady-of-ukrainian-nationalism/>

²³⁶ Nonjon, Adrien. “Olena Semenyaka, The “First Lady” of Ukrainian Nationalism.” *Illiberalism Studies*. 2020. <https://www.illiberalism.org/olena-semenyaka-the-first-lady-of-ukrainian-nationalism/>

²³⁷ Nonjon, Adrien. “Olena Semenyaka, The “First Lady” of Ukrainian Nationalism.” *Illiberalism Studies*. 2020. <https://www.illiberalism.org/olena-semenyaka-the-first-lady-of-ukrainian-nationalism/>

Right Sector. The Right Sector has been described as a “sister group” of the Azov Regiment.²³⁸ Right Sector was one the most prominent far-right Ukrainian groups involved in the Euromaidan protests, which toppled president Yanukovich. Right Sector was an extreme-right, ultra-nationalist group which favored authoritarian politics and later opposed pro-Russian separatists.²³⁹ Right Sector was described as an umbrella organization for other militant organizations including Trident, and the Azov predecessor organizations, Patriot of Ukraine and the Social National Assembly.²⁴⁰

Misanthropic Division. Azov has a strong affiliation with the Misanthropic Division. The Misanthropic Division is a nihilistic neo-Nazi paramilitary organization with similar ideological views as Azov. It originally formed around 2014 and participated in the Euromaidan Protests. In 2015, the Misanthropic Division published a manifesto pledging “immediate support” for the Azov Battalion.²⁴¹ By 2021, Misanthropic had largely merged with the Azov movement and disavowed militant activities.²⁴² However, Misanthropic Division remained active on social media setting up various shopfronts for selling merchandise, advertising, and fundraising through the Walknvt platform.²⁴³

C14/S14. C14 is a neo-Nazi nationalist group in Kyiv. It conducted an attack with Right Sector and Azov in 2016 against the left-wing Autonomous Resistance in Lviv.²⁴⁴ The group typically attacks Roma and minority communities.²⁴⁵

Atomwaffen Division. AWD made contact with the Azov Movement. In 2015, AWD founder Brandon Russell reached out to an anonymous member of the Azov Regiment online. Presenting himself as “an avid supporter of the Azov Battalion” under the username “Odin,” Russell

²³⁸ Ayres, Sabra. “Driven by far-right ideology, Azov Battalion mans Ukraine’s front line.” *Al Jazeera America*. 2014. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/7/24/ukraine-azov-battalion.html>

²³⁹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “Ukraine: Information on the Right Sector, Including Affiliated Groups and Activities; Involvement in Eastern Ukraine; Relations with Authorities (2013-July 2016).” *Refworld*, Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 22 July 2016, www.refworld.org/docid/57b6d7424.html.

²⁴⁰ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “Ukraine: Information on the Right Sector, Including Affiliated Groups and Activities; Involvement in Eastern Ukraine; Relations with Authorities (2013-July 2016).” *Refworld*, Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 22 July 2016, www.refworld.org/docid/57b6d7424.html.

²⁴¹ “14 Points of Misanthropic Division International”, Ukrainian Crusade, 26 March 2015, <https://web.archive.org/web/20170620215802/https://ukrainiancrusade.blogspot.com/2015/03/14-points-of-misanthropic-division.html>

²⁴² “Hatebook: Facebook’s neo-Nazi shopfronts funding far-right extremism.” Center for Countering Digital Hate. 2021. https://www.counterhate.com/files/ugd/f4d9b9_55b47be4de914daf866cfa1810cc56c5.pdf

²⁴³ “Hatebook: Facebook’s neo-Nazi shopfronts funding far-right extremism.” Center for Countering Digital Hate. 2021. https://www.counterhate.com/files/ugd/f4d9b9_55b47be4de914daf866cfa1810cc56c5.pdf

²⁴⁴ “C14 - Radical right-wing group with youth camps, paramilitary unit and history of violence.” Reporting Radicalism. N.d. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/c14-radical-right-wing-group-with-youth-camps-paramilitary-unit-and-history-of-violence>

