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How they joined? Militants and informers in the armed conflict in Donbas

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ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of recruitment strategies is crucial for sustainability of any insurgent campaign. This paper identifies eight mechanisms used to encourage overt and covert participation in the armed conflict in Donbas and shows that they varied depending on the type of service expected from a recruit. It relies on the original dataset compiled from studying 798 court cases of insurgents and informers convicted in Ukrainian courts in the period from October 2014 to March 2017. The paper finds that militants were more responsive to contractual or hierarchical mechanisms of recruitment, while informers who provided cover support were more likely to join through ideological appeals or activation of prior social ties.

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Introduction

How do insurgents choose their recruitment mechanisms? Why do they prioritize some mechanisms over others? Studies of civil wars point to a variety of explanatory variables from access to resources to community structure and embeddedness of insurgents into locality.¹ In this paper, I point to another variable that may explain relative effectiveness and prevalence of certain recruitment strategies. Rather than focussing on the structural aspects of the insurgency, I examine differences in recruiting two types of participants – militants and informers. Militancy is defined here as direct involvement or material support for the armed struggle on the side of an insurgent group. In addition to the use of force, militants may perform a variety of functions related to the administration of insurgency. The term informer is used to describe individuals providing covert assistance to the insurgency while operating outside rebel-held areas. Informing, then, is an individual collaboration with the insurgency meant ‘to supply information about one side to its rival’.² Throughout the paper, I employ the terms

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informer and collaborator interchangeably, although collaboration usually denotes a broader set of actions. Using the micro-level study of the armed conflict in Ukraine, this paper demonstrates that the same organization may use a variety of recruitment strategies depending on the type of activities it is recruiting for.³ In those cases when it is seeking to recruit militants, it may find the use of strategies based on contractual or hierarchical relations most effective. On the other hand, recruitment of informers is more likely to require pre-existing social ties or ideological commitments. The advantage of one strategy over another depends on how it affects certain parameters of a collective action (CA) problem that a recruiter or a group faces in each specific instance.

The paper consists of five sections. First, I present the analytical framework and explain its relevance for the goals of the study. I then outline data sources used for the study and describe the sample of cases. In the following section, I draw on the available evidence to distinguish between five common recruitment methods used to attract militants and three main methods of recruiting informers. Next, I examine independent effects of timing and location of recruitment. In the conclusion I summarize the findings and point to some of their broader theoretical and methodological implications for the study of insurgencies.

Framework of analysis

This paper adopts a rationalist approach to explaining rebel participation, which starts with acknowledging the CA problem that any nascent rebellion faces.⁴ Since the costs of participation in the rebellion are private, while the benefits are publicly accessible, individuals have a strong incentive to freeride on the efforts of others and avoid participation. Hence, the effectiveness of recruitment mechanisms depends on how they can change the calculus of targeted individuals and reverse the logic that gives rise to CA problem. There are three general ways of minimizing the incentive for freeriding in collective dissent. The one originally proposed by Olson suggests providing selective benefits in return for participation.⁵ If the benefits are significant enough to outweigh the expected costs of individual contribution, participation in collective dissent becomes more likely. The second approach offers lowering costs of individual participation to make it only marginally costlier than non-participation, while at the same time adding process-related benefits, which derive from the value one attaches to personal contribution. The third approach suggests increasing the costs of non-cooperation with rebellion to such an extent that expected costs of involvement no longer deter individual participation.

Building on Olson's analysis, Lichbach differentiates between market and community-based solutions, on one hand, and contractual or hierarchy-based solutions on the other.⁶ The adoption of a specific set of solutions

depends on the extent of planning by entrepreneurs, availability of resources, and prevalence of pre-existing social ties. At the same time, as he stresses, no single solution prevails in any instance of collective rebellion. Rather, rebel groups may simultaneously adopt several strategies to overcome the CA problem leading to the overall growth of the movement. Hence, the study of the dynamics of revolutions or insurgencies requires their disaggregation with a focus on mechanisms for resolving CA problems adopted across localities or organizations. My paper builds on this insight by examining various recruitment mechanisms and establishing the ones that recur across space and time. It also goes further by suggesting that solutions adopted to resolve CA problem depend not only on the choices of those who ask for participation but on the type of participation needed. By differentiating between instances of overt and covert participation in Donbas insurgency, I demonstrate that the former was more likely to be achieved through contractual or hierarchical planning, while the latter relied on community-based solutions.

Some scholars question applicability of CA problem to the study of rebellion. Kalyvas and Kocher, for example, argue that participation in insurgency may improve one's personal safety and can be used as a 'club goods' perk by a rebel organization.⁷ This logic could be more applicable when studying individual behaviour during an ongoing high-intensity insurgency, as in Vietnam, in which exit options for civilians are severely restricted. By contrast, our study covers only the initial period of the armed conflict in Donbas when the intensity of violence was relatively low for most of the time, while civilians had multiple escape routes. In another challenge to a rationalist framework, some authors point to the causal significance of ideological beliefs that elicit 'normative and emotional commitment' of combatants and, thus, can motivate participation irrespectively of its costs.⁸ Individual involvement in the insurgency may then depend on the intensity of one's attachment to certain norms, like justice and fairness, rather than pure cost and benefit calculations.⁹ This paper recognizes the importance of ideological and normative beliefs in explaining participation and shows how some groups adapt their recruitment methods to attract individuals. Ideologues represent a particularly appealing target group for rebel leaders since they minimize the costs of organizing and sustaining CA. At the same time, the evidence presented in the paper corroborates earlier findings that insurgency participation occurs for multiplicity of reasons and an ideological motive is far from being the only one.¹⁰

Dataset and methodology

The armed conflict in Donbas started on 6 April 2014 with the capture of government buildings in Donetsk and Luhansk – the two administrative centres of Donbas region in Eastern Ukraine – by armed men who called for

a referendum on secession from Ukraine. Over the next week, armed groups captured police and security service headquarters in Sloviansk, Kramatorsk, and other towns across the region. Militants also set up checkpoints on major intercity roads and organized self-defence groups to patrol local towns alongside the regular police force. The Ukrainian government responded on 13 April by launching an ‘anti-terrorist operation’, which involved interior troops, regular military forces, and paramilitary units. Despite initial setbacks, Ukrainian forces took control of the major industrial city of Mariupol on 13 June and recaptured most of the southern part of Donetsk oblast by mid-June. The newly elected President Petro Poroshenko intensified the counterinsurgency campaign, which led to the capture of the key cities of Sloviansk in Donetsk oblast on 4 July and Severodonetsk in Luhansk oblast on 22 July. As the frontlines moved closer to Donetsk and Luhansk Russia increased its military assistance to insurgents and, in late August, deployed regular military units to stop the Ukrainian advance. As the Ukrainian troops moved closer to Donetsk and Luhansk Russia increased its military assistance to insurgents. The signing of the Minsk Protocol on 5 September lowered the intensity of the conflict and stabilized the contact line between the two sides (see [Figure 1](#)).

