

15 April 2021

Conflict-related civilian casualties in Ukraine¹

March 2021

From 1 to 31 March 2021, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recorded five conflict-related civilian casualties: three killed (all men) and two injured (one man and one woman). One man was killed by small arms fire in territory controlled by the self-proclaimed 'Donetsk people's republic', and two men were killed, and one man and one woman were injured in mine-related incidents² or by ERW handling³ in Government-controlled territory.

February 2021

From 1 to 28 February 2021, OHCHR recorded ten conflict-related civilian casualties: four killed (two men, one boy, and one girl) and six injured (four men and two women).

Three civilian casualties (one killed and two injured) were caused by shelling and small arms fire: one was man killed by small arms fire in an escalation of force incident in Government-controlled part of Donetsk region, and two men were injured (by shelling and by small arms fire) in territory controlled by the self-proclaimed 'Donetsk people's republic'.

Mine-related incidents and ERW handling resulted in seven civilian casualties (three killed and four injured): one man was killed in a mine-related incident in Government-controlled part of Luhansk region, and one man was injured in a mine-related incident in territory controlled by the self-proclaimed 'Luhansk people's republic'. Handling of hand grenades killed two children (one girl and one boy), and injured two women in territory controlled by the self-proclaimed 'Donetsk people's republic', and injured one man in Government-controlled part of Donetsk region.

January 2021

From 1 to 31 January 2021, OHCHR recorded two conflict-related civilian casualties: a boy was injured as a result of ERW handling in the Government-controlled part of Donetsk region, and a man was injured as a result of small arms fire in territory controlled by the self-proclaimed 'Donetsk people's republic'.

Total civilian casualties in 2021

From 1 January to 31 March 2021, OHCHR recorded 17 civilian casualties (seven killed and ten injured), which is a 23 per cent decrease compared with preceding three months from October to December 2020, during which 22 civilian casualties (five killed and 17 injured) were recorded, and a 63 per cent decrease compared with the first three months of 2020 when 46 civilian casualties (six killed and 40 injured) were recorded.

From 1 January to 31 March 2021, civilian victims of mines and ERW (five killed and seven injured) comprised 70 per cent of all civilian casualties (to compare: 51 per cent in 2020, 35 in 2019, 43 in 2018, 41 in 2017 and 41 per cent in 2016). Civilian casualties that resulted from active hostilities (shelling and SALW⁴ fire) comprised 24 per cent of the total (one killed and three injured). One civilian death resulted from an escalation of force incident.

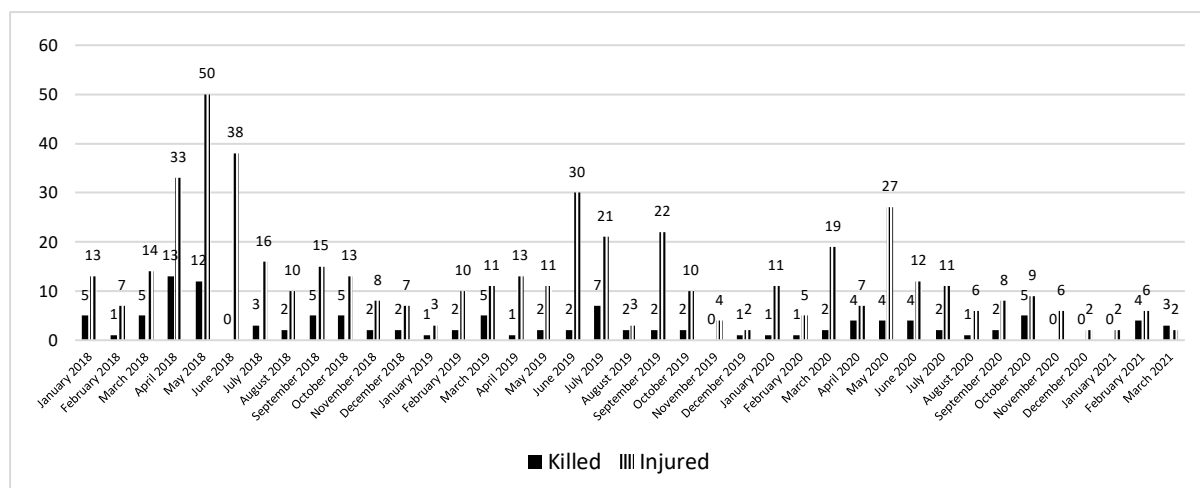
¹ OHCHR documents civilian casualties by consulting a broad range of sources and types of information, which are evaluated for credibility and reliability. This update is based on information that the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) collected through interviews with victims and their relatives; witnesses; analysis of corroborating material confidentially shared with HRMMU; official records; open-source documents, photo and video materials; forensic records and reports; criminal investigation materials; court documents; public reports of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine; reports by international and national non-governmental organisations; public reports by law enforcement and military actors; data from medical facilities and local authorities; and other relevant and credible material. In some instances, corroboration may take weeks or months before conclusions can be drawn. This may mean that conclusions on civilian casualties may be revised as more information becomes available and numbers may change as new information emerges over time.

