

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of April 12, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, Shaylei Dauphinais, Tom Thacker, and Kaitlyn Thomas.
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* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

Angelica Evans, Christina Harward, Grace Mappes,
Riley Bailey, and Frederick W. Kagan

April 12, 2024, 5:55pm ET

Click [here](#) to see ISW’s interactive map of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.

Click [here](#) to see ISW’s 3D control of terrain topographic map of Ukraine. Use of a computer (not a mobile device) is strongly recommended for using this data-heavy tool.

Click [here](#) to access ISW’s archive of interactive time-lapse maps of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. These maps complement the static control-of-terrain map that ISW produces daily by showing a dynamic frontline. ISW will update this time-lapse map archive monthly.

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 12:45pm ET on April 12. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the April 13 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Russian President Vladimir Putin acknowledged that Russia’s ongoing strike campaign against Ukrainian energy facilities aims in part to devastate the Ukrainian defense industry, confirming ISW’s ongoing assessment that Russian strikes against Ukrainian energy facilities aim to degrade Ukrainian defense industrial capacity. Putin stated during a meeting with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko on April 11 that Russian drone and missile strikes against Ukraine’s energy sector are connected to Russia’s goal of “demilitarizing” Ukraine – one of his three stated goals in Ukraine.[1] Putin characterized Russia’s ongoing strikes against Ukrainian energy infrastructure as a “forced” response to recent Ukrainian drone strikes against Russian oil and gas facilities and openly stated that Russian strikes indirectly aim to degrade Ukraine’s defense industrial capacity. The recent Russian strike campaign is degrading Ukraine’s power generation capacity while also exploiting reported Ukrainian air defense missile shortages in a renewed effort to collapse Ukraine’s power grid.[2] Putin likely hopes to prevent Ukraine’s defense industry from developing to the point of near self-sufficiency in the long term as a strong defense industry could put Ukraine in a good position to defend against future Russian aggression and significantly reduce Ukraine’s dependence on Western aid.[3] **Significant delays in Western aid, due in part to successful Russian information operations and Western hesitancy, have created an opportunity for Russian offensive operations and Russia’s strike campaign.**

ISW continues to assess that the development of Ukraine’s defense industrial base (DIB) over time can allow Ukraine to sustain its defense against Russia and longer-term national security needs with significantly reduced foreign military assistance.[4] Ukrainian officials have expressed their intention to expand Ukraine’s DIB domestically and abroad since the start of Russia’s full-scale invasion, and Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov previously identified increased Ukrainian domestic production of weapons and military equipment as a priority for 2024.[5] US State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller has

stated that the short- and medium-term provision of Western air defenses to Ukraine will be a critical element of Ukraine's ability to stand up its defense industry, which will, in turn, decrease Ukrainian dependence on Western aid and especially US aid to Ukraine in the long term.[6] Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky recently emphasized that Ukraine cannot mitigate the lack of sufficient air defense systems and that only Western-provided air defense systems, namely Patriot systems, allow Ukraine to defend Ukraine against the intensified Russia strike campaign.[7] ISW continues to assess that the US will not need to send large security assistance packages to Ukraine indefinitely if Ukraine can sufficiently expand its defensive industrial capacity, but the West's provision of air defense systems and missiles to Ukraine is crucial for Ukraine's ability to defend its energy infrastructure and its developing defense industry against Russian strikes.[8]

Russian forces are domestically producing and fielding a new air-to-surface subsonic cruise missile against Ukraine designated the Kh-69 as part of continued efforts to improve strike packages and penetrate Ukraine's degraded air defense. Ukrainian media reported on April 11 that Ukrainian law enforcement sources stated that Russian forces destroyed the Trypilska Thermal Power Plant (TPP) in Kyiv Oblast on April 11 with new Kh-69 missiles, which Russian forces had reportedly used in "isolated cases" in 2023 prior to the April 11 strike.[9] Ukrainian Air Force Spokesperson Major Ilya Yevlash confirmed on April 12 that Russian forces used the Kh-69s in the April 11 strike and described the Kh-69 missiles as an improved version of Kh-59 cruise missiles, which Russian forces have frequently used in strike packages against Ukraine in recent weeks.[10] ISW has not previously observed the Russian use of Kh-69 missiles in Ukraine. Russian forces have reportedly launched Kh-69 missiles from 400 kilometers away from their targets, exceeding a previous estimated range of 300 kilometers and the 200-kilometer range of the most recent Kh-59MK2 variant.[11] Russian forces can reportedly launch the missiles from more numerous Su-34 and Su-35 tactical aircraft rather than exclusively from strategic bombers.[12] Yevlash stated that Russian forces are domestically producing the Kh-69 missiles but that their ability to manufacture the missiles depends on their ability to source critical components.[13] While the Russian stockpiles and production capability of these Kh-69 missiles are unclear, Russia is unlikely to be able to produce them at a significantly greater speed or quantity than its other domestically produced missiles. Yevlash noted that Ukrainian forces are still developing methods to counter the Kh-69s but emphasized that Patriot air defense systems would likely be able to intercept them.[14]

The Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) claimed that it prevented a group of Central Asians from perpetrating a terrorist attack against a Russian military facility in occupied Ukraine with Ukraine's help, likely as part of efforts to set information conditions to portray any future Ukrainian attack on legitimate Russian military targets in occupied Ukraine as "terrorist" attacks. The FSB claimed on April 11 that it detained six citizens of an unspecified Central Asian state for allegedly preparing a Ukrainian-orchestrated terrorist attack on a Russian military facility in occupied Donetsk Oblast.[15] The FSB claimed that the attackers were planning to go to Turkey and then back to Ukraine after carrying out the attack - a narrative that likely attempts to parallel how the Crocus City Hall attackers traveled to Turkey before the March 22 attack.[16] Russia routinely labels Ukrainian strikes against legitimate Russian military targets in occupied Ukraine and within Russia as "terrorist" attacks.[17]

