



Meet Centuria, Ukraine's Western-trained neo-Nazi army



[KIT KLARENBERG](#) · APRIL 7, 2024

<https://thegrayzone.com/2024/04/07/centuria-ukraines-western-neo-nazi-army/>

A uniquely Ukrainian strain of Neo-Nazism is spreading throughout Europe, which openly advocates violence against minorities while seeking new recruits. With Kiev's army collapsing and a narrative of Western betrayal gaining currency, the horror inflicted on residents of Donbas for a decade could very soon be coming to a city near you.

Centuria, an ultra-violent Ukrainian Neo-Nazi faction, has cemented itself in six cities across Germany, and is seeking to expand its local presence. [According to Junge Welt](#), a

Berlin-based Marxist daily, the Nazi organization's growth has been "unhindered by local security services."

Junge Welt traces Centuria's origins to an August 2020 Neo-Nazi summit "at the edge of a forest near Kiev." There, an ultranationalist named Igor "Tcherkas" Mikhailenko demanded the "hundreds of mostly masked vigilante fighters present," who were members Kiev's fascistic National Militia, "make sacrifices for the idea of 'Greater Ukraine.'" As the former head of the Neo-Nazi Patriot of Ukraine's Kharkiv division, and commander of the state sponsored Azov Battalion from 2014 to 2015, Mikhailenko has professed a desire to "destroy everything anti-Ukrainian."

Junge Welt reports that since 2017, the National Militia "had been practicing brutal vigilante justice" throughout Ukraine, including "tyrannizing the LGBTQ scene." Centuria was subsequently blamed for a terrifying November 2021 attack on a gay nightclub in Kiev, in which its operatives assaulted revelers with truncheons and pepper spray.

Now the same Neo-Nazi sect "has an offshoot in Germany," Junge Welt revealed. On August 24 2023, the 32nd anniversary of Ukraine's independence, Centuria convened a "nationalist rally" in the central city of Magdeburg, "unmolested by Antifa and critical media reporting."

Participants proudly posed with the flag of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) founded by World War II-era Nazi collaborator Stepan Bandera. Centuria boasted at the time on Telegram, "although Ukrainian youth are not in their homeland, they are starting to unite." Meanwhile, they threatened the "enemies" of their country with "hellish storm," pledging that "Ukrainian emigrants" would not "forget their national identity for a few hundred euros."

Junge Welt reports that Centuria "is currently raising funds for its parent organization's combat unit," which is commanded by Andriy Biletsky - the Azov Battalion founder who infamously stated in 2014 that the Ukrainian nation's mission was to "lead the white races of the world in a final crusade... against Semite-led Untermenschen." At home, Centuria's members express similar attitudes towards Muslims, Africans, and gays, whom they refer to, respectively, as the "German Caliphate," "black rapists," and "pedophiles."

Now, the group's members are working hard to pass their ideological vision down to future racists across the continent. "We are creating a new generation of heroes!" Centuria's Telegram channel boasts. Accordingly, the neo-Nazi group has been arranging hiking trips to Germany's Harz mountains with a Ukrainian nationalist scout association called Plast. This outfit opened chapters across the Western world beginning in the 1950s, in response to the Soviet Union's hounding of fascists and nationalists. Besides receiving ideological indoctrination, Plast's youthful members may have the opportunity to improve their physical fitness and receive military training. As Centuria ominously declares on Telegram, "free people have weapons."



Opening ceremonies at the Lithuanian scout camp “Iskra” with Plast scouts, 2022
As Washington gradually backs away from its sponsorship of Ukraine’s war with Russia, it has begun ceding responsibility for the military campaign’s management - and likely failure

- to Berlin. If US arms shipments continue to dwindle, Germany will become Kiev's chief supplier of weapons. And the Germans may find that saying "no" to Ukraine could result in some nasty surprises.

Unlike the US, Germany does not enjoy an ocean-length buffer between itself and the fascistic proxy warriors it sponsors in Ukraine. After Ukraine's much-hyped counteroffensive finally collapsed in late 2023, its president, Volodymyr Zelensky, grumbled a veiled threat during an interview with the Economist: "There is no way of predicting how the millions of Ukrainian refugees in European countries would react to their country being abandoned."

While Ukrainians have generally "behaved well" and are "very grateful" to those who sheltered them, it would not be a "good story" for Europe if it were to "drive these people into a corner," Zelensky remarked to the outlet.

To understand how more radical elements of a spent proxy force could turn their guns on the Western governments that armed them, one need only look at the events of September 11, 2001.

A secret Western-backed Nazi network

While Centuria relies heavily on Ukrainian migrants as recruits, it also benefits from an entrenched structure of elite European support.

In September 2021, George Washington University's Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (IERES) published a [detailed and deeply unsettling report](#) which documents how Centuria was nurtured by a "self-described order of 'European traditionalist' military officers that has the stated goals of reshaping the country's military along right-wing ideological lines and defending the 'cultural and ethnic identity' of European peoples against 'Brussels' politicians and bureaucrats.'"

