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45K Muscovites Fighting in Ukraine, Mayor Says

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Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin seen with Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu. **Russian Defense Ministry / TASS**

Around 45,000 residents of Moscow have been deployed on the frontline in Ukraine, the Russian capital's mayor said late Wednesday.

Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said some 20,000 Muscovites are serving in the war as mobilized soldiers, while another 20,000 are either contract or volunteer fighters.

The remaining 5,000 are professional soldiers, he added.

Sobyanin's figures suggest that one out of 12 Russian troops in Ukraine come from Moscow, according to Radio Freedom Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL). But the outlet notes that military analysts believe the 40,000 figure is exaggerated.

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Sobyanin did not disclose how many Moscow residents had died fighting in Ukraine, but said that more than 20 were killed and more than 100 wounded "in the construction of defensive structures."

In late July, he said 30,000 Muscovites had been deployed in Ukraine — including 20,000 mobilized soldiers and 10,000 contract soldiers.

President Vladimir Putin announced a "partial" military mobilization — Russia's first since World War II — in September 2022, sending shockwaves across the country as tens of thousands of men were drafted into the army.

So far unwilling to announce a second mobilization drive, the Kremlin has instead opted for a massive PR campaign, hoping to lure Russians into military service with financial incentives.

Authorities have not disclosed their recruitment targets, but various estimates say Russia could be trying to recruit as many as 400,000 volunteer soldiers.

Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said last year the size of Russia's army would be increased to 1.5 million people, as Moscow presses ahead with its war in Ukraine.

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