

U.S. Military Assistance to Ukraine in 2022: Impact Assessment

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This research is part of the ATAC project “Western Tools Short of War: Impact Assessment of Selected Use Cases in Ukraine”

Scope & Methods

Assessing tools short of war employed by the United States to help Ukraine in 2022:

1. Arms transfers
 2. Troop training
 3. Collaboration in the information space
- Based on unclassified sources
 - 10 SME interviews (PLN, LT, U.S.)
 - Focus on U.S. efforts – but joint NATO effort is part of the impact

Ukraine War 2022

Antecedent: Jan 1 - Feb 23

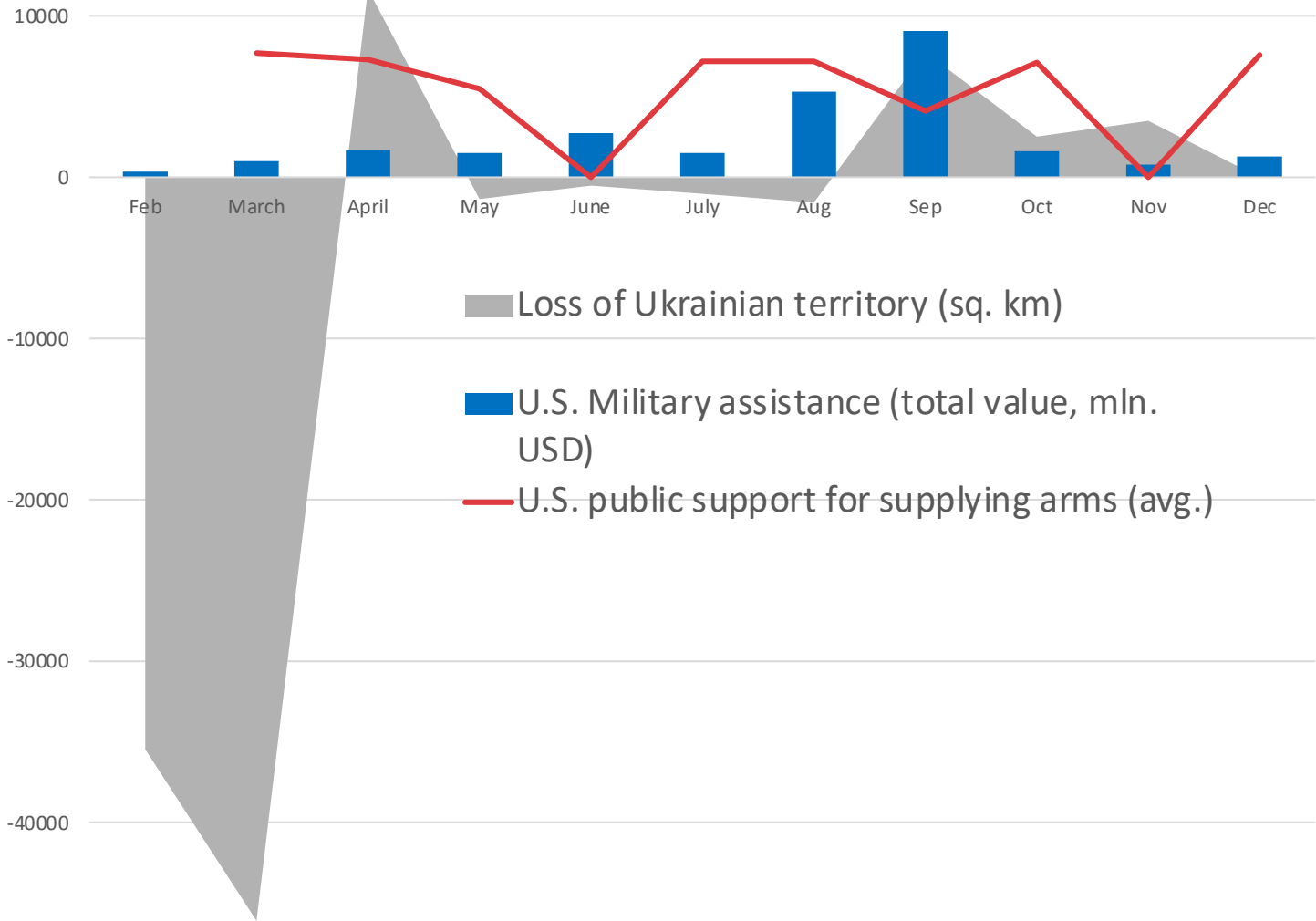
Phase 1 (Feb 24 – March 30): initial scramble to counter the Russian invasion, limited foreign assistance

