

UKRAINE

The second army

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Pokrovsk, Dnipro evacuation train. Railway employees who have been working non-stop on evacuation trains for months. Thanks to the railways, hundreds of thousands of people have been relocated to safer areas.



THE KEY ROLE BEING PLAYED BY UKRAINIAN RAILWAYS IN THE WAR AGAINST RUSSIA

Nicknamed the “second army”, the organization is a key element in Ukraine’s resistance to the Russian invasion. It is, of course, the *Ukrzaliznytsia* – Ukrainian Railways, an enormous state-owned company that employs 350 thousand Ukrainians and transports millions of people around and out of the country.

What’s more, when required, trains have been transformed into mobile hospitals (like the one operated by Doctors Without Borders), they supply humanitarian aid to support communities in difficulty and they transport hundreds of thousands of tonnes of agricultural products. These important

functions have made the organization the target of repeated Russian attacks on stations, railway bridges and repair depots, which have all become strategic targets. Likewise, railway workers have rapidly gained respect and admiration from the Ukrainian public due to the dangers that they face each day. The threat is partially reduced by dimming the lighting both on trains and at stations and by constantly changing the train routes.

However, such measures are not sufficient to defend the trains used for evacuations, which often pass close to the front lines and have to face a constant threat from enemy artillery. According to the Ukraine Crisis Media Center, since the beginning of the war more than one thousand railway employees have been killed.



Lviv. The interior of the hospital train provided by the Ukrainian railways and managed by Doctors Without Borders.

Lviv, railway station. Displaced people in transit can rest in a room provided by Ukrainian Railways.





Kyiv. A railroad employee on a night train to Lviv listens to a speech by President Zelensky.



Lviv, railway station. Volunteers on the platforms of Ukrainian Railways help disabled passengers get off the train. These passengers have left Zaporizhzhia due to the worsening security conditions in the region.



Kyiv. Passengers from Zaporizhzhia arrive at the station. Thanks to the railway workers, every day thousands of Ukrainians are able to move around the country in spite of the war.



Irpın. One of the residents of the "Iron City". The train is used as temporary accommodation for the people who have been displaced by the ongoing war and is inhabited by about 50 people who have lost their homes.



Pokrovsk, Dnipro evacuation train. Crew members relax as the train heads towards Dnipro.



A train used to evacuate civilians from Donbas has signs of damage from an artillery shell.



Kyiv, railway station. Railway staff wait in the shelter following an air-raid warning.



Lviv, railway station. A young woman welcomes her partner back from the war zone.



Irpın. Work in progress on the site of the railway bridge that was destroyed by Russian bombing. Rail traffic between Irpin and the capital was restored just over a month after the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Kyiv region.



Irpın. An employee of Ukrainian Railways irons clothes in one of the rooms of the “Iron City”. The train is used as temporary accommodation for people who have been displaced by the war.



Kyiv. A sports and commemoration event, organized by Ukrainian Railways to celebrate the incredible work done by railway employees since the beginning of the Russian invasion. The event was attended by workers and their families, alternating between moments of fun and a respectful farewell to the fallen.



Pokrovsk, Dnipro evacuation train. Xenia is the head of the last remaining evacuation train in the Russian-besieged Donbas. She has been working with her crew for several months without interruption and is willing to continue as long as the country needs.



Irpin. Work in progress on the site of the railway bridge that was destroyed by Russian bombing. Rail traffic between Irpin and the capital was restored just over a month after the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Kyiv region.

Passengers on the train during a stop in the city of Lviv. A special protective film covers the window panes to prevent the dispersion of glass splinters in the event of an explosion.





Pokrovsk, railway station, People with limited mobility wait to board the evacuation train for Dnipro.



Kyiv. A man at work in the Darnytsia Railcar Repair Plant. The railway infrastructure was hit by three Russian missiles in an attempt to paralyze the country.



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A train used to evacuate civilians from Donbas has signs of damage from an artillery shell.



Pokrovsk, Dnipro evacuation train. Due to the continuous bombardment, Ludmilla is leaving Sloviansk with the intention of moving to Lviv.



Kyiv. Railway workers check the final details before the departure of the electric trains that connect the two sides of the capital. This route was enhanced during the Russian invasion.



Lviv, railway station. An employee of Ukrainian Railways stands outside the train where she works.



Kyiv. A man at work in the Darnytsia Railcar Repair Plant. The railway infrastructure was hit by three Russian missiles in an attempt to paralyze the country.

A soldier leaves the war zone to rejoin his family for a few days before returning to the front.