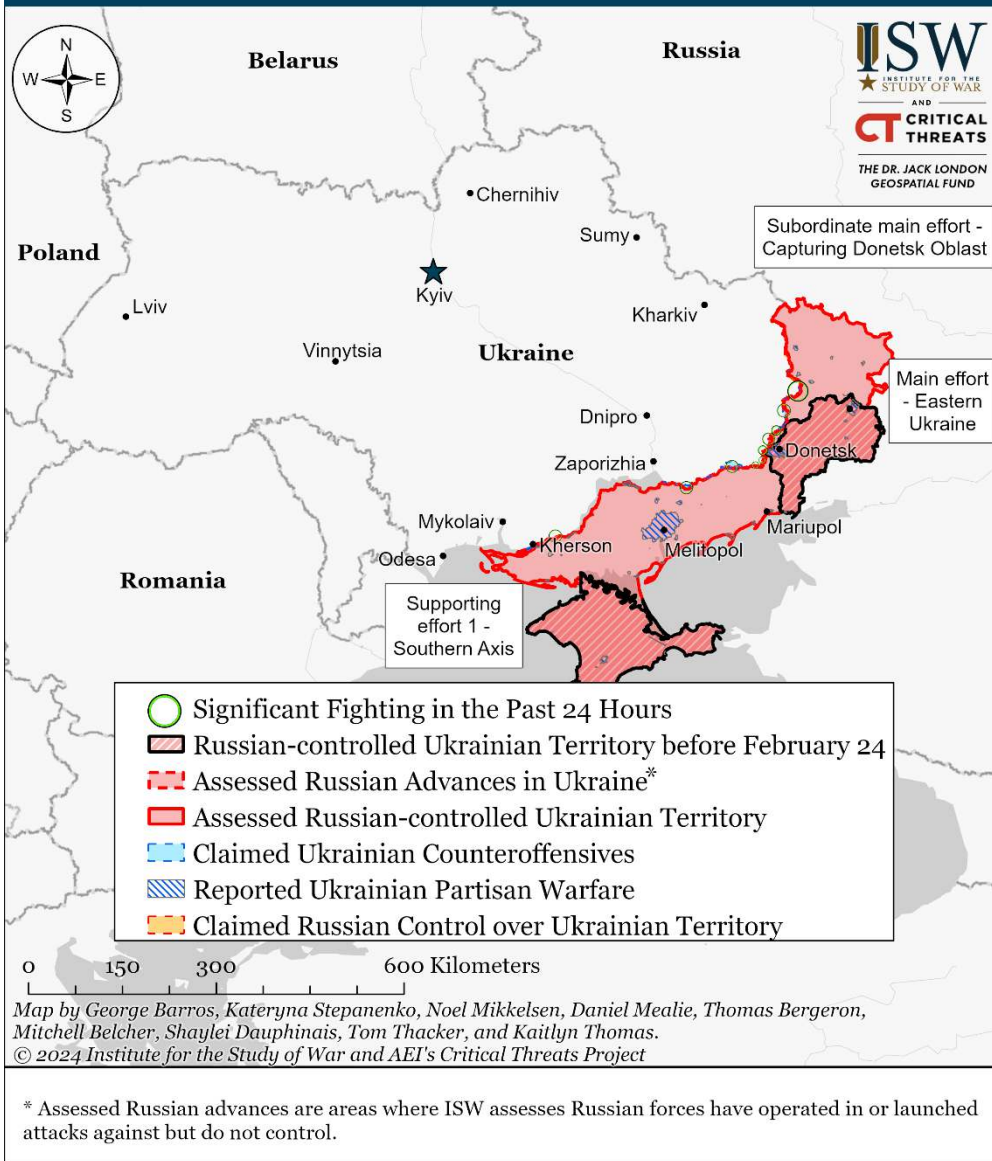
The FSB also claimed that it prevented a terrorist attack on a synagogue in Moscow on April 10 and that the FSB killed one of the alleged terrorists, a native of an unspecified Central Asian country, during a shootout.[18] The FSB claimed on March 7 that it prevented members of the Islamic State (IS) in Kaluga

Oblast from conducting an attack on a Moscow synagogue.[19] The FSB may have not claimed that Ukraine was involved in the attack that the FSB allegedly stopped on April 10 due to the FSB's prior public statements connecting the previous plans for an attack on a Moscow synagogue to IS. Russian authorities recently conducted counterterrorism operations in the Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria and the Republic of Dagestan, and ISW continues to assess that the increased frequency of counterterrorism operations in Russia is likely due to either Russian law enforcement's actual heightened fears of another terrorist attack in Russia or is part of efforts to show the Russian public that authorities are taking competent preventative steps following the major law enforcement and intelligence failure that was the Crocus City Hall attack.[20] These counterterrorism activities are also further evidence that Russian authorities actually assess that terrorist threats emanate from Central Asian and Muslim communities instead of Ukraine.[21]

Key Takeaways:

- **Russian President Vladimir Putin acknowledged that Russia's ongoing strike campaign against Ukrainian energy facilities aims in part to devastate the Ukrainian defense industry, confirming ISW's ongoing assessment that Russian strikes against Ukrainian energy facilities aim to degrade Ukrainian defense industrial capacity.**
- **ISW continues to assess that the development of Ukraine's defense industrial base (DIB) over time can allow Ukraine to sustain its defense against Russia and longer-term national security needs with significantly reduced foreign military assistance.**
- **Russian forces are domestically producing and fielding a new air-to-surface subsonic cruise missile against Ukraine designated the Kh-69 as part of continued efforts to improve strike packages and penetrate Ukraine's degraded air defense.**
- **The Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) claimed that it prevented a group of Central Asians from perpetrating a terrorist attack against a Russian military facility in occupied Ukraine with Ukraine's help, likely as part of efforts to set information conditions to portray any future Ukrainian attack on legitimate Russian military targets in occupied Ukraine as "terrorist" attacks.**
- **Russian forces recently made confirmed advances near Avdiivka and Donetsk City.**
- **Russia is reportedly sending about 2,400 Eastern Military District (EMD) military personnel currently in Russia to fight in Ukraine to make up for personnel losses at the front.**
- **Russian occupation officials continue to expand educational programs that aim to indoctrinate Ukrainian children and erase their Ukrainian identity.**

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We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We will continue to evaluate and report on the effects of these criminal activities on the Ukrainian military and the Ukrainian population and specifically on combat in Ukrainian urban areas. We utterly condemn Russian violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

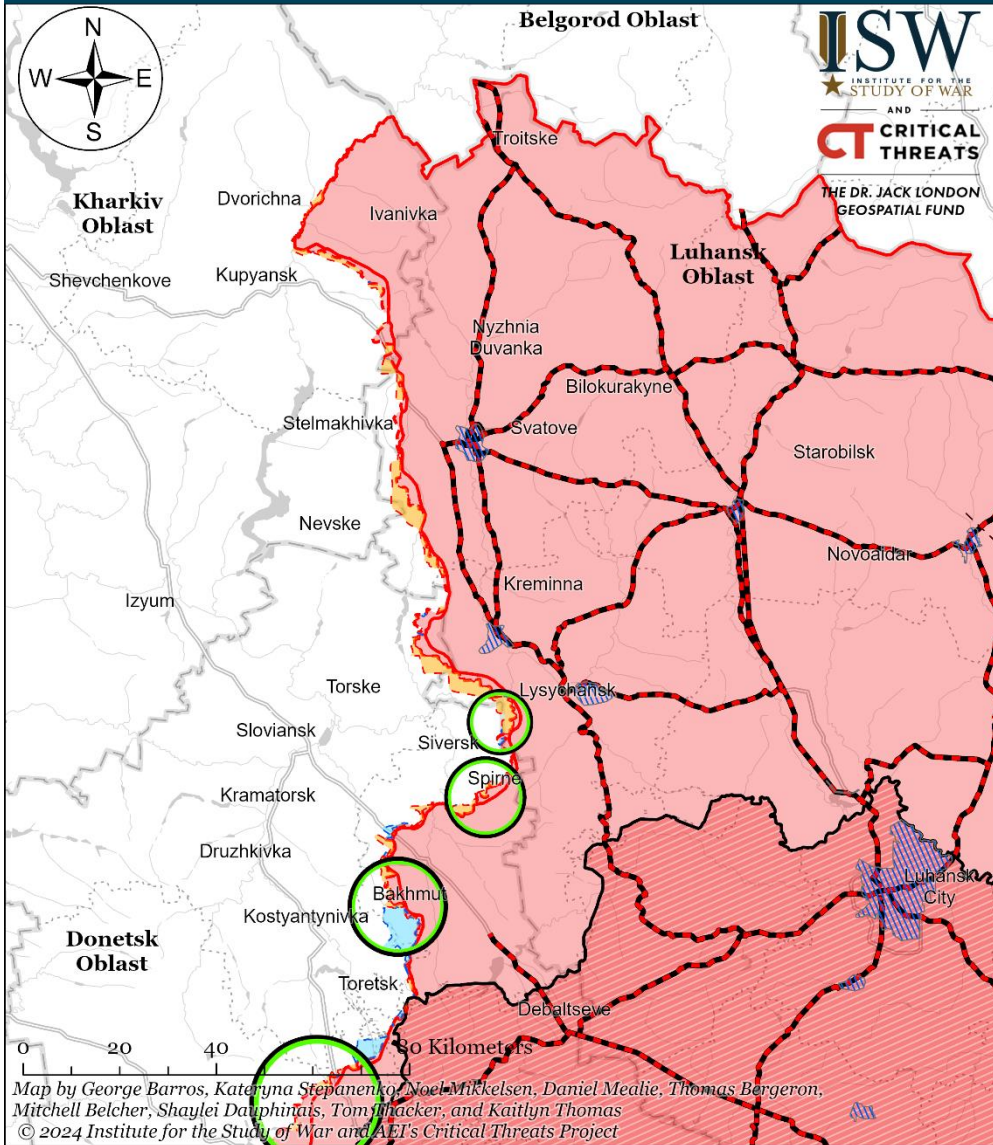
- Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine (comprised of two subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Russian Technological Adaptations
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas
- Ukrainian Defense Industrial Base Efforts
- Russian Information Operations and Narratives
- Significant Activity in Belarus

Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Luhansk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

Limited positional fighting continued in the Kreminna area on April 12. A Russian milblogger claimed on April 11 that Russian forces pushed Ukrainian forces back 1.5 kilometers in the Krupna Balka area east of Terny (west of Kreminna), although ISW has not observed visual confirmation of this claim.[22] Positional fighting continued south of Kreminna near Bilohorivka, and the Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces did not conduct any assaults elsewhere in the Lyman direction or anywhere in the Kupyansk direction.[23]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk Oblast as of April 12, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, Shaylei Dauphinais, Tom Macker, and Kaitlyn Thomas
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- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Russian Ground Lines of Communication
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare

* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

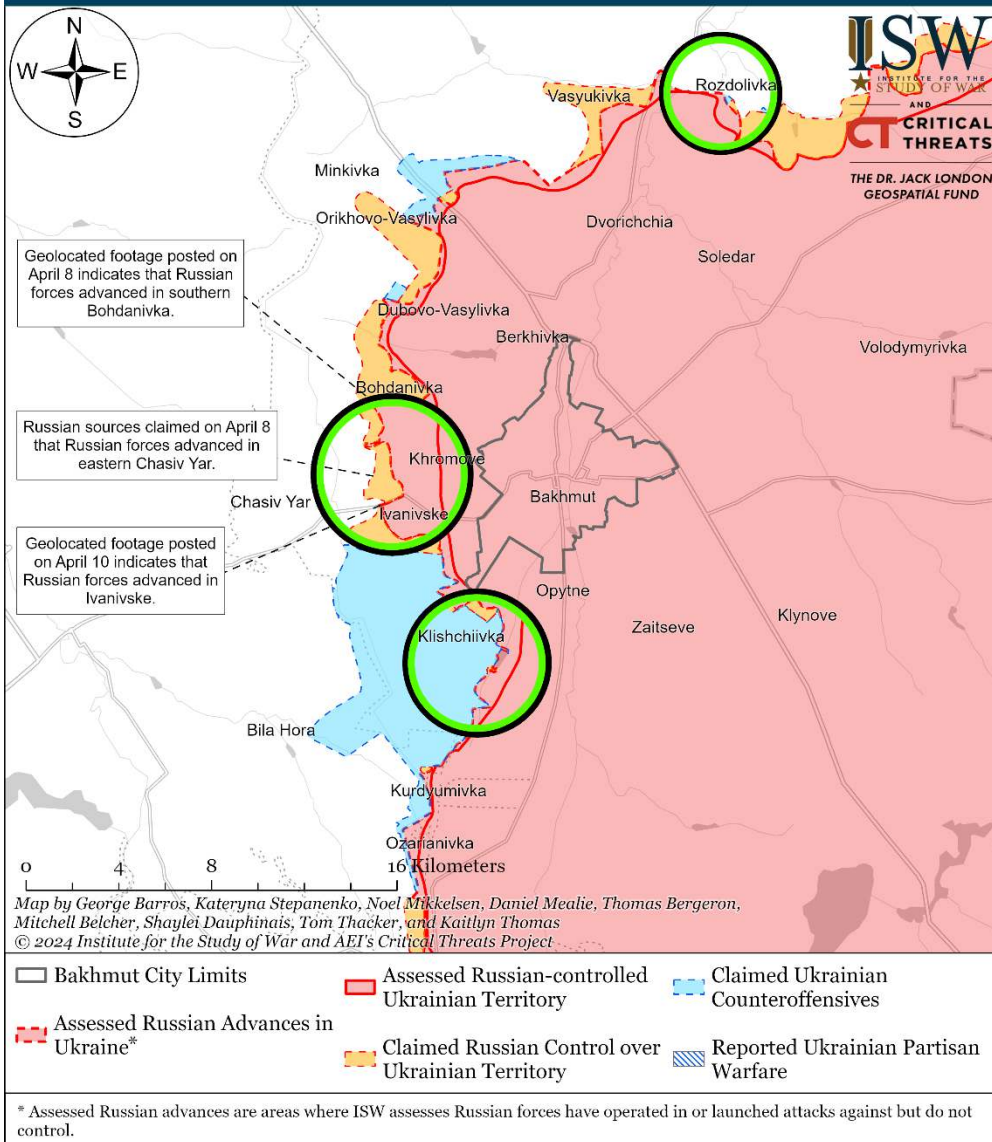
Note: A Russian source claimed on April 11 that Russian forces advanced one and one-half kilometers east of Terny.

Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Donetsk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)

Note: ISW will be orientating activity in the immediate Bakhmut area around Chasiv Yar for the foreseeable future as ISW assesses that the seizure of Chasiv Yar is the current Russian operational objective in the area.

