

## Motivated no matter what:

### dedication of the Ukrainian military despite hardships

**Unfamiliar weaponry. Lack of time. Language barrier. And yet, motivation.**

Ukrainian military was trained but still not enough for the war that broke out. The allies provided Ukraine with new types of weapons that the Armed Forces of Ukraine have never used before, so the fighters have to learn as fast as possible. In addition, the army was replenished by a lot of men with no experience but with a desire to defend their land. As a result, proper training is to be undergone urgently.



Ukraine primarily uses Soviet-era arms, but they are not efficient enough and have almost run out. The transition to Western or NATO-style weapons, whose supplies are not sufficient as well, has become a challenge for the Ukrainian military. For instance, NATO states use different calibers of ammunition. New Zealand's Captain Jonathan Dick described the **L119 gun**, which fires a 105mm shell, as a "very capable weapon" that is able to "fill a gap" in Ukraine's armory. But all the same, it takes time to learn to use it adequately.

Fortunately, a lot of Ukrainians are already well-trained and experienced soldiers. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the United States, General Mark Milley, has called them "top-notch gunners".



Panzerhaubitze 2000

The colonel of the Bundeswehr artillery, the head of the artillery school Oberst Dietmar Felber witnessed the training of Ukrainians. He said that **they are working to the point of exhaustion** in order to be able to use the **Panzerhaubitze artillery installations** as efficiently as possible in battle. Despite the fact that the Panzerhaubitze is a complicated machine, he says, they understood that there was little time for preparation. And that's why **they trained seven days a week for 10-12 hours**. Sometimes they are trained to their limit.

After "the theory" Ukrainian artillerymen left the laboratory conditions and were able to fire "live". There was no German coach on board, and they practiced their shots on their own. The colonel says he is in contact with this battalion and already knows that they have achieved success on the battlefield with German vehicles.

He emphasizes that the biggest challenge was the writing barrier. If the conversation can still be quickly translated with the aid of a translator, the inscriptions were a real problem. After all, Panzerhaubitze is an interactive weapon. For example, it has a limiter that prevents accidental shots. And when the order to fire is given, the machine actually "asks": to obey the order or not? Ukrainians are used to the Cyrillic alphabet, and initially, it was a challenge. However, some of the inscriptions were already remembered by the end of the day, the colonel says.

According to General Mark Milley, at least two hundred Ukrainian servicemen have already been trained in the combat use and maintenance of **HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery Rocket System)**. And the process of training other specialists is ongoing. He emphasized that the Armed Forces effectively use HIMARS systems, striking Russian command centers, logistics networks, artillery systems, and other targets. *"These strikes significantly reduced the capabilities of the Russians,"* Milli emphasized.

Another weaponry that is not so easy to use and was quite new to the Ukrainian military is the British **Multiple Launch Rocket System (M270 MLRS)**. The MLRS is the British Army's most advanced long-range artillery weapon - similar to the US HIMARS rocket launchers already being used in Ukraine.



Multiple Rocket Launcher System (MLRS)

The usual term of training an MLRS commander is five weeks, no less. However, by the Ukrainian soldiers, it has been done/finished in three weeks. They learned both how to use and maintain the machine.

Captain James Oliphant, of the Royal Artillery, believes that this weapon *"is going to give them [Ukrainians] more mobility which is going to aid in their survivability"*.

**The representative of the US Department of Defense rated the effectiveness of the Armed Forces of Ukraine at 12 points on a scale from 0 to 10.** He noted that the Ukrainian military comprehensively surprised American colleagues, despite the numerical superiority of the enemy. *"They have found ways to do things that we might not have thought were possible"*, he said.

Despite the obvious language barrier Capt Oliphant says they have had a "common language" with the Ukrainians. The latter already have experience in exploiting their rocket missile launchers. Capt Oliphant emphasized that over time the Ukrainian troops have become more accustomed to the UK equipment.

No matter where the training takes place, the Ukrainian troops' diligence is strictly firm. The army is led by motivation, dedication, and the desire to win at any cost.

*"Their motivation to be quick to learn is incredible... they don't take many breaks,"* Warrant Officer Rebecca Bullock, a master gunner with the Royal Artillery, said. They know they do not have much time, she says, so they are motivated to get as much knowledge as possible - *"they just work, work and work and ask a lot of questions"*.

**"How can they be quicker, how can they move faster, how can they come into action? It is all about the speed."**

- Rebecca Bullock

Captain Jonathan Dick who has been training Ukrainians in the use of the L119 gun, said: *"We definitely see a high degree of motivation and dedication to the defense of Ukraine with these guys"*.

The Ukrainian soldiers appreciate the experience and assistance provided by both local and foreign instructors. Training with new weaponry ignited the spark of aspiration in them even more. One of those Ukrainians, who are now undergoing training abroad, says *"We are just tired, but in the same way we are so motivated to continue our struggle"*. He adds then: *"When others realize we have MLRS they will have strong motivation... we are powerful and strong"*.

**The morale of the Ukrainian army is striking.** Despite the language barrier, difficulties with adaptation to new weaponry, and lack of time for proper training, Ukrainians stick to the idea of victory to the extent that nothing else matters.

Weaponry and time. That is what Ukraine urgently needs. Even though the second thing is beyond our control, the first one is not. Although Ukraine appreciates all the assistance and support given by various partners, it is clear that the more weapons will be delivered soon, the more possibilities will be gained by the forces on the frontline. **The arms nourish motivation, and that is necessary not only for the victory of Ukraine but for that of the Western world. Ukraine turned out to be a testing ground for various weapons in real battles, while Ukrainian soldiers appeared to become experts in the exploitation of these very weapons. And such knowledge makes the Ukrainian army one of the mightiest in Europe.**