IERES reported that Centuria's military wing began training in 2018 in Ukraine's Hetman Petro Sahaidachny National Army Academy (NAA), Kiev's "premier military education institution and a major hub for Western military assistance to the country."

The paper revealed that "as recently as April 2021, [Centuria] claimed that since its launch, members have participated in joint military exercises with France, the UK, Canada, the US, Germany, and Poland."

Indeed, many of the neo-Nazi group's members have drilled at the de facto NATO base in Yavoriv, just a few kilometers east of the Polish border.



Photo posted by the Canadian Armed Forces in Ukraine in 2020 shows the NAA graduation ceremony at the International Peacekeeping and Security Center in Yavoriv. What's more, "the group claims that its members serve as officers in several units of Ukraine's military. Since at least 2019, Centuria has... [called] on ideologically aligned members of the AFU to seek transfer to specific units where the group's members serve. To attract new members, the group - via its Telegram channel, which has over 1,200 followers and a dedicated mobilization bot - continues to tout its alleged role in the AFU and access to Western training, military, and exchange programs."

Every Western government the IERES researchers approached claimed not to tolerate neo-Nazis in their militaries, insisting they "trusted the Ukrainian government to select and identify the right candidates" for their training programs. But Ukraine's Hetman Petro Sahaidachny National Army Academy (NAA) has explicitly declared it carries out no such screenings, while also denying Centuria operates within its headquarters.

After the report's author reached out to Centuria and the NAA for comment about the training of neo-Nazis, operatives of the extremist movement began purging their online footprints, and have concealed their real-world activities ever since.

Western media outlets have almost completely ignored the IERES report, save for a [single article](#) in the Jerusalem Post. The silence around the issue is all the more unusual given the credentials of [its author](#), a Washington DC-based Ukrainian citizen whose work has been published by US government outlet Voice of America, and the US and UK-government funded "open source" investigative outfit Bellingcat.

Among Western officials, only the Canadian Armed Forces have commented on the report's meticulously-documented findings, [preposterously claiming](#) that photos posted to Facebook by Centuria members had been “doctored” to advance “Russian disinformation.”

Such disingenuity is not surprising given the Canadian military's well-documented history of providing training to hardened Ukrainian fascists – and its refusal to disavow Ukrainian Nazis.

To this day, the leader of the country's military, Gen. Wayne Eyre, continues to [refuse to apologize](#) for giving a standing ovation to Yaroslav Hunka, a WWII Nazi collaborator honored by Canada's parliament.

According to researchers, Centuria fighters within Ukraine have spent at least the last five years attempting to indoctrinate their high-achieving comrades into Neo-Nazism. The IERES report notes that Centuria “has been able to proselytize Ukraine's future military elite inside the NAA.”

Portrait of a British-trained Neo-Nazi

Underlining the extent of the neo-Nazi penetration of Western military apparatuses, NAA cadet Kyrylo Dubrovskiy, attended an 11-month Officer Training Course at Britain's esteemed Sandhurst Royal Military Academy in 2020. Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs [celebrated](#) his graduation while the NAA published a 12-minute [video profile](#) of the new graduate's path to military leadership. IERES noted that Dubrovskiy “showed very keen interest in Centuria matters” while attending the Academy.

Dubrovskiy appears to have narrated a Centuria [promotional video](#) circulated on Telegram in May 2020, in which the group's members are shown marching in Lviv, attending an NAA event, and firing their weapons. Dubrovskiy can be heard intoning, “our officers are raising the new army of Ukraine... We are the Centuria. We are everywhere... defend your territories, your traditions till the last drop of blood.”

A month before, Centuria [posted an interview](#) with an unnamed “cadet of Her Majesty's Armed forces,” a description that could only match one individual: Dubrovskiy. He made clear he preferred training in Ukraine, as British training for military officers “put less emphasis on theory.” During this time, “Dubrovskiy enjoyed access to foreign cadets who visited the Academy,” and “on several occasions escorted foreign delegations that visited the Academy,” including cadets from the US Air Force and the French military.

It is unclear how much “theory” Dubrovskiy injected into the daily routines of Western soldiers with whom he crossed paths while at Sandhurst. IERES concluded that “Dubrovskiy and Centuria leveraged his status as a Sandhurst cadet” to promote the group and its ideology. On the [“about” section](#) of his personal YouTube channel, Dubrovskiy describes himself as “a cadet of the Royal Academy of Great Britain.” There, he posted multiple videos about his experiences at the academy, and at least one message expressing a desire to join the neo-Nazi Azov Regiment.

On Telegram in [December 2020](#), Centuria made clear that infiltrating the Ukrainian military's highest echelons was but the first step in a much wider ideological blitzkrieg: “Centuria is shaping a first-of-its-kind military elite whose goal is to attain the highest ranks inside the Armed Forces in order to become an authoritative core able to hold significant

influence.” After consolidating its hold on the military, the group plans to penetrate the ranks of “Ukraine’s political elite,” in order to “carry out societal changes.”

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