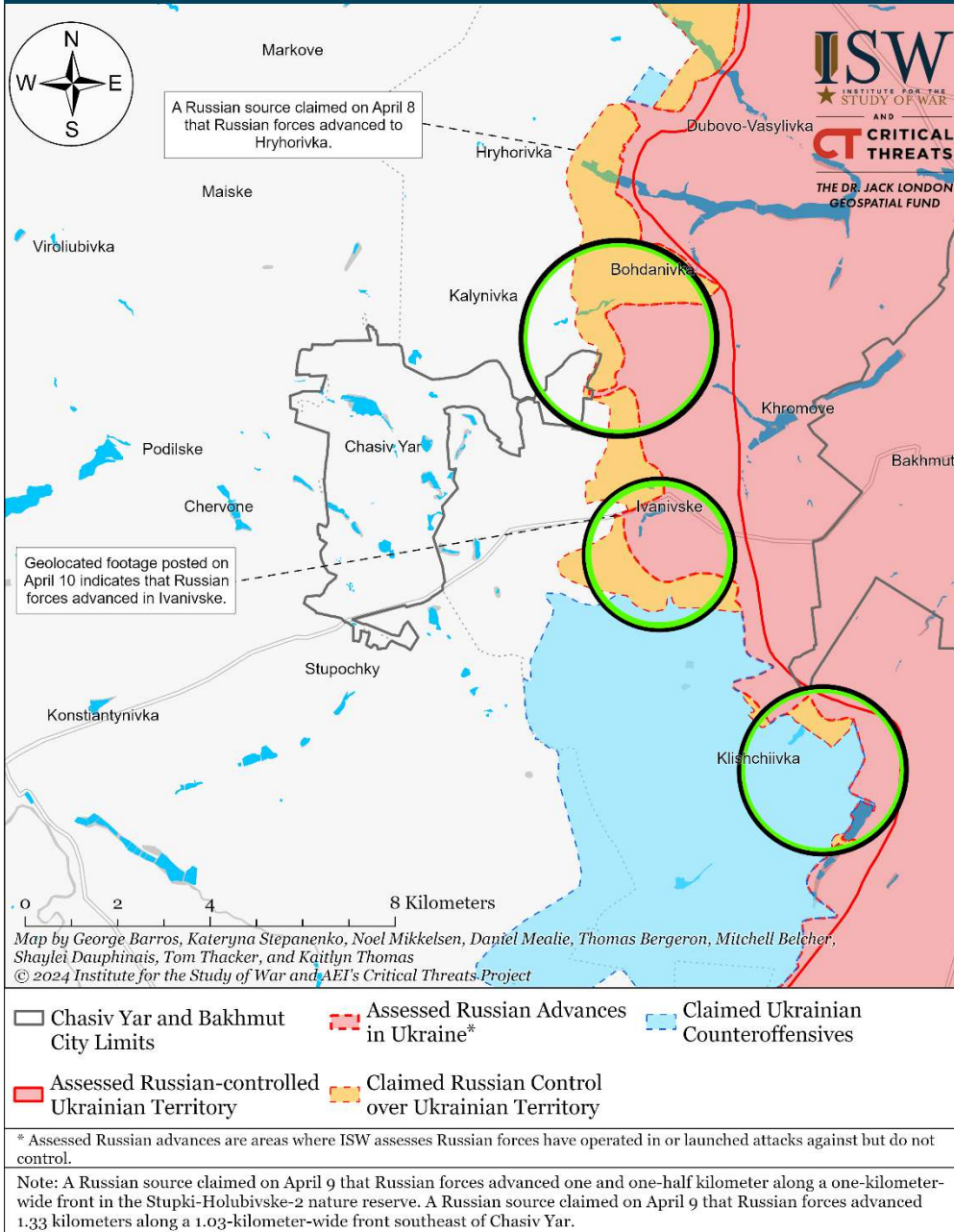
Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces marginally advanced northeast of Bakhmut. Milbloggers claimed on April 11 and 12 that Russian forces marginally advanced west of Zolotarivka towards Verkhokamyanske (both east of Siversk), and southeast of Siversk near Vesele and Vyimka.[24] Positional fighting also continued near Spirne (east of Siversk) and Rozdolivka (south of Siversk) on April 12.[25] Elements of the Russian 137th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (106th VDV Division) are reportedly operating near Rozdolivka.[26]

Assessed Control of Terrain in Bakhmut as of April 12, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



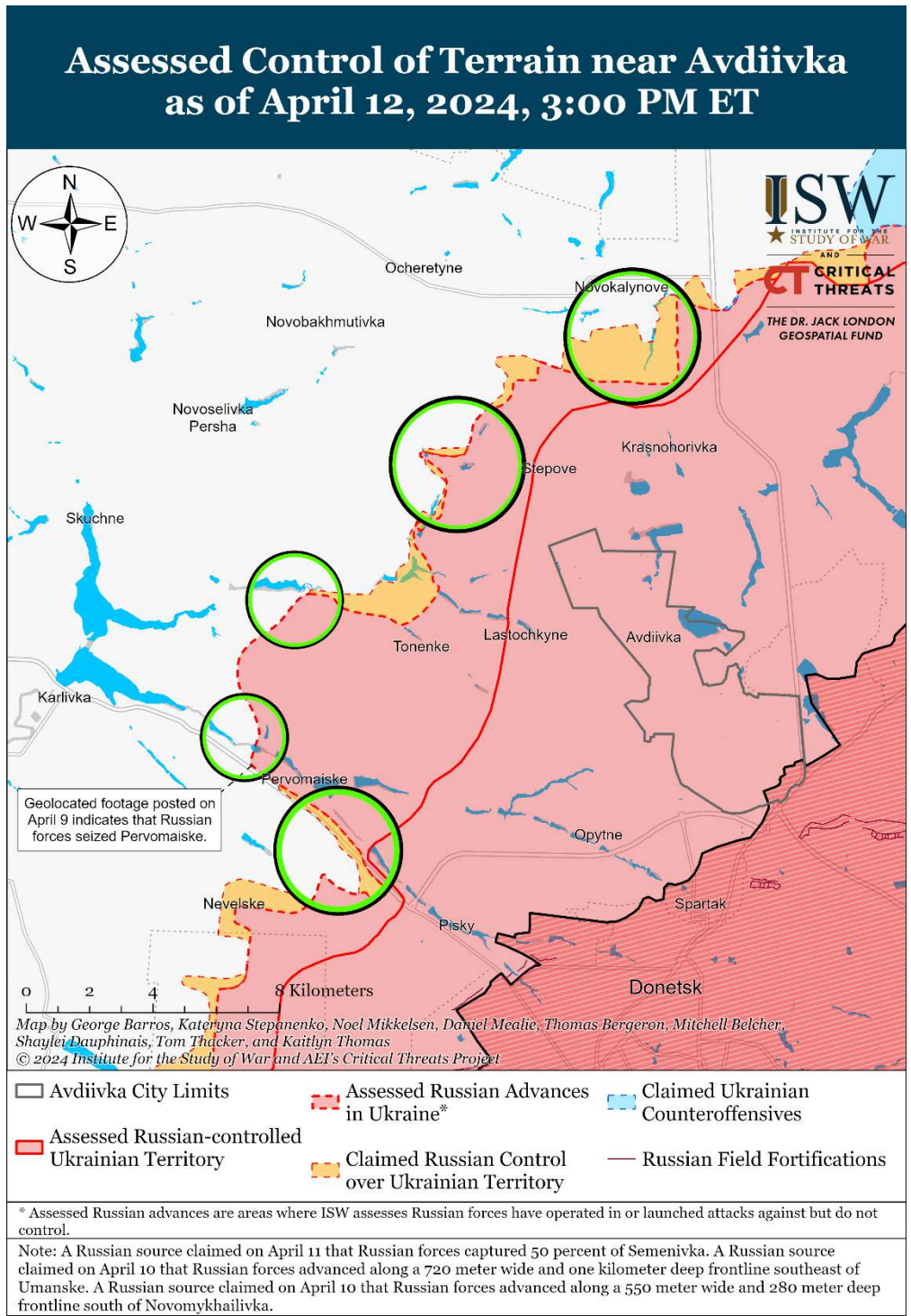
Positional fighting continued near Chasiv Yar on April 12, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces are advancing on the outskirts of the Kanal microrraion (easternmost Chasiv Yar) and towards Kalynivka from Bohdanivka (both northeast of Chasiv Yar).[27] Milbloggers also claimed that elements of the Russian 98th VDV Division are advancing on the southeastern outskirts of Chasiv Yar.[28] Fighting also continued east of Chasiv Yar near Ivanivske and southeast of Chasiv Yar near Klishchiivka.[29] Elements of the Russian 83rd VDV Brigade are reportedly fighting near Klishchiivka.[30]

