

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

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Kilde:	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
Titel:	Ukraine: Protection of civilians in armed conflict. December 2025 update
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Ukraine: Protection of civilians in armed conflict

December 2025 update



A residential building damaged in an aerial bombardment of Zaporizhzhia on 17 December 2025

12 January 2026

Summary

- Civilian casualties in December 2025 remained high, **with at least 157 killed and 888 injured**. The number of casualties in December was similar to the casualty numbers in recent months, but a **66 per cent increase** compared with December 2024 (109 killed; 522 injured).
- The total civilian casualties in Ukraine in 2025 reached at least 2,514 killed and 12,142 injured, which is a **31 per cent increase** compared to 2024 (2,088 killed; 9,138 injured) and a **70 per cent increase** compared to 2023 (1,974 killed; 6,651 injured).
- In December, **long-range strikes** with missiles and loitering munitions launched by Russian armed forces accounted for **33 per cent** of all civilian casualties (34 killed; 308 injured), usually affecting urban centers far from the frontline. **67 per cent of civilian casualties occurred near the frontline** (122 killed; 571 injured). **Short-range drones**, predominantly with first-person-view capacity, remained the primary cause of civilian casualties in frontline regions (58 killed; 256 injured), followed by artillery shelling and MLRS strikes (43 killed; 165 injured), and aerial bombardments (21 killed; 150 injured).
- As in the previous month, the vast majority of civilian casualties (**96 per cent¹**) occurred in areas under the control of the Government of Ukraine. Civilian casualties were recorded across **15 regions** of Ukraine and the city of Kyiv.
- The Russian Federation **continued large-scale, as well as region-specific attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure**. Odesa region was among the most affected areas in December, experiencing repeated strikes that resulted in prolonged power outages in several cities.

Civilian casualties December 2025²

Total civilian casualties **1,045** [**157** Killed **888** Injured]

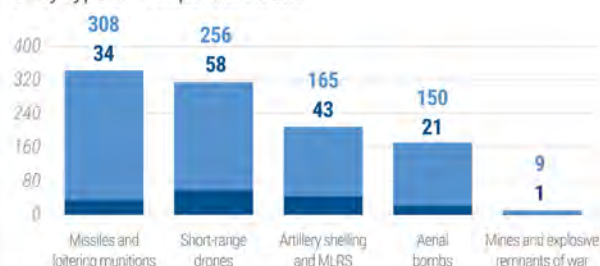
1. By territory where they occurred



2. By age and sex



3. By type of weapon/incident



Representative incidents

"Our car service was full of customers. Our senior mechanic was diagnosing a vehicle when the blast hit and shrapnel struck him. I tried to stop the bleeding until the ambulance arrived, but he didn't survive."

— a man describing an attack in Kharkiv on 26 December 2025.

- » On 1 December, a missile attack killed 4 civilians (2 men and 2 women) and injured 48 (28 men and 20 women) in Dnipro City.
- » Increased attacks damaging energy, port, and civilian infrastructure in Odesa region in December killed at least 10 civilians (9 men and 1 woman) and injured 55 (40 men, 12 women, 2 boys, and 1 girl).
- » Daily attacks with a variety of powerful artillery systems and short-range drones on Kherson City led to at least 12 civilians killed (7 men, 4 women, and 1 girl) and 113 injured (62 men, 48 women, 2 girls, and 1 boy).
- » Multiple attacks on Zaporizhzhia City injured at least 90 civilians (46 women, 37 men, 4 boys and 3 girls).
- » In the late hours of 31 December, drones struck a café and a hotel in the occupied village of Khorly, Kherson region, reportedly killing at least 29 people and injuring 31. HRMMU established that at least 18 of those killed and injured were civilians (10 killed and 8 injured: 11 women, 3 men, 3 girls, and 1 boy)³.