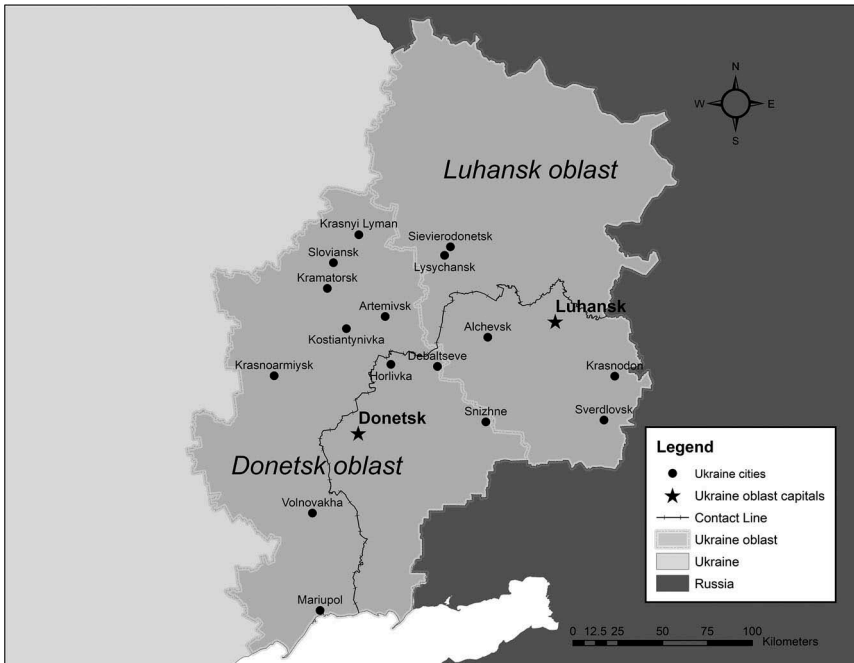


Figure 1. Map of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts with contact line (as of 1 September 2017) by Jonathan Cook, Center for Spatial Research, Baylor University.

This paper represents the first attempt to systematically study individuals who directly or indirectly participated in the conflict on the rebel side. My data are drawn exclusively from Ukrainian official sources and criminal reports compiled by Ukrainian law enforcement officers. After Ukraine regained control over most of Donbas, it launched investigations of local residents who participated in insurgent activities. Ukrainian law enforcement also conducted counterintelligence operations to identify those who kept collaborating with the separatists from Ukrainian-held territory. As a result, thousands of cases have been opened against individuals somehow involved in supporting the insurgency. Using the public registry of court records, I have compiled a dataset of 884 unique individuals convicted in Ukrainian courts on charges related to insurgency in the period from November 2014 to March 2017.¹¹ I then created two subsamples based on the dates of their recruitment and the types of their activity. One of them, consisting of 656 individuals, included only those who joined the insurgency in the first five months (March–July 2014). This represents a sample of early militants whose participation helped to sustain the separatist movement in its initial phase. Another sample consisting of 142 individuals included only those who provided information to separatists from Ukraine-controlled territories from August 2014. I use these two samples to draw pairwise comparison of methods used to recruit early militants and informers into the insurgency. This approach offers several methodological advantages. First, it allows for agency-level micro-foundational analysis, which is still rare in the study of armed conflicts.¹² This enables a more scrupulous examination of individual insurgent pathways, their objectives when entering a rebel group and the types of activities performed in it. Second, it provides a glimpse into a diverse group of rebels who operated in all parts of Donbas.¹³ As a result, any patterns emerging from comparing their individual experience could be more conclusively established given the diversity of the sample. Third, some of the cases also contain multiple witness testimonies, which contextualize the events and offer complementary perspectives. Moreover, given its sensitivity, some of the information revealed in the cases could only be acquired through court testimonies and would unlikely be shared in interviews with social science researchers.

One objection to compiling a sample based on the Ukrainian trial verdicts may be the dubious fairness of the judicial process, which raises question about their reliability. However, an overwhelming number of convictions were based on the guilty pleas of the accused. Ninety-four per cent of cases in the militant sample and 80% of cases in the informers' sample were resolved through plea bargains. In many instances, defendants provided detailed information about the duration, location, and nature of their insurgency-related activities. In a small number of cases where defendants pleaded not guilty, I also examined witness testimonies and other evidence,

such as intercepted communications, presented by the prosecutors to make their case. In several instances when suspects pleaded not guilty and prosecutors provided no direct evidence of their involvement, I abstained from including their cases into the dataset. Thus, two samples consist of individuals whose involvement with the insurgency has been established with high degree of confidence. Moreover, since the paper relies primarily on qualitative evidence drawn from court testimonies, any minor errors in the samples would not affect the overall findings.

Another question relates to the extent that the two samples are representative of the entire population of insurgents and informers. One study based on the sample of captured insurgents in Colombia suggested that they were representative since ‘probability of capture is, over time, more or less equal across guerrilla fighters engaged in active combat’.¹⁴ Using the same logic, one can view the sample of informers as largely representative of those who engaged in covert collaboration with the insurgency. The militant sample, by contrast, cannot be considered representative of all insurgents since most of the militants were captured following their demobilization rather than while they were on active duty. This results in overrepresentation of locals and underrepresentation of foreign fighters, who could not expect to blend in with civilian population and had to flee to avoid capture. As Table 1 shows, both samples consist overwhelmingly of the locals with two-thirds in each sample born in Donbas. The share of participants born in Russia is under 6% in both samples. Hence, the sample of militants could be representative only of the locals who participated in the insurgency. However, since the focus of the present study is on the strategies of recruiting locals, this bias does not affect its overall findings.

The militant sample may also include more insurgents who joined an armed group for non-ideological reasons. Most of the convicted militants in the sample demobilized and returned to their civilian lives before being detained by law enforcement. Militants who expected material rewards or

Table 1. Summary statistics for militants and informers.

	Militants N (total) = 656 % (Total) N (known)	Informers N (Total) = 142 % (Total) N (known)
Male	97.71 (656)	79.58 (142)
Born in Donbas	68.60 (543)	64.08 (107)
Born in Russia	5.79 (543)	5.63 (107)
Citizen of Ukraine	97.71 (648)	97.89 (139)
Checkpoint recruitment	17.23 (255)	Not applicable
Occupied building recruitment	19.36 (255)	Not applicable
Face-to-face recruitment	12.20 (643)	7.75 (137)
Social ties recruitment	2.44 (643)	19.01 (137)
Coerced recruitment	1.83 (643)	3.52 (137)
Ideological motives	7.16 (101)	27.46 (64)
Non-ideological motives	8.23 (101)	18.31 (64)

joined out of fear were more likely to stay and, hence, to be later detained and charged by the law enforcement. Ideologically motivated militants were more likely to retreat to rebel-held areas to continue their resistance. As we see in Table 1, the share of militants testifying to non-ideological motivation only slightly predominates over those with ideological motives. This may indicate a far greater role of ideology in the process of recruitment into the Donbas insurgency. I will return to this point when analysing the temporal variation in militant recruitment. Overall, the summary of statistics in Table 1 is not meant to give a precise assessment of the actual share of various recruitment strategies and motives of recruits and informers but rather a representation of tentative trends and possible differences between them drawn from the best available evidence.

Recruitment mechanisms: militants

Organizers of a separatist drive in Donbas should have faced a particularly acute CA problem at its onset. First, the region had no prior history of a large-scale separatist movement, which could have provided activist networks for mobilization. The small group of pro-Russian activists demanding autonomy was banned by the Ukrainian authorities in 2007.¹⁵ Second, the separatist leadership had weak vertical embeddedness in the local communities across the region.¹⁶ Both the first formal leader of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) Alexander Borodai and its first military commander Igor Strelkov, for example, were Russian nationals. One of the Cossack leaders in the self-proclaimed Luhansk People's Republic (LNR), Nikolai Kozitsyn, came from the neighbouring Rostov oblast in Russia. Hence, local community norms could not effectively promote recruitment by imposing sanctions for non-participation or enforcing reciprocity rules as happens in insurgencies led by the locals. Third, separatist movement lacked a coherent ideology that could give a widely shared meaning to a CA. Rather, it relied on a set of disparate ideational frames rejecting the legitimacy of the new Ukrainian government, characterizing power transfer in Kyiv as a 'neo-Nazi coup', amplifying threats of nationalist violence against locals and calling for integration with Russia. While these frames could have reflected the prevailing sentiments in the region, they were hardly sufficient to produce an instant mobilizing effect and encourage widespread recruitment into the movement. Even in late April 2014, only 8% of Donbas residents supported complete independence of the region from Ukraine, so the secessionist movement had a weak popular base.¹⁷

