

# Ukraine: protection of civilians in armed conflict

## October 2023 update



Date: 14 November 2023<sup>1</sup>



## Summary

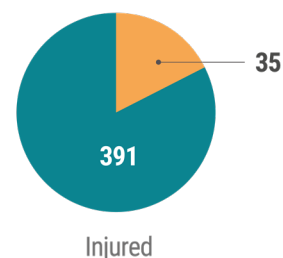
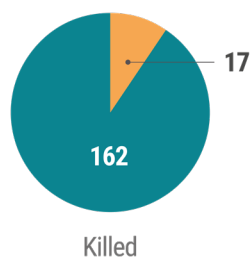
- The number of civilian casualties remained high in October with **605** civilians killed or injured.
- Most civilian casualties (**92 per cent**) continued to occur in Government-controlled territory. The majority of civilian casualties continued to occur in areas near the frontlines by shelling and multiple-launch rocket systems.
- Numbers in October showed **an 11 per cent decrease** in the number of civilian casualties compared with numbers in September, continuing to show a gradual decline in 2023.
- On 5 October, Russian armed forces launched a missile against a funeral reception in Hroza, Kharkiv oblast, killing **59 civilians**. The attack was the deadliest in 2023 in terms of civilian casualties and constituted 33 per cent of civilians killed in October.

# Civilian casualties October 2023<sup>2</sup>

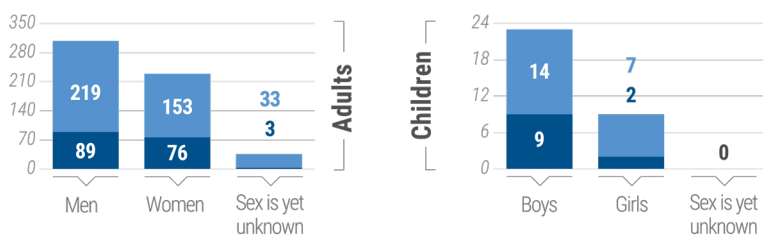
Total civilian casualties **605** [ **179** Killed **426** Injured ]

## 1. By territory where casualties occurred

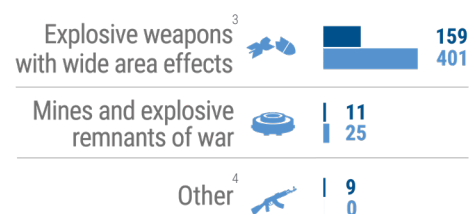
 controlled by the Government  
 occupied by the Russian Federation



## 2. By age and sex



## 3. By type of weapon/incident



## Significant incidents

- On 5 October, a missile strike killed 59 civilians (36 women, 22 men and an eight-year-old boy) in the Government-controlled village of Hroza in Kharkiv region.<sup>5</sup>
- On 18 October, a missile strike hit a five-story residential building in Government-controlled Zaporizhzhia, killing five civilians (two couples and one man) and injured at least three.
- On 21 October, a missile strike hit a post terminal in Government-controlled village Novyi Korotych, Kharkiv region, killing eight employees (men) and injuring fourteen.

*"There were bodies and body parts everywhere. My daughter's best friend was only identified by her manicure when they found her hand."*

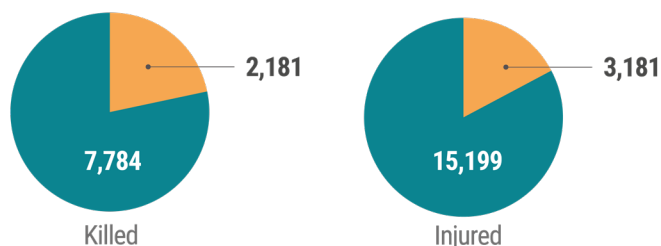
- Valentyna, local resident of Hroza.

# Civilian casualties since 24 February 2022<sup>6</sup>

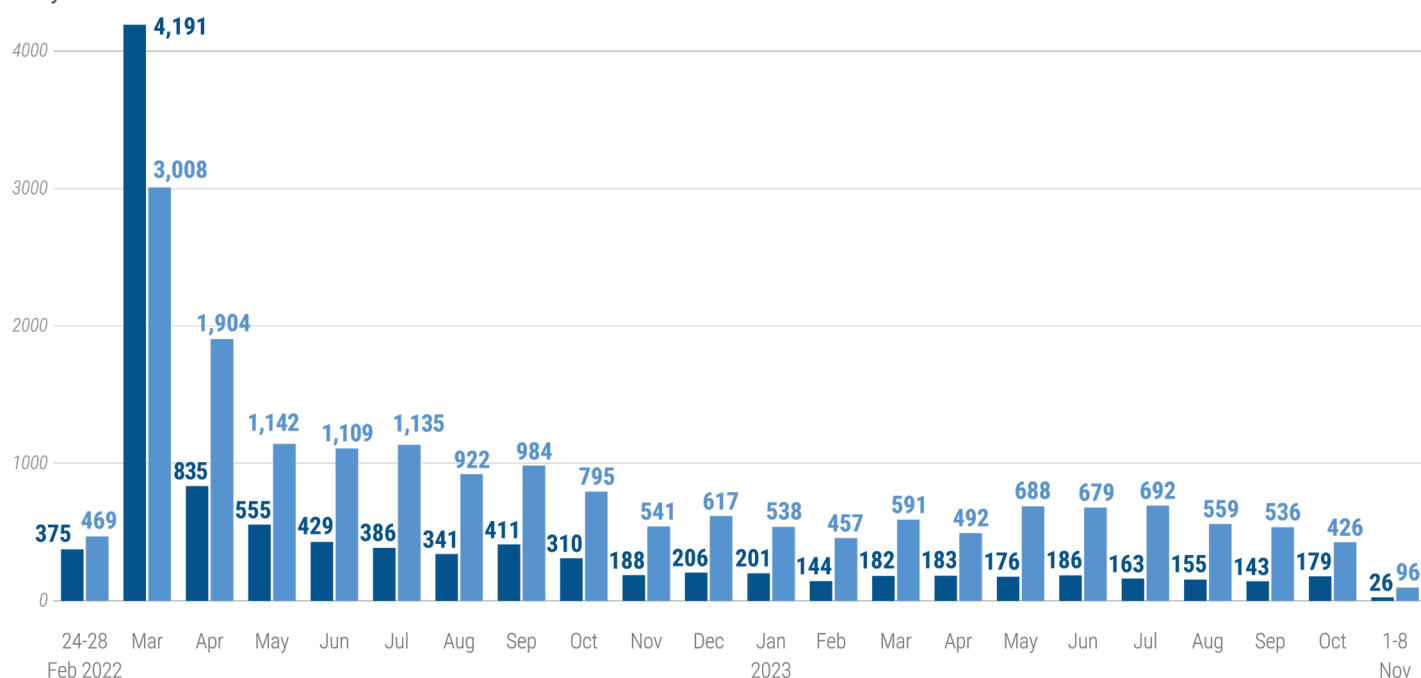
Total civilian casualties **28,345** [ **9,965** Killed **18,380** Injured ]