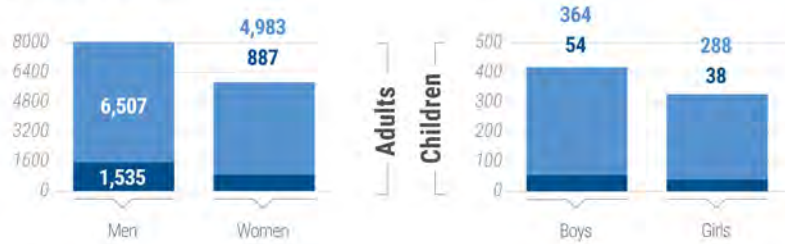
Civilian casualties 2025

Total civilian casualties **14,656** [**2,514** Killed **12,142** Injured]

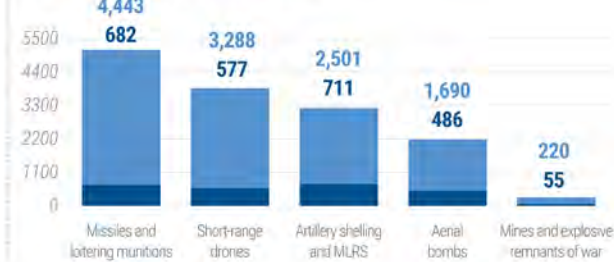
1. By territory where they occurred



2. By age and sex



3. By type of weapon/incident



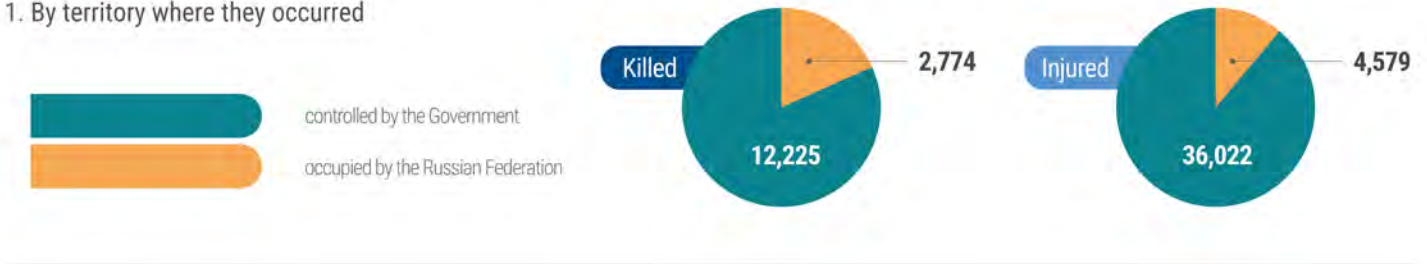
"Your day starts with explosions. They wake you up instead of an alarm, and they come closer and closer, louder and louder. You also go to bed with explosions, not knowing whether you will wake up the next morning."

— evacuee describing the impact of hostilities and life in frontline communities in Dnipropetrovsk region.