²⁴⁵ “C14 - Radical right-wing group with youth camps, paramilitary unit and history of violence.” Reporting Radicalism. N.d. <https://reportingradicalism.org/en/dossiers/groups/c14-radical-right-wing-group-with-youth-camps-paramilitary-unit-and-history-of-violence>

requested “some advice from you about my militia that I lead in the US.”²⁴⁶ It is unclear what, if any, assistance he may have received from Azov Regiment members. In addition to Russell, the Azov Movement is known to have made contact with at least one other member of AWD. In January 2016, Andrew Oneschuk, a roommate of Russell, served as a guest on the Azov Regiment’s podcast, which frequently hosts representatives of far-right organizations in Europe and North America. He spoke about challenges facing Americans who wish to join Azov in Ukraine as foreign fighters and expressed interest in learning tips in boosting membership of the extreme right.²⁴⁷ In October 2020, Ukraine deported two American Atomwaffen members who were allegedly trying to join the Azov Regiment in order to gain experience fighting.²⁴⁸

AWD Ukraine. Ukraine allegedly hosts a group claiming to be an AWD affiliate, though the cell is not sanctioned by AWD central in the United States. Like AWD Russia, the official name of this organization is unclear; for ease of reference, this profile has adopted the term “self-declared AWD Ukraine.” Some sources have referred to this group by the name “AWD Galizien.”²⁴⁹ “Galizien” is a reference to a unit of the Nazi Waffen-SS composed largely of ethnic Ukrainians during the Second World War. In December 2019, the self-declared AWD Ukraine released a video featuring five men wearing camouflage fatigues with AWD patches and threatening violence against Ukrainian politicians.²⁵⁰ The men also wore blurred-out patches for two Ukrainian far-right organizations, the Azov Battalion and Right Sector.²⁵¹

Rise Above Movement. In Ukraine, Olena Semenyaka, head of the National Corps hosted members of the U.S.-based extreme right Rise Above Movement (RAM).²⁵² Semenyaka later stated that the RAM’s leader Rundo and his compatriots “came to learn our ways” and “showed interest in learning how to create youth forces in the ways Azov has.”²⁵³ During their visit, the RAM members joined the Azov Movement for sparring at the Reconquista Club, a mixed martial

²⁴⁶ Lister, Tim. “The Nexus Between Far-Right Extremists in the United States and Ukraine.” *CTC Sentinel* 13, no. 5 (April 2020): 30–41. <https://ctc.usma.edu/the-nexus-between-far-right-extremists-in-the-united-states-and-ukraine/>

²⁴⁷ Kuzmenko, Oleksiy. “‘Defend the White Race’: American Extremists Being Co-Opted by Ukraine’s Far-Right.” *Bellingcat*. February 15, 2019. <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2019/02/15/defend-the-white-race-american-extremists-being-co-opted-by-ukraines-far-right/>

²⁴⁸ Miller, Christopher. “Ukraine Deported Two American Members Of A Neo-Nazi Group Who Tried To Join A Far-Right Military Unit For ‘Combat Experience.’” *Buzzfeed News*. 2020. <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/christopherm51/ukraine-deports-american-neo-nazi-atomwaffen-division>

²⁴⁹ Blazakis et al. “Special Report: The Atomwaffen Division: The Evolution of the White Supremacy Threat.” *The Soufan Center*. August 2020. <https://thesoufancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/The-Atomwaffen-Division-The-Evolution-of-the-White-Supremacy-Threat-August-2020-.pdf>

²⁵⁰ “Extremist Content Online: White Supremacists Celebrate Jersey City Shooting on Telegram.” *Counter Extremism Project*. December 17, 2019. <https://www.counterextremism.com/press/extremist-content-online-white-supremacists-celebrate-jersey-city-shooting-telegram>

²⁵¹ “Extremist Content Online: White Supremacists Celebrate Jersey City Shooting on Telegram.” *Counter Extremism Project*. December 17, 2019. <https://www.counterextremism.com/press/extremist-content-online-white-supremacists-celebrate-jersey-city-shooting-telegram>

²⁵² Miller, Christopher. “Azov, Ukraine’s Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights on U.S., Europe.” *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. November 14, 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html>

²⁵³ Miller, Christopher. “Azov, Ukraine’s Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights on U.S., Europe.” *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. November 14, 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html>

arts (MMA) club affiliated with the group.²⁵⁴ Rundo entered an MMA competition for white supremacists from across Europe, supposedly the first American to take part in the history of the event.²⁵⁵ While in Kyiv, Rundo also got a tattoo of the Viking warrior logo of White Rex, a clothing label founded by Russian MMA fighter and Azov Movement associate Denis Nikitin.²⁵⁶

Russian Imperial Movement. The Russian Imperial Movement is an adversary of the Azov Movement in the Ukrainian conflict.²⁵⁷ In 2014 and 2015, RIM's paramilitary force fought alongside pro-Russian separatists. Though Azov and RIM share some white supremacy extremist beliefs, they have fought on opposite sides in Ukraine's civil war.