The criminal cases of convicted militants allow us to pinpoint five mechanisms, which helped the organizers of the insurgency to resolve their CA problem. The first one – *preference revelation* – was to use protest rallies organized in different towns of the region to identify potential recruits and solicit their participation directly. These rallies created a nascent social network that insurgency organizers could draw on to

generate armed resistance. The second mechanism – *focal coordination* – involved the use of administrative buildings seized in various cities as focal points for organizing locals willing to join the insurgent movement. The third mechanism – *targeted inducement* – was the promise of selective incentives in the form of material payments for service or provision of looting opportunities to recruits. The fourth mechanism – *local patronage* – involved direct assistance from the local officials and law enforcement agents whose public involvement in the movement lowered perceived costs of individual engagement. The fifth mechanism – *external patronage* – involved provision of material and organizational resources from Russia that helped with the recruitment drive. It had a dual effect of lowering the expected material costs of waging the insurgency and increasing the perceived likelihood of success due to the expectation of further Russian intervention. I elaborate on each of the five mechanisms below.

All insurgent organizations, as Staniland aptly notes, are ‘built on social linkages’.¹⁸ These linkages, in turn, depend on the density of pre-existing social structures and intensity of social ties, which are then ‘reconfigured’ for the purposes of insurgency. The weakness of the earlier separatist movement in Donbas meant that initial mobilization into insurgency had to rely on a variety of disparate groups with often unrelated or ‘divided’ social bases. One example of such groups included local party activists from staunchly pro-Russian political parties, such as the Communist party, the Progressive Socialists, or the Russian bloc. Another subset of groups included individuals with prior military training or combat experience, such as Afghan war veterans or Cossack organizations. This type of mobilization produced a highly fragmented organizational structure with weak horizontal links between individual leaders and militant units in different towns poorly linked to local communities. It should have presented a serious obstacle to further recruitment once the initial social bases of mobilization were exhausted.

The court cases demonstrate that one of the ways through which insurgents sought to overcome the mobilization hurdle was by identifying sympathizers who publicly revealed their political preferences. This corresponds with the ‘get out the zealot’ strategy, which centers on finding individuals who have ‘intense preferences’ for the public goods that rebels promise.¹⁹ As Lichbach explains, for ‘zealots,’ marginal benefits from participation are ‘large enough to exceed marginal costs of the contribution’.²⁰ Participation in pro-Russian political rallies, which began across Donbas in early March, was one important indicator of the person’s ideological affinity to the cause. One activist participated in the separatist rallies in Artemivsk (now Bakhmut) in March 2014 and volunteered to guard these political gatherings.²¹ From a group of security guards, he was later recruited into DNR militia. In the same period, another militant started participating in anti-Maidan rallies in Krasnoarmiys’k (now Pokrovs’k) and provided his personal information to

a recruiter at one of the gatherings.²² He was later invited to enlist into the 'Russian Orthodox Army of DNR', which he joined in late May. As a member of this unit, he participated in active combat operations against the Ukrainian army until February 2015. One more militant participated in public gatherings to protect Soviet-era monuments from nationalist parties where he met one of the local separatist leaders of Mariupol and agreed to participate in organizing arms supplies for the insurgency.²³ Other 'zealots' were identified through their public exchanges with friends or co-workers, who had ties to the insurgency. For example, a miner in Selydove frequently mentioned to his colleagues how his political beliefs could motivate him to fight for DNR. He later received a phone call from a local recruiter with an offer to man a checkpoint in the neighbouring village.²⁴ Although he agreed, his active participation was limited to just 1 day of service. This shows that prior record of activism could be a better predictor of durable commitment to the insurgency than mere ideological sympathies.

The pool of potential recruits to armed groups extends beyond ideological sympathizers to include a variety of other types from opportunists to adventure seekers.²⁵ Their recruitment became possible with the use of visible insurgent-controlled outposts, which served as *focal points* that fostered coordination of volunteers. The two main outposts that drew potential recruits were checkpoints and local government buildings. To be effective as 'clues' that guide action focal points need to be conspicuous and recognizable by all interested parties. They also need to be 'unique' so that there would be no 'ambiguousness' regarding their purpose.²⁶ Government buildings, usually city councils or local police departments, were among the first ones captured by the separatists in every town that DNR claimed to control. New separatist authorities usually turned seized government buildings into their local headquarters, but they also used other offices, for example a local branch of Security Service in Sloviansk, a train station in Horlivka, state university in Mariupol, or research institute in Severodonetsk, as recruitment bases. In some towns, such as Kramatorsk, they also relied on military enlistment centres, which were earlier used for army recruitment. The use of government buildings embodied a 'new form of dissident organization' that, apart from being a coordination device, provided two additional advantages for insurgents.²⁷ First, they signalled the complete vanishing of the Ukrainian state and its replacement with a new self-governing authority. This, by itself, should have created a perception of a shifting power balance in favour of separatist groups. Second, these permanent bases added credibility to any promises of material inducements or other types of support offered to new recruits. This further facilitated contract-based recruitment strategies. Overall, 19.4% of militants joined separatist ranks by volunteering at various administrative sites, which were overwhelmingly located in government buildings.²⁸

Similarly, checkpoints displaying DNR/LNR symbols and manned by armed militants symbolized defeat of the state in its attempts to maintain monopoly on the use of force in the region. They were clear signs of extended territorial control of the rebels, whose pre-eminence civilians recognized every time they were subjected to searches or interrogations. Checkpoints became recruitment centres for 17.23% of militants in the database. In most cases, individuals would approach the checkpoints and volunteer to enlist, but in some cases, individuals were recruited while simply passing through.²⁹ These two methods were by far the most common recruitment mechanisms specified in the verdicts of convicted militants.

Both checkpoints and separatist-controlled city administrations were visible and accessible enough to coordinate expectations of those interested in joining the separatist movement. The advantage of checkpoints was their ubiquitous presence, which made them easier to join for anyone living in their vicinity. One indication of this rationale was that all individuals in the database recruited through checkpoints served at the recruitment point. Overall, most of the militants in the sample operated either in their hometown (54.1%) or in its vicinity (5.6%).³⁰ Manning a checkpoint located close to the place of residence was a particularly low-cost form of collective resistance. It required little effort to reach the location of service and provided an exit route and a safe hideout in case of an attack. So, this recruitment method might have been more appealing for 'part-timers' who were particularly sensitive to the costs of participation. Checkpoints were also effective in attracting volunteers living in villages with no separatist presence apart from the barricades located on the intercity roads. A resident of the village of Ridkodub, for example, could only support the insurgency only by coming to a checkpoint of the nearby town of Yampil.³¹ City administrations could have been more attractive to those who were interested in a sustained engagement since it involved an additional layer of formality and allowed for direct interaction with separatist leaders. As court cases show, entry into a separatist group usually required filling out a questionnaire, showing an identification document and providing a formal consent to fulfil the obligations of a member of the group. These formal recruitment procedures also show that separatist leaders tried to build an insurgent organization capable of sustained presence. It allowed accountability of individual members and required greater commitment from volunteers since their involvement had an official record. Once admitted, new recruits would usually receive a camouflage uniform, separatist stripes, and some type of a weapon, which ranged from clubs to pistols and hunting or assault rifles. Over two-thirds of the militants in the database (70.6%) reported receiving a firearm.