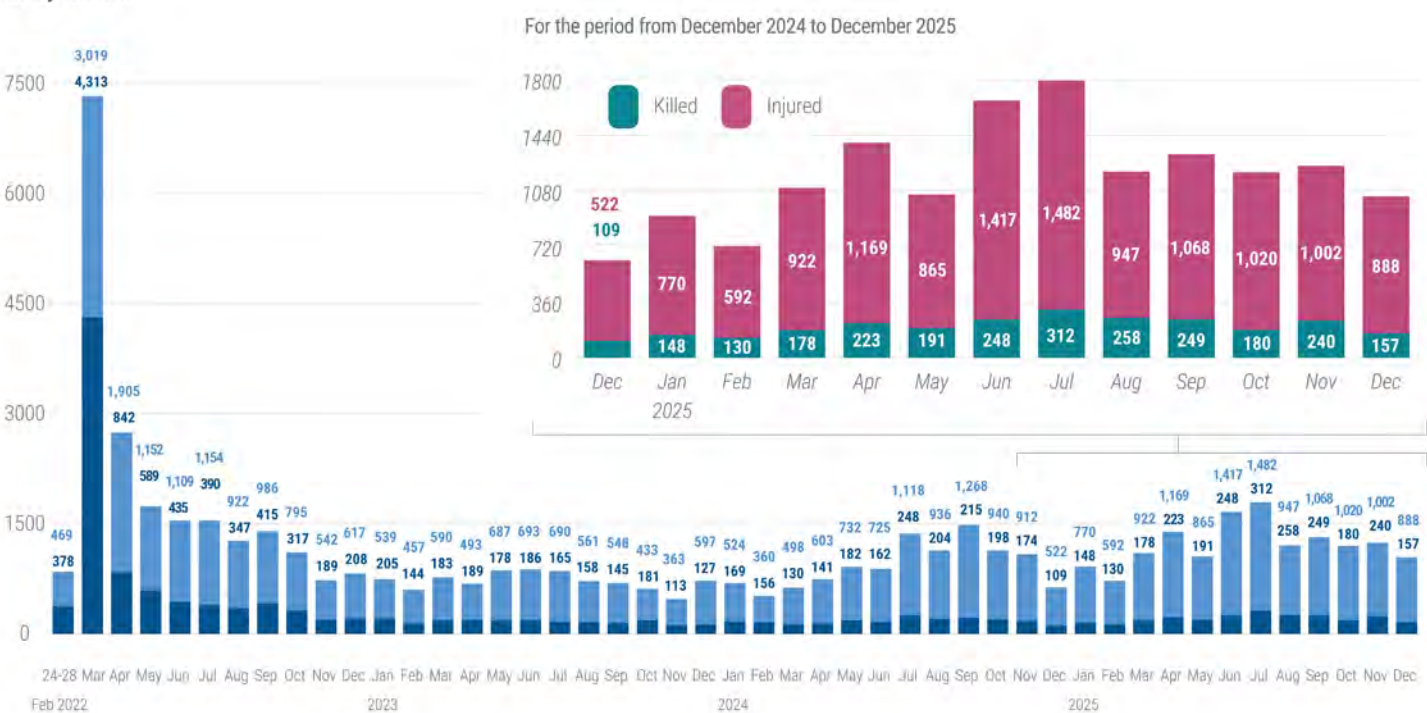
Civilian casualties since 24 February 2022⁴

Total civilian casualties **55,600** [**14,999** Killed **40,601** Injured]

