

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

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Titel:	Ukraine: Protection of civilians in armed conflict (April 2025 update)
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Ukraine: Protection of civilians in armed conflict

April 2025 update



A residential area in Kryvyi Rih impacted by a missile attack on 4 April 2025.

8 May 2025

Summary

- With at least **209 civilians killed and 1,146 injured**, the number of civilian casualties in April was 23 per cent higher than in March 2025,¹ and **84 per cent higher than in April 2024**.² April was also **the deadliest month for civilians since September 2024**. The vast majority of civilian casualties (97 per cent)³ occurred in territory controlled by Ukraine.
- At least **19 children were killed and 78 injured**, more than the combined total of children killed over the previous four months.⁴ This is **the highest verified monthly number of child casualties since June 2022**.⁵
- **Almost half of the civilian casualties were due to missile and loitering munitions attacks**. In many cases, **powerful explosive weapons were used in urban areas**, including in Kryvyi Rih, Sumy, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, and Kharkiv. In some of these attacks Russian armed forces deployed with greater intensity **missiles with fragmentation warheads** that detonated above ground, scattering fragments across large open areas, killing and injuring many civilians at once.
- **Short-range drone attacks** continued to kill and injure civilians near the frontline, **accounting for 23 percent of civilian casualties in April**. While the majority of these incidents were recorded in Kherson region, an attack with a drone on a bus in **Marhanets (Dnipropetrovsk region)** on 23 April significantly contributed to the high casualty number.
- In April, Russian armed forces conducted at least **six attacks on power generation, transmission and distribution facilities in Kherson region**, resulting in temporary power outages and suspension of public electric transport services.

Civilian casualties April 2025⁶

Total civilian casualties **1,355** { **209** Killed **1,146** Injured

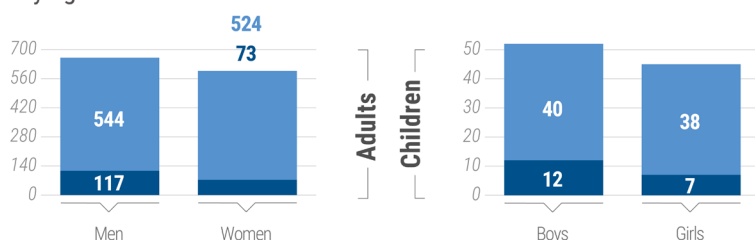
1. By territory where they occurred



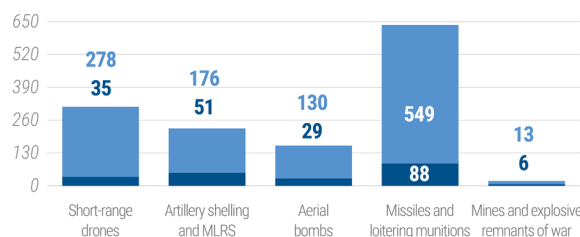
controlled by the Government
occupied by the Russian Federation



2. By age and sex



3. By type of weapon/incident



Representative incidents



- » On 4 April, just before 7 pm, a ballistic missile detonated in the air above a park, playground, and restaurant in Kryvyi Rih (Dnipropetrovsk region), dispersing thousands of metallic fragments across the residential area. The attack killed 20 civilians (8 men, 3 women, 7 boys, and 2 girls) and injured 63 civilians (30 women, 22 men, 6 girls, and 5 boys). This was the single deadliest verified strike for children since the start of the full-scale invasion.
- » On 13 April, in the morning, two ballistic missiles struck the historic centre of Sumy city minutes apart. The attack killed at least 31 civilians (18 women, 11 men, and 2 boys) and injured 105 (57 women, 34 men, 7 boys and 7 girls). Many civilians were killed in the street while attempting to help the victims of the first strike or while traveling in a bus near the impact zone.
- » On 18 April, a missile attack struck residential areas in Kharkiv city, with one missile detonating near a residential building. A 79-year-old man was killed and at least 102 civilians (68 women, 28 men, 3 girls, and 3 boys) were injured.
- » On 22 April, aerial bombardment of Zaporizhzhia city killed a 55-year-old woman and injured 39 civilians (23 women, 9 men, 5 boys, and 2 girls).
- » On 23 April, in the early morning, a short-range drone dropped a munition on a bus in Marhanets. The attack killed 9 civilians (8 women and 1 man) and injured 58 (34 women and 24 men) - all of them workers of a mining and processing plant on their way to work.
- » On 24 April, a missile and loitering munitions attack struck five districts of Kyiv city, with the majority of casualties occurring in a residential building in one of the districts. At least 11 civilians were killed (5 men, 5 women, and 1 boy) and 81 injured (40 women, 31 men, 5 boys, and 5 girls).