Assessed Control of Terrain near Chasiv Yar as of April 12, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Russian forces recently made marginal advances west of Avdiivka amid continued fighting in the area on April 12. Geolocated footage published on April 12 shows that Russian forces recently marginally advanced north of Berdychi (northwest of Avdiivka) and south of Umanske (west of Avdiivka).[31] Russian milbloggers also claimed that Russian forces advanced in fields north and south of Novokalynove (northwest of Avdiivka), where Russian forces are conducting heavy glide bomb strikes, but ISW has not observed visual confirmation of these advances.[32] Positional fighting also

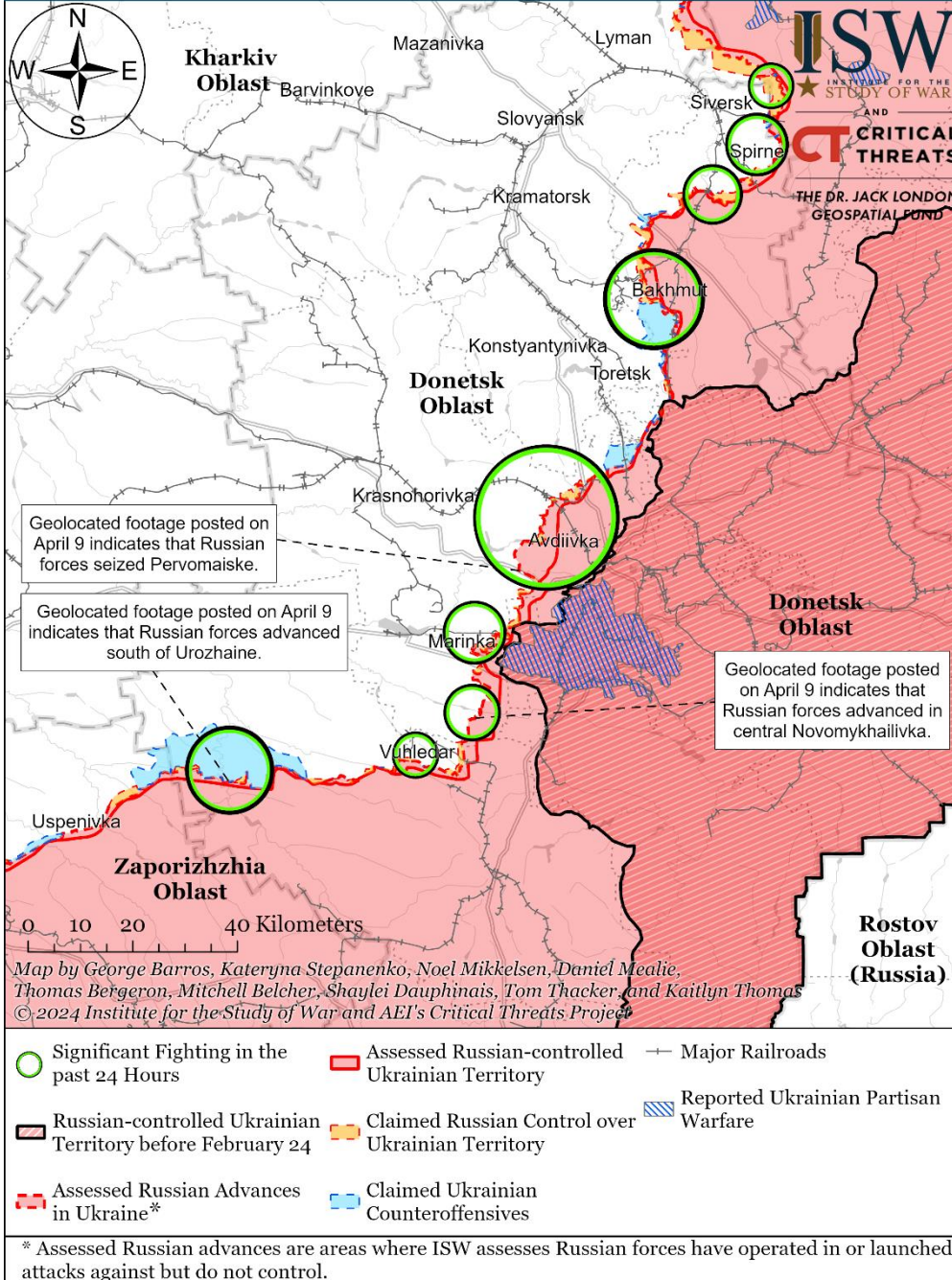
continued northwest of Avdiivka near Novobakhmutivka; west of Avdiivka near Tonenke, Semenivka, and Yasnobrodivka; and southwest of Avdiivka near Pervomaiske and Netaylove.[33]



Russian forces recently advanced southwest of Donetsk City amid continued fighting on April 12. Geolocated footage published on April 10 and 11 shows that Russian forces recently marginally advanced in southeastern Krasnohorivka (west of Donetsk City).[34] Russian milbloggers claimed that

