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Ukraine

Visiting a secret anarchist warehouse in Ukraine

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The Ukrainian left acts where official systems fail. Bjarke Friborg and Helene Vadsten visited Solidarity Collectives in Ukraine. Here is Helene's account of the visit.

Ukraine is under severe pressure after three and a half years of Russian war of aggression and occupation of parts of the country. The war and the neoliberal economic policies of Volodymyr Zelenskyy's government have riddled an already worn-out social system.

The country is filled with veterans with visible and invisible wounds, psychologically affected relatives of soldiers, children who cannot attend school because their schools lack shelters, internally displaced people lacking roofs over their heads, active soldiers lacking vital equipment.

In May 2025, Bjarke Friborg and Helene Vadsten from Enhedslisten [1] were invited to a meeting with Ukrainian Ksenia (also called Ksusha) from the anarchist network Solidarity Collectives – as well as two European activists who travel in and out of Ukraine and who, for security reasons, wish to remain anonymous.

The war has prompted left-wing groups in and outside Ukraine to put political theories into practice in impressive, solidarity-based aid work. Ksenia from Solidarity Collectives states:

"[...] for me, both personally and as an anarchist, it's practice that motivates me: Practice in creating horizontal relationships, practice in the present moment. I regard mutual aid – even on a smaller scale – as political activity and a realisation of anarchism's philosophy. I don't want to get stuck in theories and considerations about what's good and what's bad to do in this situation."

A night full of dangers and a secret meeting

All we had was an agreement to meet and an address somewhere in Ukraine. By that time, we had been in Ukraine for four days. We had spent the night in a car park basement that had been converted into a – by Ukrainian standards – luxurious shelter, while drone swarms, precision cruise missiles and high-speed ballistic missiles hammered down over cities across Ukraine from east to west.

The Putin regime had apparently decided that it was this night at the end of May 2025 that the massive bombing campaign – which has destroyed Ukrainian homes and schools and killed or wounded countless civilians ever since – should begin in earnest.

Now we stood there waiting, very tired and quite alone, at the address we had been given. Time passed while strangers passed us without returning our questioning looks. Had we made a mistake? We checked address and time. It looked correct. Could there have been a misunderstanding?

For security reasons, all location services were deactivated on our mobiles, and although we are from the generation that learned to use maps when they were made of paper and had to be folded out, it felt quite uncertain to stand in a completely unknown place in a war-torn country without either paper maps or the blue dot on Google Maps.

But how had we ended up in that situation? The arrangement had come about as part of a cross-party delegation trip under DIPD, the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy [2]. Bjarke Friberg and I are members of the steering group for a DIPD project between Enhedslisten, Alternativet [3] and Ukrainian Sotsialnyi Rukh [4]. The purpose of the trip was to gain better insight into the state of democracy among political parties and civil society organisations in the country.

After the first days with occasional daily air alarms, the night's massive, prolonged attack had given us insight into another part of Ukrainian reality: never knowing when you have to drop everything to run to safety, never knowing when you can return to your interrupted activities, the fear of losing or being hit yourself. The feeling of uncertainty sat in our tired bodies.

But then they came, our activist friends from the Ukrainian anarchist grouping Solidarity Collectives. We were both relieved and happy to finally meet the people we had previously known primarily from encrypted SMS services.

The secret warehouse

If you've seen one anarchist office, you've seen them all. Or have you?

Yes, there were desks with computers and office supplies, there were stickers, t-shirts, patches and badges and the obligatory flags from various anti-authoritarian groups from home and abroad.

But there were also shelves from floor to ceiling with equipment for use in war. Some of it clearly used, others completely new. Warm sleeping bags, bulletproof vests, knee protectors, helmets, medical equipment and much more. All essential material that, in our non-military-trained eyes, should be standard equipment for all soldiers sent to the front – but isn't in Ukraine, where soldiers are largely expected to purchase their own equipment.

At Solidarity Collectives, activists collect money and equipment donated by private individuals, activists and anti-authoritarian groupings in Ukraine, Europe and elsewhere in the world. Solidarity Collectives ensures redistribution to anti-authoritarian soldiers at the front. The collective is thus part of a larger international ecosystem of anti-authoritarian forces supporting the very concrete, military struggle against imperialism currently taking place at the front between Ukraine and Russia.

As recipients, they prioritise comrades and allies who have previously participated in political activity – such as trade unionists, anti-fascists, feminists, climate and eco-activists and other progressive left-wing activists who have decided to participate voluntarily in the war against Russia's invasion or have been recruited through Ukrainian conscription.

Solidarity Collectives has been able to deliver over a hundred effective bulletproof vests (level 4 body armor vests) and countless helmets, night vision equipment, thermal detection equipment, drones, tactical medical equipment, military uniforms, boots and much more through donations.

Part of the storage space and office is dedicated to a very special project: Work tables full of soldering irons, circuit boards and wires, a shelf with stacks of small drones that can be used for logistics, reconnaissance and combat. They don't look like much when you think of the large, deadly Shahed drones [5] that Russia sends over civilian Ukrainians night after night. On the other hand, they are light to transport, even for soldiers on foot, and they are agile in the air.

In collaboration with Czech and German anti-authoritarian forces, among others, Solidarity Collectives builds, assembles and equips the drones, after which they distribute them. The drones can help anti-authoritarian soldiers at the front move faster and more safely through dangerous areas.