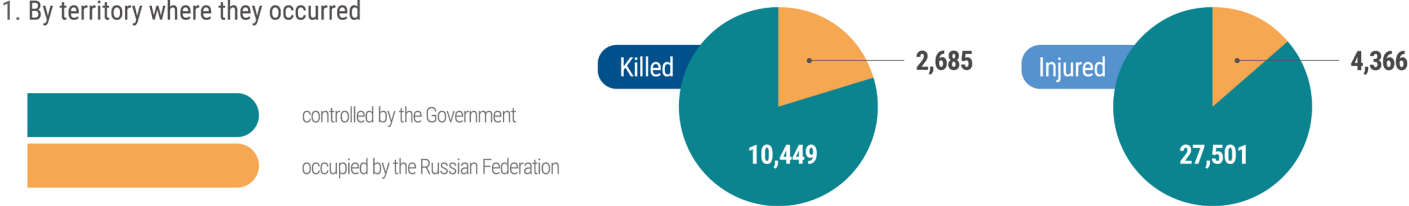
"When I opened my eyes, I was lying on the floor. There were people and parts of the bus panelling on top of me and a hole in the roof of the bus. When I looked around, I saw a headless body and several women on the floor who could not get up... Since the attack I am not able to sleep without medication. As soon I close my eyes I see that body without a head."

- a woman describing the immediate aftermath of a drone attack on a bus in Marhanets on 23 April 2025.

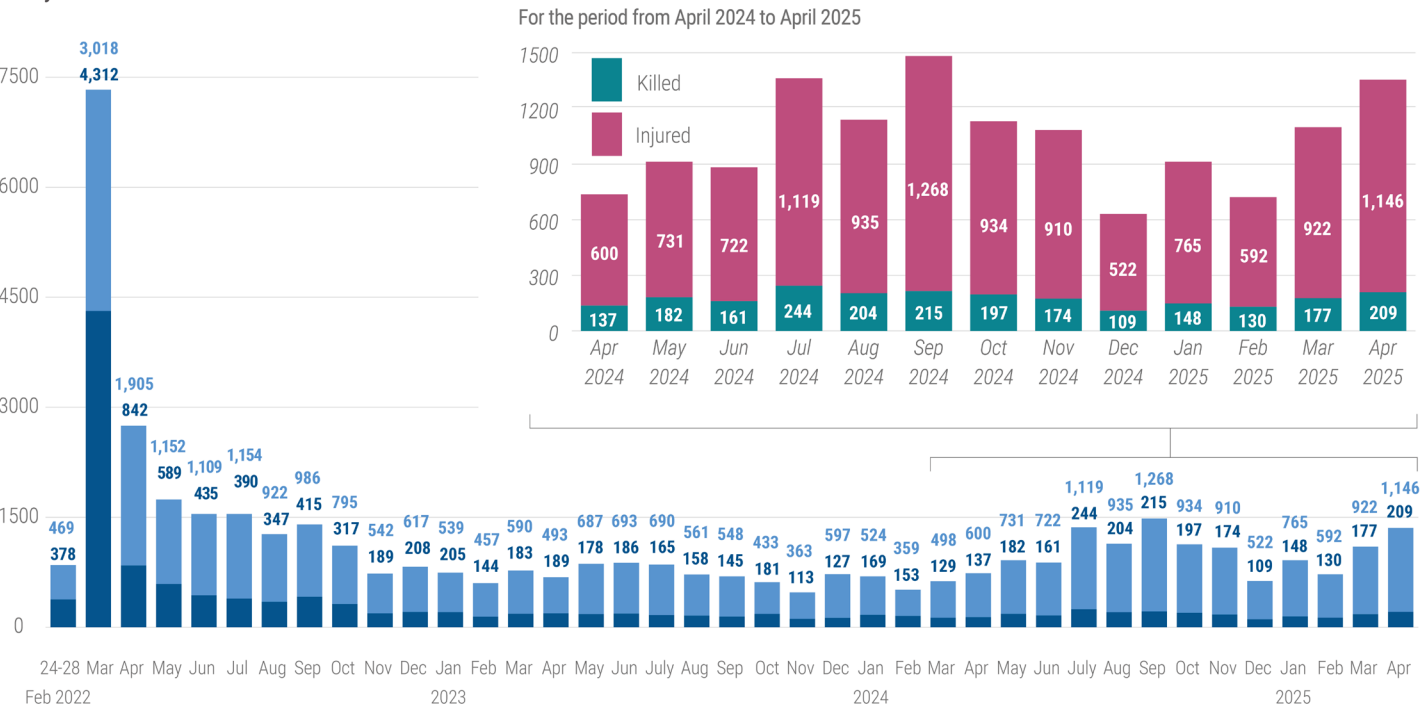
Civilian casualties since 24 February 2022⁷