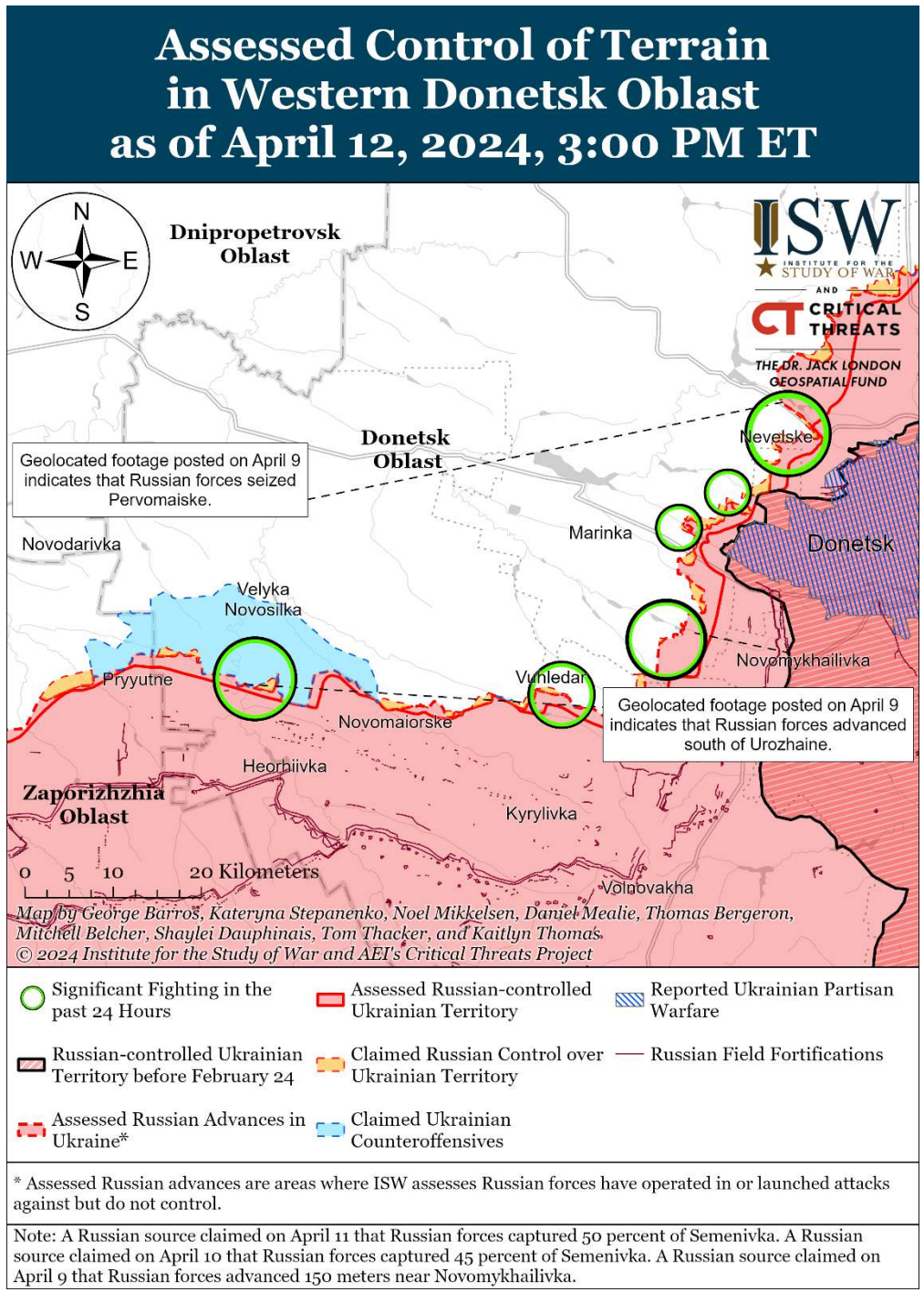
Russian forces continued to advance westward within Novomykhailivka (southwest of Donetsk City), but ISW has not observed visual confirmation of this claim.[35] Positional fighting also continued west of Donetsk City near Heorhiivka and southwest of Donetsk City near Pobieda, Kostyantynivka (west of Novomykhailivka), and Vodyane (southeast of Vuhledar).[36] Footage published on April 11 shows Ukrainian forces conducting glide bomb strikes against Russian forces near Krasnohorivka.[37]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of April 12, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Russian forces reportedly marginally advanced in the Donetsk-Zaporizhzhia Oblast border area amid positional fighting on April 12. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces crossed the Mokryi Yaly River and entered the southern outskirts of Urozhaine (south of Velyka Novosilka), but ISW has

not observed visual confirmation of this claim.[38] Positional fighting also continued near Staromayorske (south of Velyka Novosilka).[39]



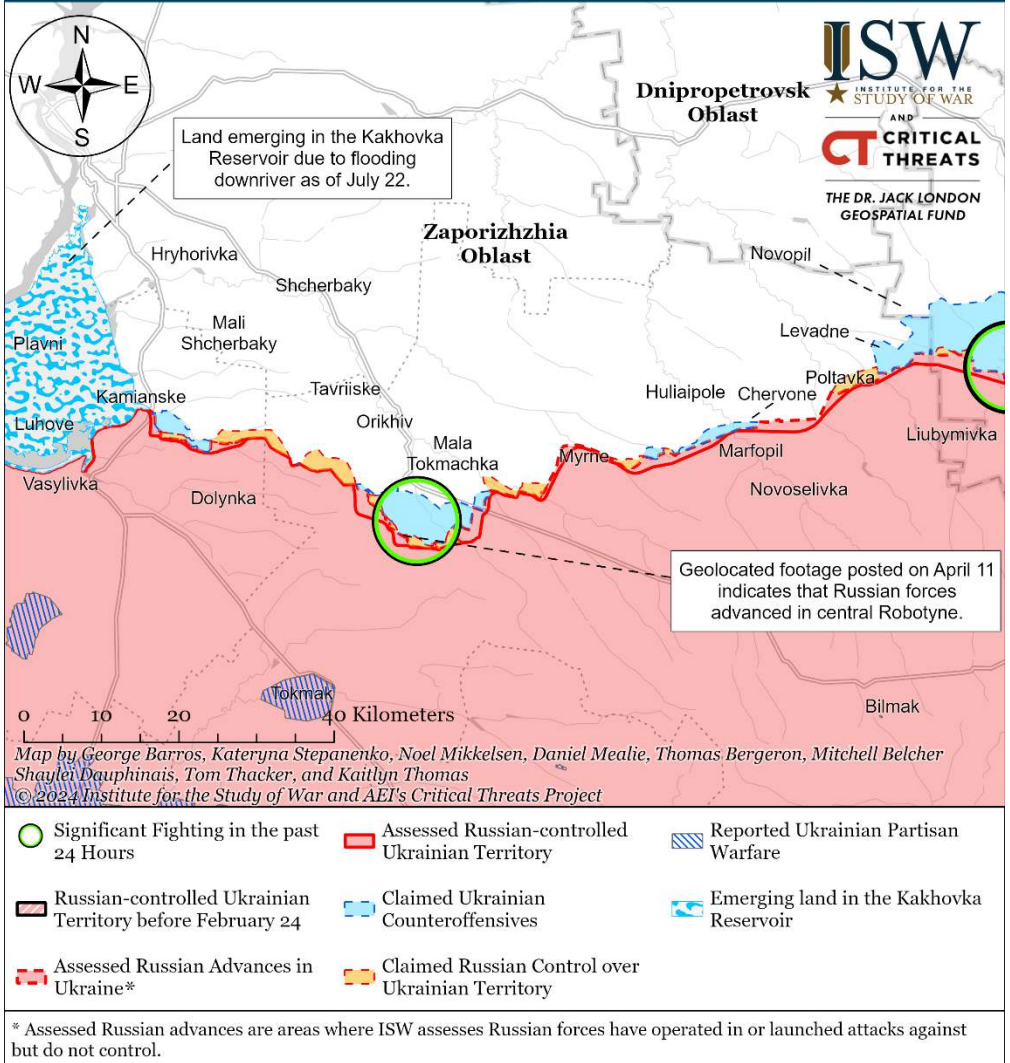
Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)

Positional engagements continued in western Zaporizhzhia Oblast on April 12, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Positional engagements continued near Robotyne and

Verbove (east of Robotyne).[40] Ukrainian forces appear to have conducted a successful HIMARS strike against a Russian Tor-M2 air defense system south of Vasylivka (west of Robotyne).[41] Elements of the Russian 392nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (likely a mobilized unit) are operating in the Zaporizhia direction.[42]