Feuerkrieg Division. Members of FKD expressed admiration for the Azov Regiment. Jarrett William Smith, for example, expressed admiration for Ukrainian far-right paramilitary groups like the Misanthropic Division and Azov. He had desired to travel to Ukraine to fight with the Azov Regiment to receive combat training. When he was unable to do so, he joined the US military instead.²⁵⁸ In 2020, Smith was arrested and convicted of distributing information on social media of how to make a bomb.²⁵⁹

D. STATE SPONSORS AND EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

Ukraine gave the Azov Battalion official volunteer battalion status in May 2014.²⁶⁰ It became an official part of the Interior Ministry's National Guard later that year.²⁶¹

American citizens have been amongst the extremists traveling to Ukraine with the expressed purpose of training with or joining the Azov Regiment. American extremists traveling to Ukraine have included avowed neo-Nazis and white supremacists, as well as individuals subject to criminal investigation and arrest by American law enforcement. For example, four members of the violent white supremacist group, Rise Above Movement, were arrested by the FBI for

²⁵⁴ Miller, Christopher. "Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights on U.S., Europe." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. November 14, 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html>

²⁵⁵ "Rise Above Movement (R.A.M.)." Anti-Defamation League. 2020. <https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/rise-above-movement-ram>

²⁵⁶ Miller, Christopher. "Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights on U.S., Europe." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. November 14, 2018. <https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html>

²⁵⁷ Blazakis, Jason et al. "Inside the Russian Imperial Movement: Practical Implications of U.S. Sanctions." The Soufan Center. April 2020. <https://thesoufancenter.org/research/inside-the-russian-imperial-movement-practical-implications-of-u-s-sanctions/>

²⁵⁸ "U.S. Army Specialist with Links to Neo-Nazi Group Pleads Guilty." ADL. Anti-Defamation League, February 11, 2020. <https://www.adl.org/resources/blog/us-army-specialist-links-neo-nazi-group-pleads-guilty>.

²⁵⁹ "Ex-Soldier in Kansas with Neo-Nazi Links Sentenced to 21/2 Years in Bomb Plot." *Los Angeles Times*. *Los Angeles Times*, August 20, 2020. <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2020-08-20/satanist-ex-soldier-sentenced-to-2-1-2-years-in-bomb-plot>.

²⁶⁰ Chazan, Guy. "Ukrainian volunteer fighters with a luxurious seaside residence". *Financial Times*. 2014. <https://www.ft.com/content/f00b9d16-196a-11e4-8730-00144feabdc0>

²⁶¹ *Ukraine: Azov battalion commander found dead*. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. 27 July 2015. <https://www.refworld.org/docid/55ee961a15.html>

violence at protests. In the FBI's criminal complaint, the investigators noted the four arrestees had traveled to Ukraine with the expressed purpose of training with the Azov Regiment.²⁶² Two members of the U.S. based Atomwaffen Division, an accelerationist Neo-Nazi group, were deported by Ukrainian authorities in 2020 for attempting to join the Azov Regiment.²⁶³ American military veterans have also joined Azov through their international recruitment program alongside far-right European volunteers.²⁶⁴

Far-right European volunteers have included veterans of European militaries, including the Swedish and Croatian militaries.²⁶⁵ Russian dissidents have also joined the Azov Regiment. Unable to protest in Russia, these individuals traveled to Ukraine to directly join the fighting, and signed up for the Azov Regiment since it is predominantly a Russian speaking group.²⁶⁶

In 2016, members of the Azov Regiment and National Corps traveled to Poland where they received special operations training from the European Security Academy, a private company which caters training programs for security, law enforcement, and military professionals.²⁶⁷ The group also received funding from charity donations, diaspora funds, and other European far-right groups.²⁶⁸

National Corps runs youth camps, claiming to provide a patriotic education alongside weapons training. These camps received funding from the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture.²⁶⁹

In early 2022, President Zelensky announced the formation of the International Legion, an organization specifically organized around foreign fighters travelling to Ukraine to fight against

²⁶² Laguardia, Francesca. 2020. CONSIDERING A DOMESTIC TERRORISM STATUTE AND ITS ALTERNATIVES †. *Northwestern University Law Review* 114, (4): 1061-1099, <http://proxygw.wrlc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/considering-domestic-terrorism-statute/docview/2366698608/se-2?accountid=11243>

²⁶³ Miller, Christopher. "Ukraine Deported Two American Members of a Neo-Nazi Group Who Tried to Join a Far-Right Military Unit for 'Combat Experience.'" *BuzzFeed News*. BuzzFeed News, October 8, 2020. <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/christopherm51/ukraine-deports-american-neo-nazi-atomwaffen-division>.

