

Abstract

The Russian invasion of Ukraine, which began on February 24, 2022, marks the largest conventional conflict in Europe since World War II. The unexpected and robust resistance by Ukrainians thwarted the Russian Federation's plans for a smooth occupational operation, allowing Ukrainians to defend their country for over two years now. This thesis analyses the military effectiveness of the Ukrainian armed forces and those of the Russian Federation in the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, with the aim of revealing differences in effectiveness during the ongoing conflict. Initially, the thesis presents existing theoretical approaches to military effectiveness, specifically introducing scholars like Stephen Biddle, Caitlin Talmadge, and John Mearsheimer. From these described approaches, variables are derived that are closely observed on both sides of the conflict. These variables serve the thesis in explaining how each side differs in terms of military effectiveness. Based on hypotheses derived from theory, three specific cases are compared to analyse differences in military effectiveness between the sides using the ratio of losses. The final part of the thesis summarizes predictions of performance of both armies and highlights key factors that influence their performance on the battlefield. The research finds that in selected cases, Ukrainian forces exhibit a somewhat higher degree of effectiveness, however, precise numerical data on losses in individual engagements are lacking, which would significantly refine and enable further research in this area.