While access to firearms could be one of the material advantages of participation in the insurgent group, criminal cases provide ample evidence that some militants in Donbas received various material rewards. Provision of *selective incentives*, or private side payments for participation, has been

Olson's main solution to the problem of CA.³² As Lichbach notes, however, successful rebel groups ration the provision of private goods and balance it with ideological appeals for collective interest.³³ While the most valuable benefits are usually reserved for leading activists, relatively costless incentives are 'reserved to mobilize the many non-elite participants'. The evidence from criminal cases indicates that reliance on material self-interest has been a common, but not a dominant strategy of recruiting militants. Only 6% of the convicted militants acknowledged receiving pecuniary rewards for their participation. The cases show that they could have been decisive in attracting those, who had an immediate material need or were left without subsistence resources. A man with a disabled son in Sloviansk stopped receiving salary in his full-time job and volunteered to guard the checkpoints for weekly payments of 200 hryvnias.³⁴ A lyceum student from Artemivsk explained that he served on checkpoints since his family needed money to pay for the operation of his disabled sister.³⁵ Another man indicated that he inspected cars at a checkpoint in Sloviansk for 2 weeks in June 2014 because he was 'hungry and had no food', which he received for his service at the outpost.³⁶ Apart from regular material payments, some militants could also expect to receive private benefits by collecting donations, extortion, or plunder. One militant, for example, was involved in collecting financial contributions from entrepreneurs working in the business centre in Kostyantynivka.³⁷ Another checkpoint guard in the village of Mospino near Donetsk said that they received regular food and financial donations from the passing cars, which allowed them to purchase additional food items from the local supermarket.³⁸ Initial material incentives could lead to a durable commitment if the supply of benefits continued. A female militant from Snizhne said that she applied to work at the office of DNR commandant since all the local enterprises closed. She later became a commander of the female intelligence unit, which operated in government-controlled areas of Donbas for 8 months and received a monthly salary of 5000 hryvnias.³⁹ She characterized her involvement with the militancy as a job needed to support her underage child and elderly parents. Although examples of looting were rare, several instances were mentioned. In the most serious documented case, a chief police detective in Kramatorsk raided a local car dealership along with two other policemen and a dozen of armed militants.⁴⁰ According to multiple testimonies, they took at least five cars as well as two boat engines, car tires, and computer equipment.

Through their public backing of the insurgency, and often direct involvement in it, police officers and some local officials provided *internal patronage* to separatists. It encouraged recruitment by lowering the costs of participation and indicating potential benefits from aligning with the new authorities.⁴¹ According to Gurr, once the security apparatus starts siding with the rebels, it increases the 'military capacity' of the latter

and hence shifts 'the balance of coercion' in their favour.⁴² It demonstrates that the government is not capable of exercising 'coercive control' and lowers public estimates of the likelihood of repression for engaging in the opposition activities. The initial collaboration between local police and separatist activists began with organizing joint street patrols in towns across Donbas. According to one testimony, the local police chief in Rubizhne (Luhansk oblast) ordered to include 'Afghan war veterans', who supported the separatist cause, in daily patrols of the town as early as February 2014.⁴³ A similar practice was instituted in Krasnyi Liman (now Lyman) (Donetsk oblast).⁴⁴ A more explicit backing became visible in April when police officers were frequently guarding checkpoints alongside militants under separatist banners. According to a witness testimony, for example, many police officers organized and manned checkpoints in Debaltseve.⁴⁵ One of them, the head of the section of district inspectors in nearby Horlivka, guarded a checkpoint wearing a police uniform with separatist insignia.⁴⁶ This became possible partially because many senior officers took positions in the new insurgent-run administrations or issued orders on their behalf. A former district inspector in Horlivka became the head of the police department in the district under insurgent control. He patrolled the streets wearing a 'camouflage uniform and St. George's ribbon' as well as DNR and Russian insignia. He also led searches of the apartments of pro-Ukrainian police officers, his former colleagues, who refused to cooperate with insurgents.⁴⁷ Another head of local police station in Krasnyi Liman even praised the cooperation of the police and insurgents, which he said helped to lower the crime rate, at a public rally with town residents on 24 May 2014.⁴⁸ Police officers further used their authority to recruit residents for the insurgency. In early May 2014, a police colonel in the village of Fashivka in Luhansk oblast organized a meeting of local residents at which he called for organizing self-defence units to ensure order.⁴⁹ A man attending this rally later received a phone call from the officer asking him to guard a checkpoint at the entry to the village. Every time he would arrive there, the officer would personally give him a Kalashnikov rifle and instruct him to inspect passing cars. Police officers also exercised coercive pressure over recruits and helped to ensure their continuous involvement. A man from Fashivka testified that he kept coming to the checkpoint since he was afraid of the negative consequences for himself and his family in case he refused. In a more obvious example of coercion, police inspector in Sloviansk acting alongside with other two fellow policemen detained locals and brought them to checkpoints for compulsory labour.⁵⁰

Patronage from local officials also increased resources available to separatists and legitimized their actions. The head of the city council in Zolote ordered his subordinates to provide premises and assistance to the

organizers of the 11 May secessionist referendum in Luhansk oblast.⁵¹ Another local official, the head of Krasnotorsk village council, supported efforts of the militants to obstruct movement of Ukrainian troops ordering his subordinates to join the blockade.⁵² Later, he denounced several pro-Ukrainian activists in his village to insurgent leaders in the neighbouring Kramatorsk and even participated in their interrogations. In Debaltseve, members of the local councils adopted an appeal condemning the new Ukrainian authorities and endorsing separatist referendum.⁵³

Finally, *external patronage* that insurgents received from Russia (both from government and non-government sources) was vital in lowering the costs of starting the insurgency, expanding their resource base, and increasing public expectations of a successful outcome. Although various forms of Russian external involvement are mentioned in less than 10% of all cases, the existing accounts point to a systemic and significant external contribution.⁵⁴ One of its effects was to provide separatists with access to arms, some of which have been supplied at the outset from the occupied Ukrainian military bases in Crimea. Several cases deal with the operation to organize the supply of weapons to Mariupol, which involved local separatist leaders and Russian intelligence operatives.⁵⁵ One cache of weapons, provided free of charge in one instance, consisted of 73 boxes, which included 88 Kalashnikov rifles (AK-74), 8 machine guns, 24 grenade-throwers, 918 grenades, and over 20,000 bullets. In addition, Russian operatives were said to have given 20,000 dollars for the purposes of the insurgency. Another tangible contribution lowering the insurgency costs has been the provision of 'know how' for organizing and staging the rebellion. The most obvious was the decisive role of the Russian nationals with prior military experience in the leadership of the insurgency in Donetsk and in the ranks of the insurgent unit in Sloviansk. One of Russian nationals from Riazan first joined 'self-defence' groups in Crimea and then travelled to Sloviansk as part of Strelkov's group to participate in the capture of government buildings there.⁵⁶ Russia also provided military training for new recruits. One Ukrainian national testified to having been sent to a Russian city of Rostov-on-Don by his commanders as part of a group consisting of up to 30 individuals.⁵⁷ He spent about 2 weeks there receiving training in how to operate a field gun and drive an artillery tractor. Another militant from Odesa first went to Crimea where in March–April 2014, he received training on the base operated by the Russian military intelligence.⁵⁸ In addition, Russia helped to coordinate recruitment through the supply of Ukrainian militants living on its territory. An Odesa native living in Russia volunteered to enlist in insurgency through a recruitment centre in Rostov-on-Don, crossed the border to Krasnodon in Luhansk oblast with a group of 20 people, and later returned to Rostov oblast for 12 days of military training.⁵⁹