In the future, the part of Solidarity Collectives working with the war effort plans to establish a veterans' organisation. It will work in collaboration with trade unions and social institutions on rehabilitation of anti-authoritarian soldiers who have been physically or mentally injured, so they can be resocialised into Ukrainian everyday life.

It's important to remember that Ukrainian soldiers don't have a fixed time period or end date for active service. This means that those soldiers – who volunteered in the very first days after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 – have been active soldiers in a warring country for three and a half years. At the same time, the Ukrainian state is unable to cover veterans' needs at present.

The need for support in Ukraine is therefore still enormous. You can support Solidarity Collectives' targeted work for left-wing, anti-authoritarian soldiers by sending money via PayPal: solidaritycollectives_ua@proton.me

You can also support the vital work with drones via PayPal: solidaritycollectives.fpv@proton.me

When you've finished reading this article and perhaps decided to support Solidarity Collectives' important work, spend 20 minutes of your life watching this harsh, open-hearted, moving [interview](#).
with the Belarusian military medic Charlie. Just one of the soldiers Solidarity Collectives supports. Charlie volunteered for the Ukrainian army at the beginning of the full-scale invasion in February 2022.

Solidarity Collectives helps people and animals trapped in the war

In addition to work helping the front, Solidarity Collectives also performs humanitarian tasks among civilians in areas near the front. Using their network, for example among trade union activists, Solidarity Collectives finds out where there is need for humanitarian support and for what. This could be internally displaced people or hospitals and schools.

Solidarity Collectives has organised humanitarian convoys and delivered supplies such as medicine, clothing, food, sleeping bags, mattresses and gas stoves to the cities of Bucha [6], Bilohorodka, Chernihiv, Kryvyi Rih, Mykolaiv, Kramatorsk, Kharkiv and others.

You can support Solidarity Collectives' civilian support on PayPal: solidaritycollectivesua.humanitarian@proton.me

Most recently, Solidarity Collectives has established the Animal Aid project, which provides food, veterinary treatment and safe shelters for animals. A team of volunteers rescues injured and abandoned animals, helps find new homes for them and works to increase understanding of animals' needs.

You can support the work with animals on PayPal: solidaritycollectivesua.animals@proton.me

Information work

The media group at Solidarity Collectives aims to explain the anti-authoritarian view of the situation in Ukraine by collecting testimonies from soldiers and activists both from the front lines and from society in general.

They work on documenting, inspiring, sharing knowledge and fundraising for specific projects in various media formats. You can see this, for example, on Instagram in a post about housing in Russian-occupied areas.

You can follow Solidarity Collectives' media work here:

- [English-language website](#)
- [YouTube channel](#)

You can help

We often hear from concerned left-wingers in the west that there is no Ukrainian left, that Ukraine under Zelenskyy has imprisoned the entire left. This is incorrect.

There is an active Ukrainian left, including Solidarity Collectives, which does very concrete and essential political work. However, it is correct that the Ukrainian state does not live up to its democratic obligations, and that there are problematic examples of persecution of trade union and left-wing activists.

The latest development, where Parliament passed and President Zelenskyy signed a law that effectively abolished the independence of anti-corruption authorities, is just one example. But the episode also shows a strength of Ukrainian democracy – because Ukrainians immediately and in large numbers took to the streets to protest in small and large cities across Ukraine.

The Ukrainian people do not want to return to the time under former president Viktor Yanukovych's [7] totalitarian regime. And they succeeded. After just a few days of protests, Zelenskyy announced that a new law would be passed that reversed the original and secured the independence of anti-corruption authorities. This law was passed on 31 July 2025. Popular pressure works, even in Ukraine.

Ordinary Ukrainians have repeatedly shown themselves ready to act. For justice, for democracy, for their fellow citizens. Ukrainian civil society steps up where the Ukrainian state fails. This applies not least to the many small, progressive left-wing activist groupings. But they need our solidarity and our support.

You can spread the good news: that there is an active Ukrainian left. Help keep Danish public attention on Ukraine's cause. Share this article.

[(Follow Solidarity Collectives' social media and like, comment and share posts.

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [X \(Twitter\)](#)

– [Bluesky](#)

You can also help concretely by sending what you can spare to the accounts mentioned throughout the article. All amounts help, large and small. Otherwise, you can also help here:

– [Crypto accounts](#)
– [Patreon](#))]

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[1] Enhedslisten (The Unity List) is Denmark's main left-wing political party, founded in 1989 as a coalition of socialist and communist parties. It is better known internationally as the Red Green Alliance.

[2] DIPD (Dansk Institut for Partier og Demokrati) is a Danish government agency that supports democratic development and political party cooperation internationally

[3] Alternativet (The Alternative) is a green political party in Denmark founded in 2013

[4] Sotsialnyi Rukh (Social Movement) is a Ukrainian progressive political party

[5] Shahed drones are Iranian-made kamikaze drones extensively used by Russia in its attacks on Ukrainian civilians

[6] Bucha is a city near Kyiv where Russian forces committed documented war crimes against civilians in 2022

[7] Viktor Yanukovych was Ukraine's pro-Russian president from 2010-2014, overthrown in the Euromaidan revolution