

# Men of Military Age “Refuse to Fight”. The Are Fleeing the Country. Zelensky Refuses to Take Responsibility for the “Deeply Unpopular Mobilisation Plan”

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*In 2023, Ukrainian border guards (DPSU) detained several young people who were trying to cross the Tisza River on the border with Romania and Hungary to avoid being conscripted and sent to the battlefield, [The Times](#) reported. This revelation comes as Ukrainian **President Volodymyr Zelensky** refuses to take any responsibility for a deeply unpopular mobilisation plan that he wants to introduce.*

Since the beginning of the conflict, the Ukrainian Border Guard has detained more than 17,000 citizens who tried to leave the country illegally. More than 20,000 unsuccessful attempts to flee the country by men of military age seeking to avoid the draft were also recorded.

The Times reported that men now try every day to cross the borders between Ukraine, Romania, and Hungary, risking their lives to enter the forests or cross the Tisza River. According to the outlet, some Ukrainian men attempting to escape the country jumped into the swift winter currents of the Tisza wearing wetsuits and life jackets, whilst others used car tires or rubber rings for the dangerous crossing.

The newspaper also noted that many young people fail to cross the border and end up dead.

“Since 2022, the Mukachevo unit of the DPSU has pulled the bodies of 19 men who drowned trying to cross the river and found a further five frozen to death in the forests. Some men attempt to cross the border without a guide,” the newspaper reported.

These desertion attempts continue to occur while a new bill is being drafted with the aim of mobilising an additional 500,000 people for military service. Clauses of the initiative, which are currently passing through the Ukrainian parliament, include lowering the draft age from 27 to 25, limiting draft exemptions, mobilising men online, and increasing penalties for those who avoid conscription.

Yet, despite the Ukrainian parliament pushing for this, according to Politico, Kiev regime leaders are afraid to take responsibility for the new mobilisation plan. The bill, which was withdrawn on December 11 for review, is so unpopular among Ukrainians that Zelensky prefers it to be proposed by the government and not by him.

Politico admits that Ukrainians are in no rush to join the Ukrainian military amid the failed counteroffensive, corruption scandals, and concerns about human rights violations. According to the newspaper, the initial enthusiasm of Ukrainians and other Eastern European countries to fight Russian forces “evaporated” for these reasons.

Furthermore, the article indicates that the mobilisation also brings economic problems to the country. Around \$46 billion, or more than a fifth of the Ukrainian economy, is dedicated to the futile war effort against Russia.

It is recalled that Zelensky said in December,

“The mobilisation of an additional 450,000 to 500,000 people will cost Ukraine 500 billion hryvnia (\$13.2 billion), and I would like to know where the money will come from. Considering that it takes six Ukrainian working civilians paying taxes to pay the salary of one soldier, I would need to get 3 million more working people somewhere to be able to pay for the additional troops.”

Clarifying this issue in Estonia on January 11, Zelensky said:

“If you are in Ukraine and you are not at the front, but you work and pay taxes, you also defend the state. And this is very necessary,” adding that citizens out of Ukraine who are neither fighting nor paying taxes face an ethical dilemma.

“If we want to save Ukraine, if we want to save Europe, then all of us must understand: Either we help Ukraine or we don’t. Either we are citizens who are at the front, or we are citizens who work and pay taxes,” he said.

However, for the brave talk of mobilisation, the simple fact is that taking people away from their jobs to become soldiers will destroy Ukraine’s already aid-reliant economy. Ukraine is completely reliant on the West, so much so that the plan to plug next year’s \$43 billion budget deficit is to hope foreign financial aid arrives, including 18.5 billion euros from the European Union and more than \$8 billion from a US package containing military assistance.

Effectively, Ukraine does not have a serious economic plan, especially when considering that both US and European packages continue to be blocked and face growing opposition. Since the war began, Ukraine has relied entirely on foreign aid to support social services as its financial resources are funnelled into the military.

With Ukraine having no chance of winning the war and the economy completely in tatters, it is little wonder that Ukrainians are desperately fleeing the country. The mobilisation plan, which Zelensky does not want to take responsibility for after cancelling this year’s election,

has spread panic to the extent that Ukrainians would rather take the risk of drowning in a river to escape the country than forcibly be taken to the frontlines.

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