Finally, Russian influence affected the calculus of many potential rebels. Lichbach points to the significance of 'incomplete information' in creating illusions about the benefits of the rebellion, the sense to which its goals are widely shared as well as in promoting its ideology and symbols.⁶⁰ Several studies argue that a heightened sense of threat, either through media or social structure, may have a major mobilizing effect.⁶¹ A Russian media campaign framed the Euromaidan revolution in Kyiv as a fascist coup and consistently exaggerated the threat that Ukrainian nationalists presented to Russian speakers in the South-eastern regions. This could have motivated some locals to join the insurgency for self-defence. In several cases, militants said to have joined the insurgency as the Ukrainian armed forces neared because they felt the need to defend their towns from the pending Ukrainian assault.⁶² Another way that the Russian presence influenced expectations was by creating an impression that the scenario of Crimean annexation could be repeated in Donbas and, hence, raising the likelihood of quick and successful resolution of the conflict. On one hand, this increased the perceived costs of resistance for local law-enforcement officers. When militants led by several Russian nationals surrounded one of the police stations in Sloviansk on 12 April, policemen inside decided that resistance was futile because they viewed the assailants as 'little green men' who were much better armed and prepared.⁶³ On the other hand, this lowered the costs of participation in rebellion for recruits, who expected a quick and decisive victory once Russia intervened.⁶⁴ The rising probability of winning is a powerful force behind the growth of collective dissent.⁶⁵

The five recruitment mechanisms outlined above were instrumental in resolving CA problem for the nascent rebellion and accelerating the mobilization pace. Most of them, however, were unsuitable for organizing a clandestine network of informers who would collaborate with the insurgents from the government-controlled areas. Visible focal points could not be used in the same manner to recruit for covert activities. Selective incentives could not be offered, at least immediately, to recruits and there could hardly be any guarantees that they would receive private benefits in the future. Any form of patronage, while a possibility, could not lower the risks associated with the activities conducted in the government-controlled areas.

Recruitment mechanisms: informers

The analysis of criminal cases of Ukrainian citizens engaged in covert provision of information to insurgents suggests three most effective recruitment mechanisms. The first one – *preference activation* – was based on approaching citizens with a prior record of supporting the insurgency. It usually targeted residents who participated in separatist rallies or publicly expressed their sympathies but avoided joining armed groups as the conflict began.

The second mechanism – *social reciprocity* – involved reliance on family or social ties as a way of encouraging participation. It was particularly common for those whose friends or family members joined insurgent groups or remained in insurgent-controlled areas. The third mechanism – *coercion* – was based on the use of intimidation to induce cooperative behaviour.

Engagement of individuals with demonstrated affinity to the insurgent cause was the only mechanism similar to the one employed by militants. In addition to the value associated with attaining group goals, informers were more likely to perceive greater efficacy of their involvement. Informing involved relaying information that only they were uniquely positioned to collect, which heightened the significance of their individual contribution. As one's estimates of making a difference rise, likelihood of their participation in collective dissent also increases.⁶⁶ The court cases point to two different ways in which 'believers' became active informers. Some of them collaborated with insurgents during an active phase of the conflict and resumed communications following insurgent retreat. A nurse in a Kramatorsk emergency care clinic had been an active early supporter of insurgency promoting it on social media and providing medical assistance to fighters in April–June 2014.⁶⁷ Once the government recaptured the city, she decided to stay there to remain 'useful' to the insurgency. She later called insurgents with detailed information about the composition of Ukrainian troops, the location of their checkpoints, and the movement of their armed vehicles. A man in Toretsk met his 'handler' at a checkpoint which they both guarded in spring 2014.⁶⁸ Once the town returned under Ukrainian control, he started providing information about the movement and location of Ukrainian troops. Other sympathizers became actively involved only after traveling to insurgent-controlled areas and receiving offers to collaborate. A man from Kostiantynivka, who earlier participated in separatist rallies, travelled to Donetsk and was asked to serve as an informer at another rally in support of DNR.⁶⁹ Having returned to his hometown, he formed a group with six more people whom he persuaded to collect information regarding the Ukrainian troops stationed in the area. A woman from the village of Zaitseve located near the contact line in Donetsk oblast met an insurgent officer while crossing a separatist checkpoint to DNR in May 2015.⁷⁰ She later agreed to give him locations of Ukrainian military units in the village. In her testimony, she acknowledged that she was a supporter of separatist republics and sought to prevent the Ukrainian military from shooting at insurgent-controlled territories where she had friends. Another separatist sympathizer from the village of Luhanske said in an intercepted conversation that he would like to cross the frontline and join the rebels since he 'could not take it anymore'.⁷¹ In his court testimony, he explained that he was intimidated by the Ukrainian military whom he saw 'shooting at the villagers, breaking into the houses and plundering'. He also witnessed how intoxicated Ukrainian soldiers drove an infantry

fighting vehicle over the car of a local resident. Helping rebels with information made him, in his words, feel 'important' and capable of 'making a difference'.

The second mechanism involved activation of social ties, which existed prior to the conflict. Family members or long-time friends and colleagues are likely to develop the bonds of trust, which lower risks associated with participation for potential informers. Since the primary constraint on the decision to collaborate is the likelihood of retaliation, recruitment targets would be more open to involvement if the offer comes from someone who would not denounce them later.⁷² When dealing with friends they are also more likely to feel bound by the norms of reciprocity, which increase private costs of non-cooperation and create an incentive to fulfil obligations of the 'implicit social contract'.⁷³ Finally, a person may also be more likely to adopt other-regarding or altruistic logic focused on the potential beneficial impact of their actions for others when responding to someone they have a close relationship to. The combination of each of these factors makes the 'social ties' mechanism particularly powerful in recruitment of covert agents.

Data clearly bear these expectations out – reliance on social ties was evident in 19% of the cases of convicted informers.⁷⁴ It also proved much more common in recruitment of informers than militants.⁷⁵ Some of the informers interacted with immediate family members. A farmer provided information about the armed forces in the village to her son who lived in insurgent-controlled Dokuchaivs'k.⁷⁶ A female in the village of Myronivs'ke in Donetsk oblast conveyed information about location of military units and impact of artillery bombardments to her husband of 25 years who resided in insurgent-controlled Debaltseve.⁷⁷ Another female regularly relayed troops locations around her village to her cousin who was an insurgent in DNR. A miner in Kramatorsk was introduced to someone from the insurgency by his relative in Makiivka with whom he then shared the information regarding the movements of troops.⁷⁸ In a number of instances, informers collaborated through their friends or acquaintances.⁷⁹ A resident of Toretsk collected information about the movement of Ukrainian troops in this town for her friend living in insurgent-controlled Horlivka.⁸⁰ In her court testimony, she explained that they were neighbours for 9 years and worked together as distributors of cosmetic products. They developed a high level of intimacy and mutual trust, which enabled them to discuss their 'family difficulties'. When her friend approached her through social media asking for information about Ukrainian troops, she agreed so that there would be 'fewer civilian casualties'. A person in the village of Pavlopil' provided information about military manoeuvres to his acquaintance in a neighbouring village under insurgent control.⁸¹ A man in Kostyantynivka was providing information to someone he knew from working at the local market where they both sold used car parts.⁸² In several instances, informers

communicated through acquaintances of their friends, who were introduced to them as trusted interlocutors.⁸³

This dynamic was also evident even in the cases of several law enforcement officers who were recruited to provide classified information to insurgents. An officer of Ukraine's Security Service in Volnovakha regularly informed his former colleague, who served as an officer in DNR's security service about defence fortifications in the area.⁸⁴ A former policeman in the village of Luhans'ke provided information to his former colleague from the police department, who was the head of intelligence of the rebel unit in Luhans'k.⁸⁵ In a particularly telling case, a high-ranking Ukrainian army officer working in the army headquarters in Kyiv agreed to provide classified documents regarding an 'anti-terrorist' campaign to a friend, who had helped him 3 years earlier during a serious medical operation.⁸⁶ As he explained in court, he realized that the information he was sharing could be used by 'terrorists' to damage Ukraine's national security, but he felt that he was 'in debt' to his former companion.