Phase 2 (April 1 – May 11): boost in military assistance, Ukrainian resilience

Phase 3 (June 1 – July 31): stalemate / incremental advances / attrition, arrival of *HIMARS*

Phase 4 (Aug 1 – Oct 7): Ukrainian counter-offensive

Phase 5 (Oct 8 – Dec 31): Ukraine's bombing of the Kerch bridge, Russian destruction of energy infrastructure



1. Arms Transfers

1. Advanced weaponry

- Popular signal
- HIMARS - decisive for summer offensives, despite reduced range
- Older systems just as valuable
- System diversity is increasingly problematic

2. Gradual vertical U.S. escalation (more and more sophisticated weaponry) has successfully avoided a major Russian response

3. Arms diversions

- None detected yet
- Concerns about the post-/frozen conflict (especially small arms)

2.1 Troop Training

1. 2014-2020 training - significant force multiplier
2. Weapons training - Shortened cycles give only basic instruction
 - Fail to instill user culture
 - Higher-than-usual repair rates (1/3 of equipment being serviced at any given time)
 - Ammunition shortages made worse
3. Limited training on maintenance – logistical challenges and delays

2.2 Troop Training

4. Remote support by U.S. SOF
 - Cultural and language barriers
 - Increasingly impeded by the lack of battlefield familiarity
5. Independent veterans
 - Supplementing tactical training
 - Boosting on-the-ground repairs capabilities
6. Sending U.S. contractors into Ukraine for training and repairs
 - Politically too risky
 - Key recommendation

3.1 Information Space

1. U.S. early public intel sharing
 - Broadly viewed as successful
 - Neither sought nor achieved preemption
 - Facilitated ally consensus building
 - Averted Russian false flag campaigns
 - Impact dampened by previous politicized use of intel (IRQ, AFG)

2. U.S. battlefield intelligence support – key force multiplier
 - Unprecedented speed and extent
 - Alleviating ammunition shortage problem by improving targeting efficiency
 - Boost of morale through high level target engagement (e.g., Moskva, Snake island)

3. Ukraine’s limited sharing of intelligence could reduce the effectiveness of the military assistance
 - Public lobby for more and more sophisticated arms vs. frontline needs
 - Losses and tactical planning

3.2 Information Space

4. Countering Russian cyber offensives
 - Key U.S. private sector assistance (*Starlink*, cloud, network monitoring)
 - Public sector collaboration (threat monitoring)
 - Direct engagement between Russia and NATO member states (PLN, *Viasat*)

5. Ukraine's will to resist - Explained by academic research
 - Defender states with weak institutional capacity - particularly prone to respond with overwhelming force when attacked
 - Survival at stake (prospect theory, asymmetric warfare etc.)
 - Morale (international support, home ground)
 - Relative level of personal identification with Ukraine - strongest predictor of willingness to sacrifice

6. Unanticipated second-order effects - intelligence failures
 - Food crisis due to grain blockade
 - Global conflict environment (Syria, Iran)
 - Limited preparedness in Ukraine (no auxiliary power or heating)

Thank you

Contacts

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Full Reports

- <https://www.start.umd.edu/publication/us-arms-transfers-ukraine-impact-assessment>
- <https://www.start.umd.edu/publication/us-military-training-assistance-ukraine>
- <https://www.start.umd.edu/publication/us-assistance-ukraine-information-space-intelligence-cyber-and-signaling>