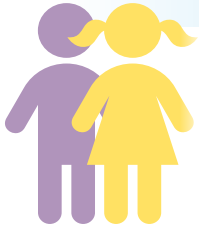




CHILD CASUALTIES



At least **611 children** have been **killed** and **1,425 injured** since the start of the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion in February 2022.<sup>1</sup>

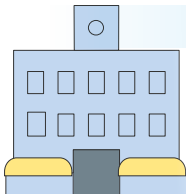


At least **323 boys** and **260 girls** lost their life as a direct result of hostilities, **15** of whom were **babies** under one year old.<sup>2</sup>

Attacks with explosive weapons spread fear and uncertainty across the country. At the start of the school year (autumn 2023), 85 per cent of child casualties from explosive weapons with wide area effects occurred near the front line. Waves of Russian missile strikes between December 2023 and the end of winter 2024 increased the numbers of child casualties far from the front line. The 2024 spring season again saw higher child casualties near the front line, due mainly to a significant increase in the use of aerial bombs by the Russian Federation.

Mines and explosive remnants of war killed at least 26 children and injured 101, disproportionately affecting boys who accounted for 84 per cent of the casualties. They present a significant risk in regions where hostilities have taken place and where the front line has moved. The extensive contamination of mines and explosive remnants of war can cause deaths, injuries, disabilities and trauma for years to come.

EDUCATION



In 2024 alone, at least **160 education facilities** have been **damaged** and **47 destroyed** by the hostilities.<sup>3</sup>

The hostilities have driven schools in some areas to hold classes online or underground. Hybrid modalities blending in-person and online classes are also used.

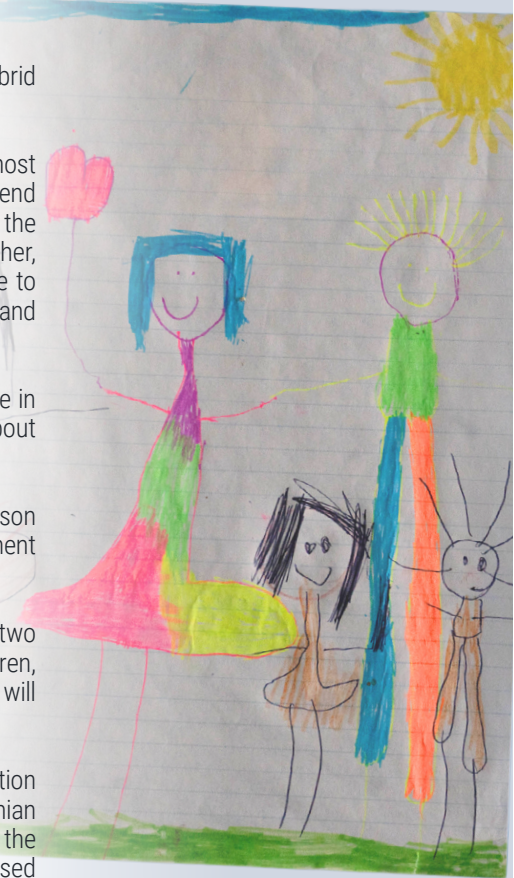
When schools lack bomb shelters, children must attend classes online.<sup>4</sup> As a result, almost 1 million children – a quarter of all children enrolled in school in Ukraine – could not attend any in-person learning during the school year.<sup>5</sup> This made it particularly difficult to meet the educational needs of children with disabilities or those who required learning support. Further, children in online classes experienced significant disruptions to their learning process due to electricity blackouts (caused by Russian strikes on energy infrastructure across Ukraine) and limited availability of equipment such as phones or tablets.

In Kharkiv, some children attended classes in makeshift underground facilities, for instance in specially equipped metro stations; however, some parents reported security concerns about their children traveling to and from the facilities.

Frequently interrupted classes due to air raid alarms are one of the biggest barriers to in-person or blended learning. When triggered by the threat of attacks, these alarms indicate imminent danger and require immediate protective action, disrupting the learning process.<sup>6</sup>

The cumulative impact of disruptions in education caused by two years of war on the heels of two years of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in significant learning losses for Ukrainian children, with girls and children from rural areas or poor families most affected. Learning disruptions will also have long-term implications for future employment opportunities and earnings.<sup>7</sup>

In occupied territory of the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions, the education programme profoundly changed when Russian occupying authorities replaced the Ukrainian curriculum with the Russian curriculum.<sup>8</sup> The imposed Russian curriculum failed to respect the cultural identity and language of Ukrainian children. The Russian occupying authorities used intimidation to prevent access to Ukrainian education available online.<sup>9</sup>



A drawing by an 8 y.o. boy from Kharkiv who left his home due to the hostilities.

<sup>1</sup> All civilian casualty figures in the Factsheet reflect incidents verified by OHCHR.