## 1. By territory where casualties occurred

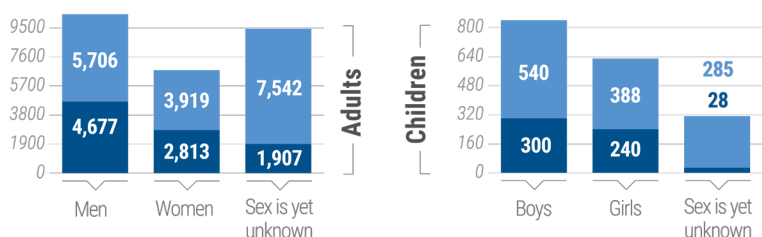
█ controlled by the Government  
█ occupied by the Russian Federation



## 2. By month



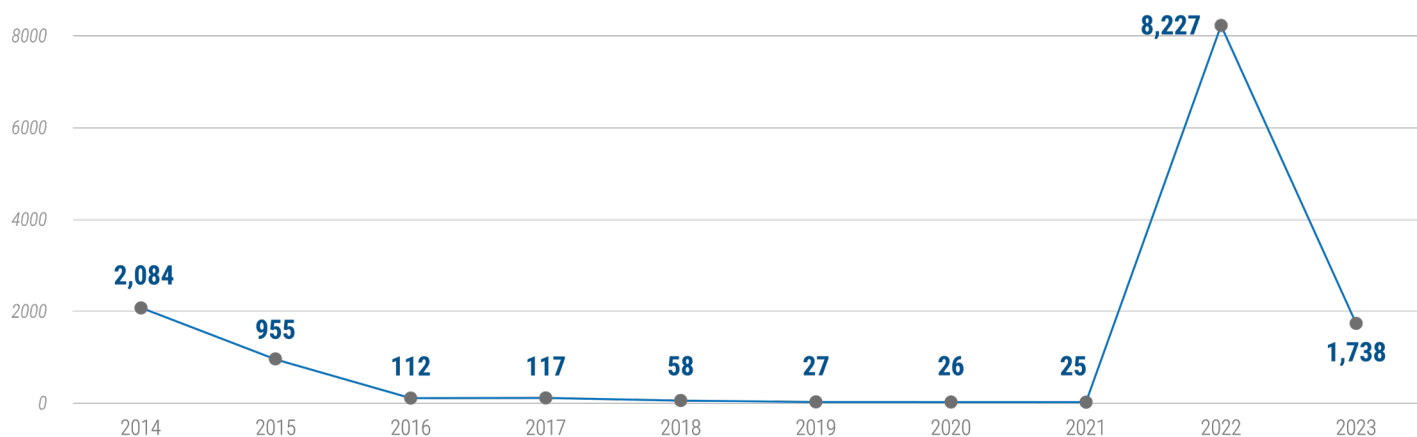
## 3. By age and sex



## 4. By type of weapon/incident



# Civilian casualties (killed) since 2014





## The UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine

OHCHR has documented civilian casualties in Ukraine since 2014. The numbers are based on information that the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) has 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; 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 may take time. As a result, civilian casualty figures may be revised as more information becomes available. Statistics presented in the current update are based on individual civilian casualty records 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 casualty took place as described.

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<sup>1</sup> All figures are as of 8 November.

<sup>2</sup> The actual number might be higher as some reports are still pending confirmation.

<sup>3</sup> Incidents in which civilians were killed or injured by shelling from artillery, tanks and multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS), by cruise and ballistic missiles (air, sea and land-based), and by air strikes, including loitering munitions and other unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> This attack was the deadliest incidents in 2023 and the second deadliest since the start of the Russian full-scale armed attack in February 2022. More details could be found in [OHCHR report](#) Attack on Funeral Reception in Hroza, 5 October 2023. The attack with the highest number of civilians killed recorded by OHCHR occurred in Kramatorsk on 8 April 2022 when a cluster munition attack killed 60 civilians and injured 111 more.

<sup>6</sup> OHCHR believes that the actual figures are considerably higher, as many reports, particularly from certain locations and from the immediate period after 24 February 2022, are still pending corroboration. This concerns, for example, Mariupol (Donetsk region), Lysychansk, Popasna, and Sievierodonetsk (Luhansk region), where there were allegations of high civilian casualties. An increase in total figures in this update compared with the previous update is not only due to casualties that occurred in the reporting period as OHCHR also continues to corroborate casualties that occurred before the reporting period.