² Incidents in which civilians were killed or injured by mines (antipersonnel or anti-vehicle) or explosive devices triggered in the same way, such as booby traps, or by ERW (explosive remnants of war) that are inadvertently detonated by unsuspecting civilians.

³ Victims of ERW handling manipulate with an ERW for a certain period of time and take additional efforts to make it detonate (for instance, by trying to dismantle it), or were near those, who manipulated an ERW.

⁴ Small arms and light weapons.

Timeline of civilian casualties from 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2021



Total civilian casualties in 2020

From 1 January to 31 December 2020, OHCHR recorded in total 149 conflict-related civilian casualties: 26 killed (17 men, eight women and one boy) and 123 injured (75 men, 33 women, eight boys and seven girls), which is a 10.8 per cent decrease compared with 2019 (167 casualties: 27 killed and 140 injured), and the lowest annual figure for the entire conflict period.

Civilian casualties in 2020, per type of weapon/incident

	Killed	Injured	Total	Percent
MRI and ERW handling	17	59	76	51.0
UAV strikes	1	1	2	1.3
Shelling and SALW fire	7	61	68	45.7
Road accidents with military vehicles		2	2	1.3
Killings	1		1	0.7
Total	26	123	149	100.0

Civilian casualties resulting from active hostilities in 2020

From 1 January to 31 December 2020, active hostilities (shelling, SALW fire and UAV⁵ strikes) caused 70 civilian casualties: eight killed (five women and three men) and 62 injured (30 men, 23 women, six girls and three boys). This a 33.3 per cent decrease compared with 2019, when 105 such civilian casualties were recorded.

Of these 70 casualties, 67 (eight killed and 59 injured) were recorded from 1 January to 26 July⁶, and three (all injured) during the period from 27 July to 31 December.

Eighty-seven per cent of them (seven killed and 54 injured) were recorded in armed group-controlled territory (five killed and 39 injured in territory controlled by the self-proclaimed 'Donetsk people's republic', and two killed and 15 injured in territory controlled by the self-proclaimed 'Luhansk people's republic'), and 13 per cent (one killed and eight injured) in Government-controlled territory. In 2018-2019, this correlation was 79 per cent to 17 per cent.

Civilian casualties resulting from active hostilities in 2020, per location

Territory controlled by armed groups			Territory controlled by armed groups		
Settlement	Killed	Injured	Settlement	Killed	Injured
Oleksandrivka	1	8	Holubivka		2
Holubivske	1	6	Spartak	1	0
Donetsk		7	Panteleymonivka		1
Horlivka		7	Tavricheske		1
Sakhanka		5	Zaitseve		1
Zolote	1	3	Government-controlled territory		
Dokuchaievsk		3	Settlement	Killed	Injured
Olenivka		3	Marinka		3
Shyroka Balka	1	1	Avdiivka		2
Syhnalne	1	1	Krasnohorivka		1
Staromykhailivka	1	1	Novotoshkivske		1
Berezivske		2	Verhnotoretske		1
Donetskyi		2	Zaitseve	1	

⁵ Unmanned aerial vehicle.