<sup>2</sup> On the basis of records where the sex or the age of the child were known.

<sup>3</sup> These numbers reflect incidents verified by OHCHR.

<sup>4</sup> Schools must have a functional bomb shelter in order to receive children in person (guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Science).

<sup>5</sup> UNICEF [press release](#), Significant increase in number of children killed across Ukraine this year, as deadly attacks continue, 25 April 2024.

<sup>6</sup> SaveED, [War and Education: 2 Years of Full-Scale Invasion](#), 2024.

<sup>7</sup> World Bank, European Union, Government of Ukraine, United Nations, [Ukraine: Third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment, February 2022 – December 2023](#), February 2024.

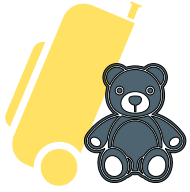
<sup>8</sup> The complete replacement of the education system runs contrary to an occupying Power's obligation under international law not to interfere with the existing institutions in place in occupied territory.

<sup>9</sup> OHCHR, [Human rights situation during the Russian occupation of territory of Ukraine and its aftermath](#), 20 March 2024, paras. 129-136.

## EVACUATIONS AND DISPLACEMENT

Relentless hostilities along the front line prompted the Government of Ukraine to evacuate children and adolescents from high-risk areas, including through mandatory evacuation of families with children from some communities.

Some families fled their homes in occupied territories to avoid having the Russian curriculum imposed on their children or due to the risk that their teenage sons could be forcibly conscripted into the Russian military.

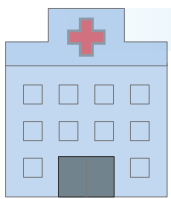


Of the nearly **6 million Ukrainian refugees** in Europe, 26 per cent are children (an estimated **1.5 million children**).<sup>10</sup>



A further **800,000 children** are estimated to be **internally displaced** in Ukraine.<sup>11</sup>

Displaced children have lost their homes, along with the security of everything that home meant to them. Many have been separated from close family members and friends. Their families have lost property and income, and can no longer provide for the family's needs as before. Half of refugee children and youth from Ukraine remain out of school but more refugee households are starting to enrol.<sup>12</sup> Displacement can lead to severe stress and psychological trauma for children, with potential long-term effects on their well-being. Displacement also exposes children to various protection risks such as trafficking, exploitation, abuse, violence and separation from family. These risks are exacerbated for those in vulnerable economic, social or psychological situations.



Since 24 February 2022, **1,569 health facilities** across Ukraine have been damaged or destroyed, reducing access to health care.<sup>13</sup>

The hostilities have significantly impacted children's physical health and psychosocial well-being.

The shortage of health care professionals and closure of pharmacies in hostilities-affected areas combined with increased poverty rates created further barriers to accessing health care.<sup>14</sup>

Displaced families as well as families in areas with ongoing hostilities have faced challenges in accessing primary health care services, notably because of the cost of medicines and treatment, the time needed to access services, and the limited availability of family doctors. This has particularly affected pregnant women and babies, as the availability of maternal and newborn care services is much lower in hostilities-affected areas.



Children in cities in Ukraine's front line areas have spent **3,000-5,000 hours sheltering in basements and underground metro stations** during air raid alerts, equivalent to 4 to 7 months spent underground.<sup>15</sup> Such prolonged confinement has had a devastating effect on their mental health and well-being.

More than half of the parents in regions of eastern Ukraine reported that their children were anxious or tense, either sometimes or often.<sup>16</sup>

Limited access to health care and damage to vaccine storage equipment has lowered vaccination rates among displaced children and children in hostilities-affected areas, hindering routine immunization efforts.<sup>17</sup> This increased the vulnerability of children towards vaccine-preventable diseases, especially measles, with factors such as crowded shelters during airstrikes and displacement further heightening risk of outbreaks.

Changing power dynamics within households and rising levels of trauma and stress linked to war-related violence have been associated with increased domestic violence, particularly against women and children. This type of violence may have long-lasting negative impacts on physical and mental health of children whether they are directly affected or witnesses.



Destroyed educational facility in Kherson region.

<sup>10</sup> Source: UNHCR collation of statistics made available by the authorities.

<sup>11</sup> IOM, General Population Survey: Round 16, March-April 2024.

<sup>12</sup> UNHCR, Education of school-age refugees from Ukraine - an analysis of major challenges and trends based on Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA), publication forthcoming.

<sup>13</sup> WHO [surveillance system](#) for attacks on health care.

<sup>14</sup> [WHO 2024 Emergency Appeal: Ukraine](#), January 2024.

<sup>15</sup> UNICEF [Press Release](#), Ukraine two years: Children in frontline areas forced to spend up to 5,000 hours - equivalent to nearly 7 months - sheltering underground, 23 February 2024.

<sup>16</sup> UNICEF, Survey of Ukrainian parents, September 2023.

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Health of Ukraine.