The third mechanism – coercion – involved an explicit threat of the imposition of costs for non-cooperation. Although it remained rare (3.5%), it was used twice as frequently as in recruitment of militants (1.8%). Coercive recruitment into insurgency was largely used as a form of punishment for certain violations, such as late night consumption of alcohol or flouting curfew rules.⁸⁷ Coerced informing, by contrast, usually happened when a person feared for the life of his relatives living in insurgent-controlled territories or even under the government's control. In one instance, militants stopped a person driving to government-controlled areas and threatened retaliation against his daughter living in Donetsk if he would not provide them with information about Ukrainian troops.⁸⁸ Another man from the village of Krasnogorivka said that his brother volunteered to join the insurgents and was killed in August 2014.⁸⁹ Later that year, he received a phone call from someone who knew his brother with an attempt to recruit him as well. Once he refused to cooperate, he received threats against his wife and son, which persuaded him to start gathering the needed information. Another man said that he was intimidated by one of his acquaintances, who threatened to take away his home and abduct family members if he refused to inform him about location of Ukrainian troops in the village.⁹⁰ He said that he decided to cooperate due to the lack of protection from the Ukrainian forces, who ignored his pleas for help. Overall, though, ideational and social ties played a far more prominent role in recruitment of informants than coercive pressure.

Timing and location of recruitment

The analysis of the court cases also suggests that effectiveness of outlined mechanisms might have varied based on the timing and location of the recruitment effort. The level of risk for militants in rebel-held areas is lower in

those cases when government pursues a slow and cautious counterinsurgency strategy with minimal use of force. This can indicate that the power balance favours the insurgency. The expected costs of participation then rise in proportion to the intensity of violence of the armed conflict and proximity to the battlefield. In line with these expectations, data demonstrates that an increase in the intensity of the conflict and the advance of the Ukrainian troops coincided with a sharp decline in the number of recruits joining the militants' ranks (see Figure 2). Seventy-three per cent of militants in the sample joined the insurgency in the two months of April and May.

The highest frequency of recruitment was in May 2014, when separatists in two self-proclaimed republics held referendum and declared their independence. By contrast, the intensified counterterrorism operation in June and July coincided with a sharp drop in militant recruitment levels. Some of the cases indirectly point to the deterrent effect of the heightened threat from counterinsurgent attacks. One person who joined insurgency in July to 'defend his town from the Ukrainian armed forces' said that he spent less than 2 weeks in its ranks.⁹¹ Once the bombing began, he went back home taking his weapon along. Another person explained that he decided to leave after seeing 'the bus full of wounded people'.⁹² A person in Lisichansk who volunteered to the local insurgent unit 'Prizrak' said that he left it immediately after his first combat experience against Ukrainian forces.⁹³

Data also point to the varied importance of motives at different stages of the insurgency (see Figure 3). Ideological motives, such as support for succession of Donbas or anti-Ukrainian grievances, were more common among early recruits.

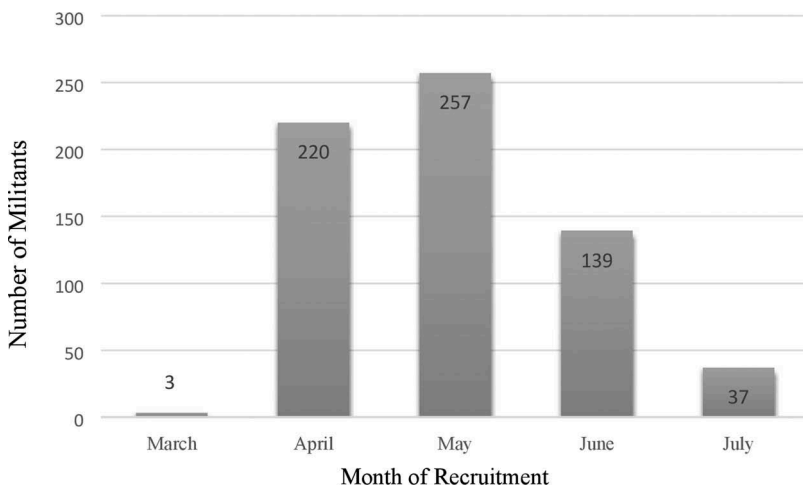


Figure 2. Recruitment frequency (militants), March–July 2014.

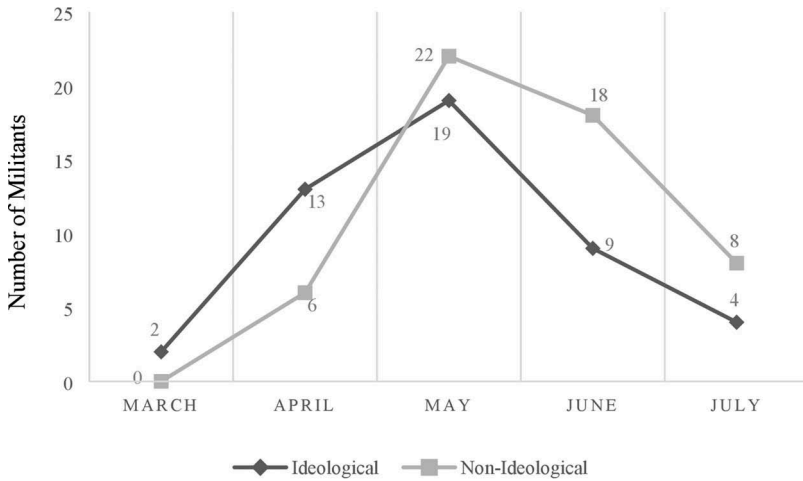


Figure 3. Time of joining insurgency by motive, March–July 2014.

By contrast, non-ideological considerations, such as material gains, fear, or self-defence, have become more prominent in May and June.⁹⁴

This may indicate that the initial wave of mobilization was driven by ideological ‘zealots’ recruited through pre-existing organizational networks or at separatist rallies. As ideological base became depleted, emotional and materialistic appeals became more effective in recruitment. One of the convicted militants, for example, testified that he started manning a checkpoint in Avdiivka in early July only after his acquaintance offered to pay him for his service.⁹⁵ He left after 2 weeks since he received no promised payments. At the same time, the escalation of fighting might have also triggered the participation of those who were especially sensitive to ‘other-regarding’ impulses. A man from Lisichansk testified that he quit his job and joined the so-called Army of Southeast in early June to ‘defend his home town’ and ensure order on the streets.⁹⁶ Another person from Luhansk, who was involved in guarding bridges and roads around the city, claimed that he took up arms following the start of Ukrainian offensive in June as ‘any real man would do’.⁹⁷

Among informers, over 90% began to collaborate with insurgents in the first year of the militancy (see Figure 4). There was a sharp drop in the number of recruited informers in the second half of 2015 and just one case of a convicted informer recruited in January 2016.