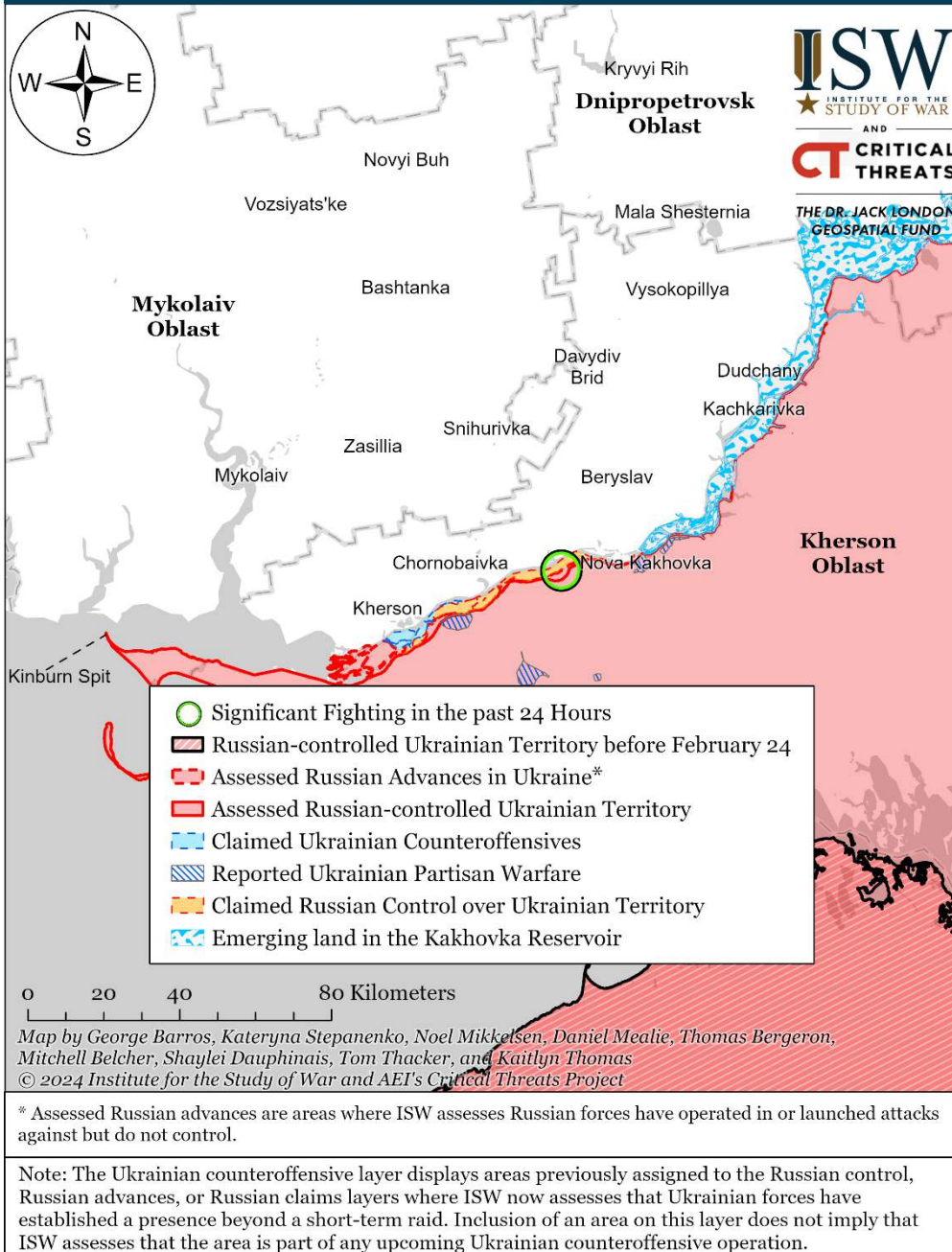


Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhia as of April 12, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Positional engagements continued in east (left) bank Kherson Oblast near Krynky on April 12, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline.[43]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of April 12, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign (Russian Objective: Target Ukrainian military and civilian infrastructure in the rear and on the frontline)

Russian forces conducted a series of drone and missile strikes against Ukraine on the night of April 11 to 12 and during the day on April 12. Ukrainian military officials reported that Russian forces launched 17 Shahed-136/131 drones from occupied Crimea and a Kh-59 cruise missile from occupied Donetsk

Oblast on the night of April 11 to 12.[44] Ukrainian forces reportedly downed 17 Shahed drones over Mykolaiv, Odesa, Kherson, Dnipropetrovsk, Vinnytsia, and Khmelnytskyi oblasts. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian air defenses destroyed a Russian-launched Kh-59 missile later during the day on April 12.[45] Ukrainian Southern Operational Command Spokesperson Colonel Nataliya Humenyuk stated that Russian drone strikes on April 12 were a test of the “classic routes” that Russian drones use during strikes and reiterated that Russian forces launch drones in different directions in order to overload Ukrainian air defense systems.[46]

Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts (Russian objective: Expand combat power without conducting general mobilization)

Russia is reportedly sending about 2,400 Eastern Military District (EMD) military personnel currently in Russia to fight in Ukraine to make up for personnel losses at the front. The Ukrainian Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) stated on April 12 that Russia will send military personnel of the Pacific Fleet (EMD) and 11th Air Force and Air Defense Army (Russian Aerospace Forces [VKS] and EMD) to Ukraine in order to replenish Russian personnel losses.[47] The GUR stated that Commander of the Pacific Fleet Admiral Viktor Liina decided to stop all rotations to Syria and to send about 2,000 military personnel from Primorsky Krai and Kamchatka Krai to Ukraine. The GUR did not specify if all 2,000 personnel were initially destined for deployments to Syria. The Pacific Fleet operates at the Russian naval base in Tartus, Syria, but it remains unclear if the end of the Pacific Fleet's rotations in Syria will herald a larger transfer of Pacific Fleet assets from Syria to Ukraine or elsewhere.[48] The GUR stated that Russia will also transfer about 400 military personnel from the 11th Air Force and Air Defense Army from Khabarovsk Krai to Ukraine to “patch the holes” in areas of the front where elements of the understaffed 155th and 40th naval infantry brigades (Pacific Fleet, EMD) are operating. Elements of the 155th Brigade are reportedly operating near Novomykhailivka, and elements of the 40th Brigade are reportedly operating near Velyka Novosilka.[49] The GUR stated that an unspecified number of personnel from the EMD will join a new, unspecified motorized rifle brigade that Russia is forming in Voronezh.[50]

Russian Technological Adaptations (Russian objective: Introduce technological innovations to optimize systems for use in Ukraine)

The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed on April 12 that the Russian Strategic Missile Forces successfully launched an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) from a mobile ground-based missile system at the Kapustin Yar test site in Astrakhan Oblast.[51] The Russian MoD claimed that Russia conducted the launch as part of tests of “promising” missile systems and checks on the stability of missiles in service.

Ukrainian Defense Industrial Efforts (Ukrainian objective: Develop its defense industrial base to become more self-sufficient in cooperation with US, European, and international partners)

ISW is not publishing coverage of Ukrainian defense industrial efforts today.