²⁶⁴ Shuster, Simon, and Billy Perrigo. "How a Far-Right Militia Uses Facebook to Train New Members." *Time*. *Time*, January 7, 2021. <https://time.com/5926750/azov-far-right-movement-facebook/>.

²⁶⁵ Lister, Tim. "The Nexus between Far-Right Extremists in the United ..." *Combating Terrorism Center At West Point*. *Combating Terrorism Center At West Point*, April 2020. <https://ctc.usma.edu/the-nexus-between-far-right-extremists-in-the-united-states-and-ukraine/>.

²⁶⁶ Vickery, Matthew. "Ukraine's Other Russians." *Al Jazeera*. *Al Jazeera*, September 26, 2015. <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2015/9/25/ukraines-other-russians>.

²⁶⁷ Kuzmenko, Oleksiy. "Ukrainian Far-Right Fighters, White Supremacists Trained by Major European Security Firm." *Bellingcat*. 2018. <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2018/08/30/ukrainian-far-right-fighters-white-supremacists-trained-major-european-security-firm/>

²⁶⁸ Ayres, Sabra. "Driven by far-right ideology, Azov Battalion mans Ukraine's front line." *Al Jazeera America*. 2014. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/7/24/ukraine-azov-battalion.html>

²⁶⁹ Roussinos, Aris, Daniel Bessner, Seth Harp, and Hannah Zeavin. "The Armies of the Right, by Aris Roussinos." *Harper's Magazine*. *Harper's Magazine*, December 14, 2020. <https://harpers.org/archive/2021/01/the-armies-of-the-right-ukraine-militias/>.

the Russian military.²⁷⁰ By March 6, 2022, President Zelensky claimed 16,000 foreigners had already volunteered to fight, again though it is difficult to estimate how many of these are joining the Azov Movement, or Regiment more specifically.²⁷¹ By July, 2022, the Ukrainian military kept details of the International Legion, including numbers and home countries of volunteers, as closely guarded information.²⁷² Therefore little additional information has been made publicly available.

Arsen Avakov, as Interior Minister of Ukraine from 2014-2021, provided substantial support to PU, the Azov Battalion, and the broader movement post 2014.²⁷³ Avakov began first providing support to PU when he was mayor of Kharkiv from 2005 to 2014. The Azov Battalion was incorporated into the Ukrainian National Guard within the Interior Ministry at the beginning of Avakov's term as Minister.²⁷⁴ Avakov took a method of cooperation with far-right organizations in Ukraine, and helped create an environment where those groups can operate with relative impunity.²⁷⁵ Avakov sabotaged efforts at police reform, and during his time as Minister attacks carried out by far-right groups were rarely fully investigated.²⁷⁶ In 2018, Biletsky stated he spoke with Avakov several times a year.²⁷⁷ Michael Colborne, Bellingcat reporter who focuses on the far-right and Azov Movement, characterized the relationship between Avakov and Azov as mutually beneficial.²⁷⁸ The Movement has relative autonomy, but is sometimes called upon to conduct actions favorable to Avakov.²⁷⁹

MAPS

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²⁷⁰ Bella, Timothy, and Annabelle Timsit. "Zelensky Says 16,000 Foreigners Have Volunteered to Fight for Ukraine against Russian Invasion." *The Washington Post*. *The Washington Post*, March 3, 2022.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/03/03/zelensky-ukraine-16000-foreign-volunteers-russia/>.

²⁷¹ Bella, Timothy, and Annabelle Timsit. "Zelensky Says 16,000 Foreigners Have Volunteered to Fight for Ukraine against Russian Invasion." *The Washington Post*. *The Washington Post*, March 3, 2022.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/03/03/zelensky-ukraine-16000-foreign-volunteers-russia/>.

²⁷² "How Foreign Far-Right Volunteers Are Arriving to Fight in Ukraine." Antifascist Europe. Antifascist Europe, May 30, 2022. <https://antifascist-europe.org/ukraine/how-foreign-far-right-volunteers-are-arriving-to-fight-in-ukraine/>.

²⁷³ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022, P. 83.

²⁷⁴ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022, P. 83.

²⁷⁵ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022, P. 84.

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²⁷⁸ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022, P. 85.

²⁷⁹ Colborne, Michael. *From the Fires of War: Ukraine's Azov Movement and the Global far-right*. Columbia University Press, 2022, P. 85.