One possible explanation for the sharp decline in frequency of collaboration since mid-2015 is the failure of the insurgency to recapture government-controlled areas and the increasing clarity of the government’s dominance in the areas under its control. As Kalyvas suggests, ‘imposition of control allows the effective use of violence thus deterring

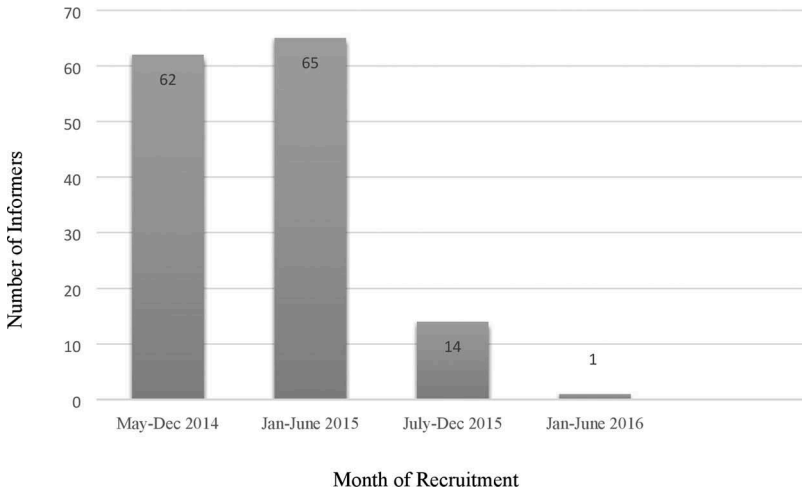


Figure 4. Recruitment frequency (informers), May 2014–June 2016.

defection'.⁹⁸ Higher levels of territorial control allow the government to identify potential defectors through denunciations of the local civilians or improved surveillance. Hence, while the supply of militants should be higher in the periods of low intensity violence, collaboration would be more frequent in the areas of greater contestation where the risk of denunciation is lower. As Figure 5 shows, informers in Donbas were

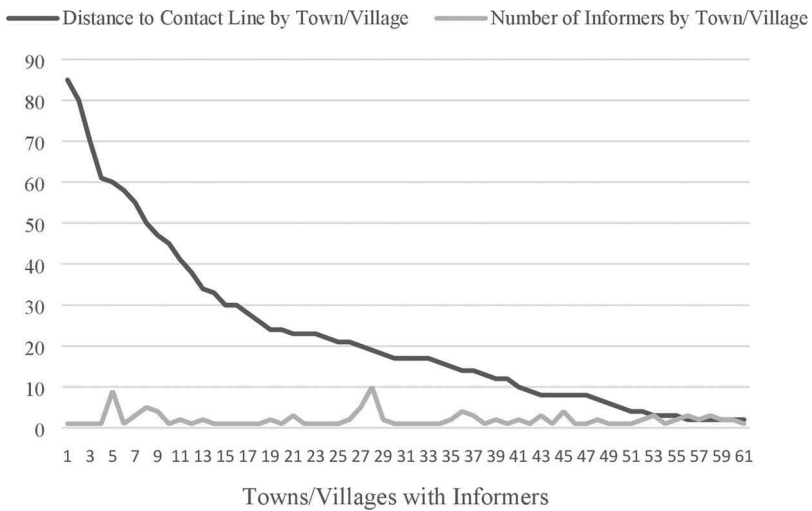


Figure 5. Distance to contact line (in km) and number of collaborators in each town.

more likely to operate closer to the contact line where the level of the government's control was initially low. Overall, about two-thirds of informers operated within 30 km (18.6 mi) from the insurgent-controlled territory, while the rest operated in the dominant control areas as far as 135 km from the frontline.⁹⁹ By mid-2015, as the government's control over contested areas improved, the risks of collaboration increased and the number of informers dwindled.

Figure 6 suggests another explanation for a declining number of informers. It shows the prevalence of ideological motives during the initial phase of collaboration immediately after the recapture of the territories by the Ukrainian forces.¹⁰⁰ The share of ideologically motivated collaborators then quickly declined, while non-ideological motives became more common in the first half of 2015. If these data accurately reflect a broader trend, it means that the effect of improved territorial control was reinforced by the depletion of the ideational support base of the insurgency. De-escalation of the conflict since spring 2015 also meant that emotional factors, such as the need for self-defence, were less significant in triggering collaboration. The confluence of these three developments resulted in the drastic lapse of supply of collaborators for the rebels.

Finally, while the data does not allow us to compare the intensity of commitment to the insurgent cause among members of two groups, it does show that for a sizeable share of militants, it became a temporary activity. Every fifth convicted militant (19.2%) participated in the movement for 2 weeks or less. Although the reasons for their demobilization may vary, it shows that the militancy might have experienced a relatively high turn-over or desertion rate in the first several months. It also shows that exit barriers

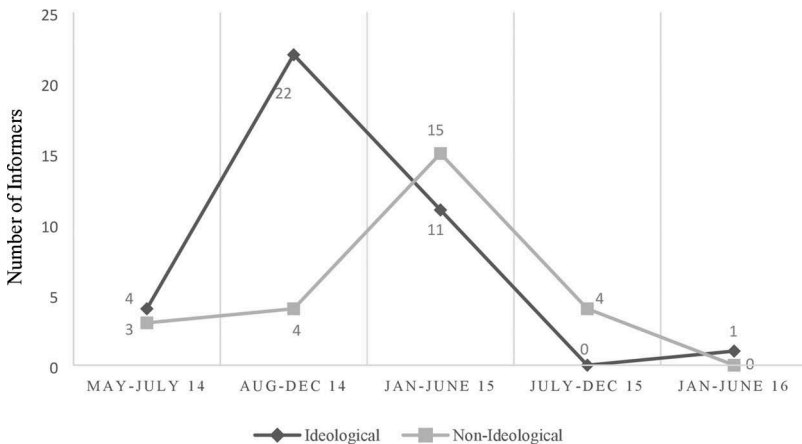


Figure 6. Time of collaboration start by motive, May 2014–June 2016.

for insurgents were quite low further underscoring the rarity of coerced recruitment (see [Figure 6](#)).

Conclusion

Using a micro-level social process analysis of the armed conflict in Donbas, this paper demonstrates that a rebel organization may adopt a variety of recruitment mechanisms to encourage enlistment or collaboration. Their effectiveness depends on the type of activities that recruits are expected to perform, as well as the timing and location of recruitment efforts. The focus in this paper was on militants supporting the rebellion overtly and informers providing covert assistance from behind enemy lines. The qualitative analysis of the court cases shows that rebels initially targeted individuals explicitly supportive of the cause, but their shortage led to the use of other recruitment strategies. Recruitment for participation in the militancy was more effective using contractual or hierarchical solutions, such as focal coordination, material inducement as well as internal and external patronage. Informers, by contrast, were more likely to be responsive to community-based solutions, such as reciprocity based on familial or social ties and coerced cooperation based on threats. The evidence from the paper further shows that counterinsurgents may undercut recruitment efforts if insurgency has a shallow base of ideological recruits. The rising intensity of counterinsurgent operations in Donbas led to a sharp drop in the number of recruited militants. Similarly, the number of informers in contested areas declined as the government reasserted its control over the territory.

The findings of the paper suggest several directions for further research. First, the use of the CA framework in the analysis of rebel participation is particularly fruitful when combined with the agency-level data. While there has been a recent shift from examining structural factors to studying individual choices in explaining the insurgency, this paper stresses the need for an independent focus on rebel recruitment mechanisms. Viewed as a rebel group's attempted solution to the CA problem, their effects can be consistently compared across a variety of cases with a sufficiently fine-grained empirical data. Second, most of the current accounts of rebel recruitment view it as static, dichotomous, and predetermined. However, rebel groups may display a great degree of flexibility and even opportunism in choosing their recruitment strategies. There should be a better understanding of the way rebel groups decide on how to recruit new members, evaluate effectiveness of various strategies, or adjust them over time to changing supply patterns. Finally, the study of temporal and spatial variation in recruitment efforts may be a particularly promising area for future research. Divergent success rates of the same recruitment mechanism in different localities may help to test a variety of theoretical arguments about the causes of civil war.

At the same time, variable dynamic of recruitment across time may allow to assess the impact of various counterinsurgent strategies or the effect of fluctuation in insurgent resources.

