

Ukraine: Protection of civilians in armed conflict

May 2025 update



The brother of three children killed in Korostyshiv on 25 May holds a toy near their destroyed house.

11 June 2025

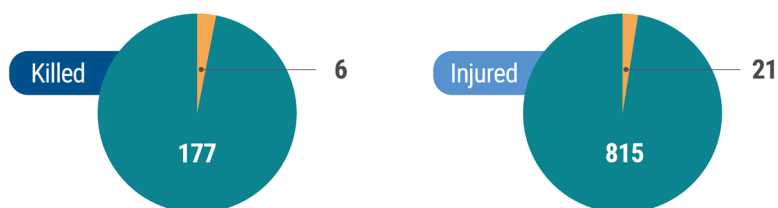
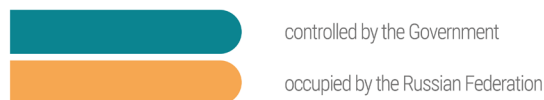
Summary

- **In May 2025, at least 183 civilians were killed and 836 injured**, continuing a trend of high civilian casualties this year. The number of civilians killed in May is the **second highest in 2025**, following April.
- **Long-range strikes** continued at a high rate in May, causing the largest proportion of civilian casualties throughout Ukraine, while **short-range drones** remained the leading cause in frontline areas. The vast majority of civilian casualties (**97 per cent**)¹ occurred in areas under the control of the Government of Ukraine.
- In May, civilian casualties were recorded **across 17 regions of Ukraine and the city of Kyiv**, including areas located far from the frontline.
- 28 per cent of the civilian casualties were the result of **missile strikes and loitering munitions**. The same high proportion of casualties was caused **by short-range drone attacks**. Artillery shelling and MLRS strikes accounted for 21 per cent, and aerial bombardments for 18 per cent of the casualties.
- In May, Russian armed forces conducted at least **five attacks** on port infrastructure in Odesa region, resulting in civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure.

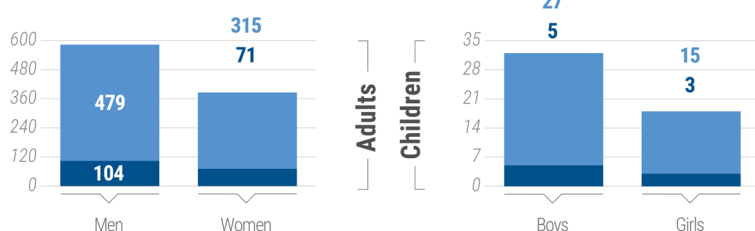
Civilian casualties May 2025²

Total civilian casualties **1,019** [**183** Killed **836** Injured]

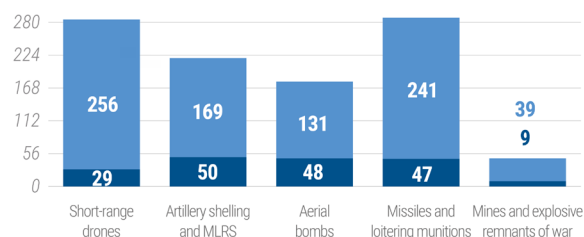
1. By territory where they occurred



2. By age and sex



3. By type of weapon/incident



Representative incidents



A house in Makariv, Kyiv region, destroyed as a result of the 25 May attack.

- » On 1 May, a loitering munitions attack in Zaporizhzhia city injured 31 civilians (20 men, 9 women, and 2 boys).
- » On 1 May, a loitering munitions attack in Odesa city killed a man and a woman and injured 15 civilians (8 men and 7 women).
- » On 1 May, a drone attack on a market in occupied Oleshky, Kherson region, reportedly killed 8 and injured 19 people. Verification of the casualties, as well as the circumstances of the attack, is pending.
- » On 2 May, a loitering munitions attack in Kharkiv city injured at least 21 civilians (13 men and 8 women).
- » On 7 May, an aerial bombardment in Kostiantynivka, Donetsk region, killed a woman and injured 14 civilians (8 men and 6 women).
- » On 17 May, a drone struck a civilian bus near Bilopillia, Sumy region, killing 9 civilians (5 women and 4 men) and injuring 7 (5 women and 2 men) - mostly older persons.
- » On 23 May, a missile attack on Odesa port infrastructure killed 3 men and injured 12 more – port workers among them.
- » On 25 May, a combined missile and loitering munitions attack killed 14 civilians (7 men, 4 women, 2 boys and 1 girl) and injured at least 55 (23 women, 20 men, 8 boys and 4 girls) in 6 regions of Ukraine and Kyiv city.

"I had such an adrenaline rush that I truly believed I would be bandaged and released home. I did not realize how severe my wounds were. I saw a lot of blood pouring from injuries, but I did not feel any pain."

—A woman injured in Kupiansk on 23 May 2025, who underwent multiple surgeries due to severe traumatic injuries.



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.

¹ 992 civilian casualties in territory controlled by Ukraine and 27 in territory occupied by the Russian Federation.

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

³ 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.

⁴ 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.