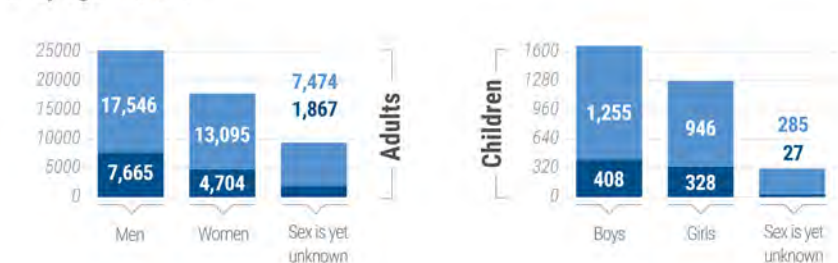
1. By territory where they occurred



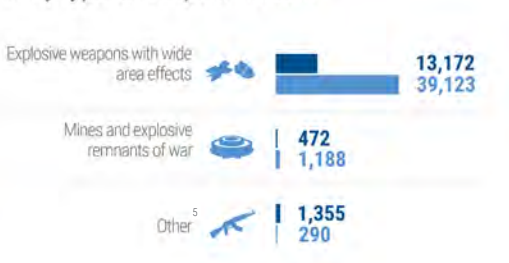
2. By month



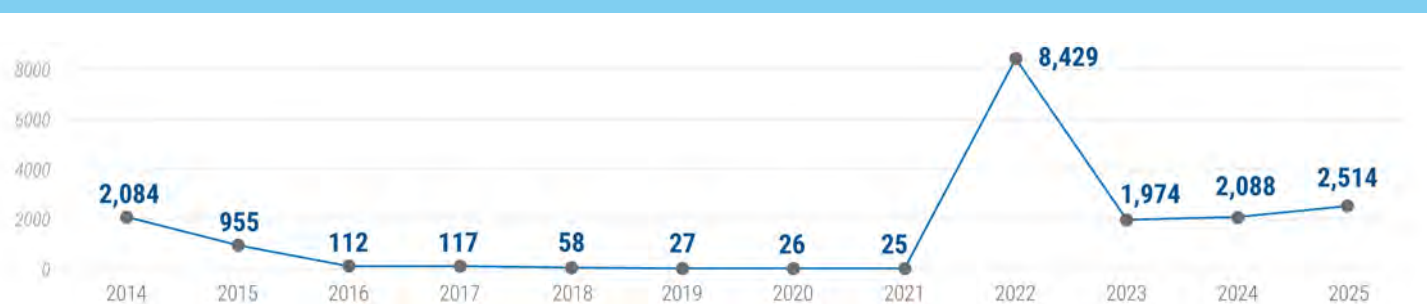
3. By age and sex



4. By type of weapon/incident



Civilians killed since 2014





The UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine

HRMMU collects information about civilian harm from conflict-related violence from a wide range of sources, including through interviews with victims, their relatives, and witnesses; open-source information, including photo and video material; forensic records and reports; criminal investigation materials; court documents; reports by international and national non-governmental organisations; public reports by law enforcement and military actors; data from medical facilities and local authorities.

All sources and information are assessed for their relevance and credibility and cross-checked against other information. In some instances, corroboration takes time. This means that as more information becomes available, conclusions on civilian casualties may be revised and numbers may change.

Statistics presented in the current update are based on individual records of civilian harm where the “reasonable grounds to believe” standard of proof was met, namely where, based on a body of verified information, an ordinarily prudent observer would have reasonable

grounds to believe that the harm took place as described. HRMMU refers to information that meets this criterion as “verified.” When HRMMU has not yet verified a casualty or reported an individual case of death or injury, it does not necessarily mean that HRMMU has established the individual as an active member of an armed group or as someone who directly participated in hostilities. In many cases, the non-designation of an individual as a civilian reflects a lack of information, rather than a confirmation the individual’s status as a combatant.

The actual extent of civilian harm – both casualties and infrastructure damage – is likely considerably higher as many reports of civilian harm, particularly from the period immediately after the full-scale armed attack of 24 February 2022, have not been possible to verify due to the large number of reports and the lack of access to relevant areas. The number of civilian casualties is likely particularly undercounted in cities such as Mariupol (Donetsk region), Lysychansk, Popasna, and Sievierodonetsk (Luhansk region), where there was protracted intensive fighting at the start of the armed attack in 2022.

¹ 999 civilian casualties in territory controlled by Ukraine and 46 in territory occupied by the Russian Federation.

² The actual number might be higher as some reports are still pending confirmation.

³ When HRMMU has not designated a casualty as a civilian, it does not necessarily mean that HRMMU has established that the individual was an active member of an armed group or otherwise directly participated in hostilities. In many cases, the non-designation of an individual as a civilian reflects a lack of information, rather than information that the individual was not a civilian. In the attack on Khorly, HRMMU has established that several of those killed and injured occupied official positions in the civilian administration in occupied territory. Occupying such civilian positions does not alone render an individual a legitimate target under international humanitarian law.

⁴ In comparison with the previous update, an increase in total figures in this update is not only due to casualties that occurred in the reporting period, but also to the corroboration by OHCHR of cases that occurred before the reporting period.

⁵ Incidents in which civilians were killed or injured by fire from small arms and light weapons, including as a result of crossfire, sniper fire, escalation of force incidents (cases in which military opened fire on civilians whom they perceived as a threat), and wilful killings, as well as road accidents involving either military vehicles or civilian vehicles driven by military in the area of hostilities.