Notes

1. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*; Gates, "Recruitment and Allegiance"; Petersen, *Understanding ethnic violence*; Staniland, "Organizing Insurgency."
2. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 105.
3. Although Russia's direct engagement in the hostilities added an interstate dimension to the conflict in Donbas, the International Criminal Court (ICC) characterized it as a non-international armed conflict occurring in parallel to the Russian-Ukrainian war. Similarly, leading research centres, such as the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights and the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), recognize non-international character of the conflict. This indicates the applicability of civil war theoretical frameworks for the analysis of the war in Donbas. See Report on Preliminary Examination Activities 2016, The Office of the Prosecutor, International Criminal Court: https://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/otp/161114-otp-rep-PE_ENG.pdf For the legal review of the Geneva Academy see: <http://www.rulac.org/browse/conflicts/non-international-armed-conflicts-in-ukraine#collapse1acord> For UCDP summary see: <http://ucdp.uu.se/?id=1#country/369>.
4. Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action*; Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant*; Popkin, *The Rational Peasant*.
5. Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action*.
6. Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma*.
7. Kalyvas and Kocher, "How 'Free' Is Free Riding in Civil Wars?"
8. Sanin and Wood, "Ideology in Civil War."
9. Wood, *Insurgent collective action and civil war in El Salvador*.
10. Humphreys and Weinstein, "Who Fights?"; Arjona and Kalyvas, "Recruitment into Armed Groups in Colombia."
11. Ukrainian Public Court Registry is available here: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/>.
12. Justino, Brück and Verwimp, "A New Analytical Framework."
13. At the same time, militants from Donetsk oblast are significantly better represented constituting about 97% of the entire sample of militants.
14. Oppenheim, Steele, Vargas and Weintraub, "True Believers, Deserters and Traitors."
15. Judah, *In Wartime: Stories from Ukraine*, 153.
16. Staniland, "Organizing Insurgency."
17. Katchanovski, "What do citizens of Ukraine actually think about secession?"
18. Staniland, "Organizing Insurgency," 150.
19. See Note 6.
20. *Ibid.*, 37.
21. Case No. 243/2987/15-к, 3 April 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/43425797>.
22. Case No. 185/2146/16-к, 19 September 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/61703962>.
23. Case No. 310/8044/14-к, 1 February 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/55351754>.

24. Case No. 242/1145/15-к, 14 May 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/44171111>.
25. Ervin Staub, *Overcoming Evil: Genocide, Violent Conflict, and Terrorism*, Oxford University Press, 2013..
26. Schelling, "Bargaining, Communication, and Limited War."
27. Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma*, 129.
28. I could not establish recruitment mechanism for 42% of militants.
29. Case No. 235/9010/15-к, 12 December 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/54488181>.
30. Another 5.9% were outsiders and there was no information on the residence of another 34.3%.
31. Case No. 236/977/15-к, 15 April 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/43659007>.
32. See Note 5.
33. Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma*, 230.
34. This was equal to about 10 USD at the time. See case No. 243/661/16-к, 4 February 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/55448138>.
35. Case No. 243/6593/15-к, 9 September 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/49927352>.
36. Case No. 243/10421/15-к, 13 October 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/61982207>.
37. Case No. 233/327/15-к, 10 February 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/42639433>.
38. Case No. 310/8512/14-к, 19 February 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/45920251>.
39. Case No. 319/1135/15-к, 29 October 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/52909414>.
40. Case No. 234/378/15-к, 28 May 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/44720401>.
41. Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma*, 181.
42. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, 271.
43. Case No. 428/5721/14-к, 13 November 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/54806206>.
44. Case No. 243/8934/15-к, 9 November 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/53284343>.
45. Case No. 219/1147/15-к, 16 November 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/53461106>.
46. Case No. 233/2621/16-к, 16 June 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/58384139>.
47. Case No. 243/8934/15-к, 9 November 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/53284343>.
48. Case No. 236/2050/15-к, 5 September 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/61099436>.
49. Case No. 431/3564/14-к, 20 April 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/43695450>.
50. Case No. 243/1713/15-к, 2 December 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/53952918>.
51. Case No. 423/898/15-к, 16 March 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/56525992>.

52. Case No. 234/10571/15-к, 23 November 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/54254816>.
53. See Note 45.
54. Russia substantially intensified its espionage in Ukraine during Viktor Yanukovich's presidency (2010–14). According to Kuzio, it became possible due to 'Ukraine's curtailing of counter-espionage activities in Crimea, the Donbas, and Odesa and turning a blind eye to their recruitment of locals and infiltration of state institutions'. Kuzio, *Ukraine: Democratization, Corruption, and the New Russian Imperialism*, 475.
55. Case No. 310/6513/14-к, 6 April 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/43467650>.
56. Case No. 243/4875/14, 13 January 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/42274713>.
57. Case No. 319/139/16-к, 5 April 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/56931735>.
58. Case No. 522/5622/16-к, 27 September 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/61603265>.
59. Case No. 1522/1907/15, 16 October 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/53086927>.
60. Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma*, 91–93.
61. Fuji, *Killing Neighbors*; Shesterenina, "Collective Threat Framing and Mobilization in Civil War."
62. Case No. 428/6007/14-к, 23 October 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/53182977>; Case No. 235/10373/15-к, 24 November 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/62930849>.
63. Case No. 243/1463/15-к, 24 November 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/53756003>.
64. Recollections of former militants indicate that the expectation of Russian intervention along the lines of Crime was widespread among militants. See, for example, Gubarev, *Fakel Novorossii*, 167.
65. Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma*, 66.
66. *Ibid.*, 83.
67. Case No. 234/11703/15-к, 25 April 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/57550151>.
68. Case No. 227/5798/15-к, 20 March 2017: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/65401324>.
69. Case No. 233/6860/15-к, 12 January 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/54887181>.
70. Case No. 243/6244/16-к, 30 March 2017: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/65612638>.
71. Case No. 219/7642/15-к, 23 September 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/61525919>.
72. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*.
73. Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma*, 134.
74. I could not establish the exact recruitment mechanism in 67% of cases.
75. Only 2.4% of militants were recruited using prior social ties.
76. Case No. 225/4954/16-к, 2 September 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/60872003>.
77. Case No. 219/10734/15-к, 27 March 2017: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/65644215>.

78. Case No. 729/743/15-к, 28 July 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/47518118>.
79. Case No. 264/9381/14-к, 9 December 2014, <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/41835542>; Case No. 235/9426/15-к, 30 November 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/54005811>.
80. Case No. 225/6151/15-к, February 15, 2017: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/64751881>.
81. Case No. 221/2901/15-к, 13 October 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/52214756>.
82. Case No. 233/6265/15-к, 9 February 2017: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/64600902>.
83. Case No. 235/7503/15-к, 2 March 2017: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/65061582>; Case No. 227/5798/15-к, 20 March 2017: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/65401324>.
84. Case No. 752/26679/15-к, 16 October 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/52484368>.
85. Case No. 219/7642/15-к, 23 September 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/61525919>.
86. Case No. 761/21108/15-к, 18 December 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/54561020>.
87. See, for example, Case No. 219/773/16-к, 4 July 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/58727615>.
88. Case No. 235/7506/15-к, 15 July 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/58972136>.
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91. Case No. 235/10373/15-к, 24 November 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/62930849>.
92. Case No. 227/4/15-к, 19 June 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/45297278>.
93. Case No. 423/1486/16-к, 16 March 2017: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/65427135>.
94. This is based on 15% of cases in which motives could be clearly established.
95. Case No. 227/1147/16-к, 14 April 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/57264829>.
96. Case No. 415/3532/14-к, 15 January 2015: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/55849609>.
97. Case No. 418/263/15, 17 August 2016: <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/59764756>.
98. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 124.
99. This graph shows only cases of informers operating in Donbas and excludes three cases of informers residing outside of Donbas.
100. These data are based on 44% of informers whose motivation could be established from the cases.

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