⁶ Following the agreement reached by the Trilateral Contact Group in Minsk on 22 July 2020, the Joint Forces Operation of Ukraine and armed groups of self-proclaimed 'republics' issued and enacted orders on measures to strengthen the ceasefire from midnight on 27 July 2020. The package of additional measures aimed to make the ceasefire comprehensive, sustainable and unlimited.

Civilian casualties resulting from mines and ERW in 2020

From 1 January to 31 December 2020, mine-related incidents and ERW handling caused 76 civilian casualties: 17 killed (14 men, two women and one boy) and 59 injured (44 men, ten women and five boys). This is a 28.8 per cent increase compared with 2019 (59: 17 killed and 42 injured).

Civilian casualties among women in 2020

From 1 January to 31 December 2020, OHCHR recorded 41 civilian casualties among women (eight killed and 33 injured). This is an 18 per cent decrease compared with 2019 (ten killed and 40 injured), and the lowest annual number of civilian casualties among women during the entire conflict period.

Civilian casualties among women in 2020, per type of weapon/incident

	Killed	Injured	Total	Percent
Shelling and SALW fire	4	23	27	65.9
MRI and ERW handling	2	10	12	29.3
UAV strikes	1		1	2.4
Killings	1		1	2.4
Total	8	33	41	100.0

Civilian casualties among children in 2020

From 1 January to 31 December 2020, OHCHR recorded 16 civilian casualties among children: one killed (a boy), and 15 injured (eight boys and seven girls). This is a 24 per cent decrease compared with 2019 (one killed and 20 injured), and the lowest annual number of civilian casualties among children during the entire conflict period.

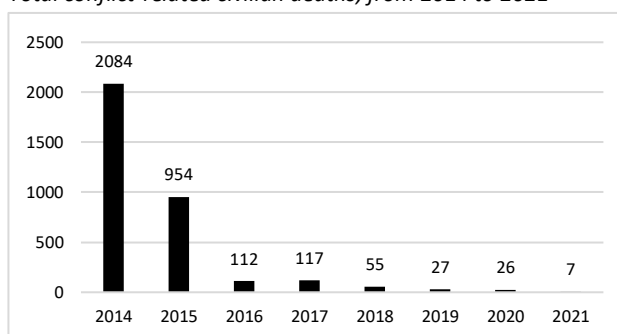
Civilian casualties among women in 2020, per type of weapon/incident

	Killed	Injured	Total	Percent
Shelling and SALW fire		9	9	56.3
MRI and ERW handling	1	5	6	37.5
Road accidents with military vehicles		1	1	6.2
Total	1	15	16	100.0

Total conflict-related civilian casualties

During the entire conflict period, from 14 April 2014 to 31 March 2021, OHCHR recorded a total of 3,084 conflict-related civilian deaths (1,833 men, 1,064 women, 100 boys, 50 girls, and 37 adults whose sex is unknown). Taking into account the 298 deaths on board Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 on 17 July 2014, the total death toll of the conflict on civilians has reached at least 3,382. The number of injured civilians is estimated to exceed 7,000.

Total conflict-related civilian deaths, from 2014 to 2021



Civilian casualties resulting from mines and ERW during the entire conflict period

During the entire conflict period, from 14 April 2014 to 31 March 2021, OHCHR recorded 1,196 civilian casualties caused by mines, ERW and explosions of military depots: 359 killed (247 men, 67 women, two adults whose sex is unknown, 41 boys, and two girls) and 837 injured (468 men, 186 women, 39 adults whose sex is unknown, 118 boys and 26 girls). They comprise approximately ten per cent of total conflict-related civilian casualties.