Total civilian casualties **45,001** { **13,134** Killed **31,867** Injured

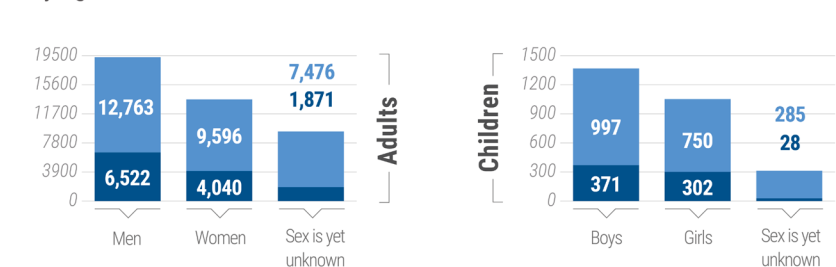
1. By territory where they occurred



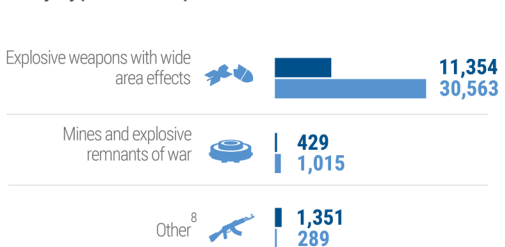
2. By month



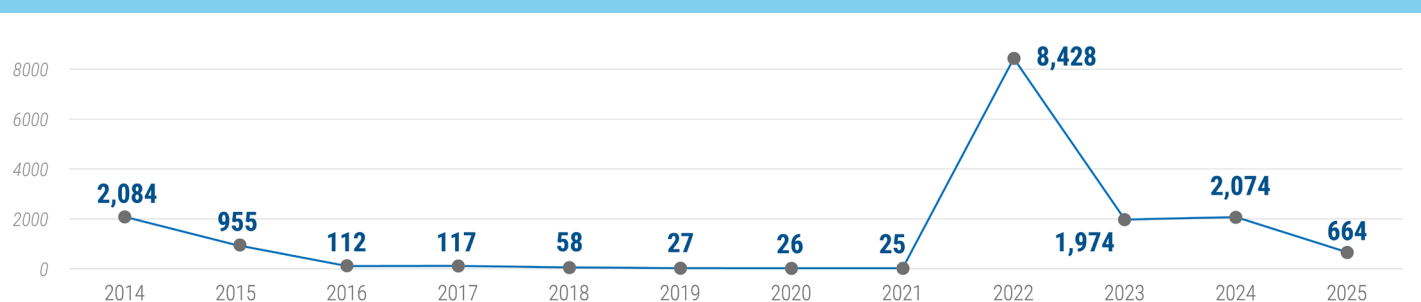
3. By age and sex



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.

¹ 177 killed and 922 injured in March 2025.

² 137 killed and 600 injured in April 2024.

³ 1,316 civilian casualties in territory controlled by Ukraine and 39 in territory occupied by the Russian Federation.

⁴ 15 children were killed from December 2024 to March 2025.

⁵ 21 children killed and 77 injured in June 2022.

⁶ The actual number might be higher as some reports are still pending confirmation.

⁷ An increase in total figures in this update compared with the previous update is not only due to casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure that occurred in the reporting period as OHCHR also continues to corroborate cases that occurred before the reporting period.

⁸ 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.