Activities in Russian-occupied areas (Russian objective: Consolidate administrative control of annexed areas; forcibly integrate Ukrainian citizens into Russian sociocultural, economic, military, and governance systems)

Russian occupation officials continue to expand educational programs that aim to indoctrinate Ukrainian children and erase their Ukrainian identity. Luhansk Peoples Republic (LNR) Head Leonid Pasechnik signed an agreement with the Russian “Avangard” Educational and Methodological Center for Military-Patriotic Education of Youth on April 9 to host patriotic education and basic military training exercises for students in occupied Luhansk Oblast.[52] Zaporizhia Oblast occupation officials claimed on April 10 that Russian Presidential Administration Deputy Head Sergei Kiriienko visited occupied Berdyansk to view the construction of military-patriotic education youth and wellness centers.[53] The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported that representatives from the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) are visiting orphans and children without parental guardians in occupied Ukraine to try to convince the children to enroll in specialized MVD-affiliated educational institutions.[54]

Russian occupation authorities continue to illegally deport Ukrainian children to Russia – a practice that Russian authorities reportedly intensified in the days leading up to Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Russian Senator Konstantin Basyuk stated on April 10 that Russian authorities sent children from occupied Chaplynka, Kherson Oblast to the “Ocean” children’s center in Primorsky Krai in March 2024.[55] Basyuk stated that the first group of Ukrainian children went to the “Ocean” children’s center in October 2023 following agreements between Kherson Oblast occupation administration head Vladimir Saldo, Russian Duma Deputy Roza Chemeris, Primorsky Krai Deputy Igor Chemeris, and the management of the “Ocean” children’s center in summer 2023. Russian opposition outlets *Verstka* and *Vazhnye Istorii* reported on April 8 that Russian authorities deported at least 400 Ukrainian children from orphanages and boarding schools for children with disabilities in occupied Donetsk Oblast to Russia in the days before Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.[56]

Russian Information Operations and Narratives

The Kremlin is once again intensifying an information operation feigning interest in meaningful negotiations about Ukraine as part of an ongoing effort to elicit preemptive Western concessions on Ukrainian territorial integrity and sovereignty. Russian President Vladimir Putin stated in a meeting with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko on April 11 that Russia has never “given up” on a peaceful resolution to the war in Ukraine and reiterated a narrative alleging that the West dissuaded Ukraine from signing an agreement favorable to Russia during negotiations in Istanbul in April 2022.[57] Putin disparaged the Global Peace Summit in Switzerland scheduled for June 2024 and claimed that Russia opposes any negotiation format that is “not in line with [the Kremlin’s] reality.”[58] Putin stated that maybe Lukashenko should initiate peace negotiations, prompting Lukashenko to place the onus for the lack of negotiations on the West.[59] Kremlin spokesperson Dmitri Peskov reiterated that the alleged treaty supposedly almost signed in Istanbul can serve as a basis for negotiations but that several new “realities” have emerged in the past two years that need to be considered, likely referring to Russia’s illegal annexation of occupied Ukrainian territories.[60] Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov similarly blamed the West for a lack of negotiations at a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) members on April 11.[61] Kremlin officials previously amplified false interests in negotiations ahead of the Ukrainian summer 2023 counteroffensive in order to discourage critical Western aid to Ukraine, and Russian officials are likely aiming to repeat these efforts amid ongoing debates about US security assistance to Ukraine.[62]

Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Department of Non-proliferation and Arms Control Director Vladimir Yermakov reiterated boilerplate rhetoric about nuclear escalation aimed at the US, United Kingdom (UK), and Finland in an interview with Kremlin newswire *TASS* on April 12.[63] The Kremlin routinely issues escalatory nuclear rhetoric to force the West into self-deterrence over support for Ukraine.[64]

Russian opposition outlet *SOTA* reported on April 12 that bots on Russian social media platform V Kontakte (VK) are increasingly promoting content critical of Moldovan President Maia Sandu and that the effort may be connected to Russian Presidential Administration Deputy Head Sergei Kiriyenko and his son, Vladimir Kiriyenko, who owns the Mail.ru group.[65] *SOTA* noted that the anti-Sandu rhetoric intensified on April 10, following pro-Russian Moldovan autonomous region of Gagauzia Governor Yevgenia Gutsul's visit to Moscow on April 9 to illegally sign an agreement on pensioner accounts with a Russian state-owned bank.[66] The Kremlin is likely attempting to use pro-Russian actors in Moldova to destabilize Moldovan democracy and society, prevent Moldova's accession to the European Union (EU), or even justify future hybrid or conventional operations against Moldova.[67] Russian information operations that aim to discredit the current Moldovan leadership will likely intensify as these destabilization efforts continue.

Significant activity in Belarus (Russian efforts to increase its military presence in Belarus and further integrate Belarus into Russian-favorable frameworks and Wagner Group activity in Belarus)

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko stated on April 11 that there is currently no need for Belarus to create a demilitarized "sanitary zone" between Belarus and Ukraine as part of a Russian information operation aimed at deterring further Western military assistance to Ukraine.[68] Lukashenko claimed that Belarus' "need" for a demilitarized zone also depends on Western states, describing Western weapons and ammunition transfers to Ukraine as "escalations," and claimed that Western states are considering stationing their forces in Ukraine along the border with Belarus.[69] Russian President Vladimir Putin has previously suggested creating a demilitarized "sanitary zone" in Ukrainian-controlled areas along the Ukrainian-Russian international border to place Russian territory and Russian-occupied Ukrainian territories out of the range of frontline artillery systems and Western-provided long-range systems.[70]

Lukashenko stated during his meeting with Putin on April 11 that Belarus is beginning to domestically produce microchips and other unspecified electronic components, likely as part of Russian and Belarusian efforts to address their continued reliance on Western-produced, sanctioned components.[71]

Note: ISW does not receive any classified material from any source, uses only publicly available information, and draws extensively on Russian, Ukrainian, and Western reporting and social media as well as commercially available satellite imagery and other geospatial data as the basis for these reports. References to all sources used are provided in the endnotes of each update.



[1] <http://kremlin dot ru/events/president/news/73852> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar031824>

[2] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar041124> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-march-31-2024> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar032224> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar032924>

[3] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/ukraine%E2%80%99s-long-term-path-success-jumpstarting-self-sufficient-defense-industrial-base>

[4] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/ukraine%E2%80%99s-long-term-path-success-jumpstarting-self-sufficient-defense-industrial-base>

[5] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/ukraine%E2%80%99s-long-term-path-success-jumpstarting-self-sufficient-defense-industrial-base>

[6] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar010624>

[7] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-april-6-2024> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar041024>

[8] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-january-24-2024> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar020624> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/ukraine%E2%80%99s-long-term-path-success-jumpstarting-self-sufficient-defense-industrial-base>

[9] <https://suspilne dot media/724083-rosiani-vdarili-po-tripilskij-tes-patma-raketami-h-69-dzerela/> ; https://defence-ua dot com/weapon_and_tech/rf_dlja_udaru_po_tripilskij_tes_vikoristala_najnovishi_h_69_i_tse_girsh_e_za_kinzhal-15016.html

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[12] https://defence-ua dot com/weapon_and_tech/rf_dlja_udaru_po_tripilskij_tes_vikoristala_najnovishi_h_69_i_tse_girsh_e_za_kinzhal-15016.html

[13] <https://armyinform.com.ua/2024/04/12/h-69-cze-nova-raketa-dlya-nas-tozh-myvychayemo-yak-mozhna-yij-protydiyaty-illya-yevlash/>

[14] <https://armyinform.com.ua/2024/04/12/h-69-cze-nova-raketa-dlya-nas-tozh-myvychayemo-yak-mozhna-yij-protydiyaty-illya-yevlash/>

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