

Finnish Police: Weapons Bound For Ukraine End Up on Europe's Black Market

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Port of Helsinki. **Sini Merikallio (CC BY-SA 2.0)**

Police in Finland have raised the alarm over the smuggling of Western-donated weapons from Ukraine by criminal gangs, Finland's Yle broadcaster [reported](#) Sunday.

Weapons originally sent as military aid to Ukraine including assault rifles, pistols, grenades and combat drones, had been found in multiple European countries, Christer Ahlgren, head of organized crime at the Finnish police's bureau of investigations, told Yle.

Ahlgren did not give any further details about the smuggling of light weaponry into Finland, such as the number of arms recovered or their street value, but did say that the authorities believed that "three of the world's largest motorcycle gangs" had reactivated their smuggling routes for Ukrainian-bound weapons.

"We have been warning about the growth of organized crime and criminal street gangs for years, but we have not been listened to," Ahlgren told Yle.

Russia has [accused](#) Kyiv's allies of fueling the black market for illegal arms with their monthly donations of weapons worth over \$1 billion. Ukraine's defense minister in July dismissed fears of illegal weapons trafficking as Russian fearmongering.

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Ahlgren told Yle that weapons from Russia had also ended up in Finland.

"It's impossible to say how many weapons are in the country and in whose hands," Ahlgren said.

Europol [warned](#) back in July that arms donations to Ukraine could flood the EU via existing smuggling routes and online platforms. Members of the U.S. Congress also demanded stricter oversight of U.S. arms supplies to Ukraine, the value of which [neared \\$18 billion](#) as of mid-October.

The United States last week [announced](#) a tracking program to ensure that light, high-tech weapons such as the 1,400 Stinger anti-aircraft missiles and the 8,500 Javelin anti-tank missiles donated to Ukraine do not end up in the hands of extremists.

"Ukraine has been armed in huge quantities and that's a good thing," Ahlgren told Yle, adding "but we'll be dealing with these weapons for decades and paying the price here."

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