

28 February 2022

Civilian casualty report¹

From 4am on 24 February 2022, when the Russian Federation's military action against Ukraine started, until 12 midnight on 27 February 2022, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recorded 406 civilian casualties in Ukraine: 102 killed (15 men, 14 women, 3 boys, 2 girls, as well as 2 children and 66 adults whose sex is yet unknown) and 304 injured (26 men, 18 women, 5 girls, 2 boys, as well as 14 children and 239 adults whose sex is yet unknown).

196 casualties (50 killed and 146 injured) were recorded in Donetsk and Luhansk regions: 158 (37 killed and 121 injured) in Government-controlled territory, and 38 (13 killed and 25 injured) in territory controlled by the self-proclaimed 'republics'.

210 casualties (52 killed and 158 injured) were recorded in other regions of Ukraine (the city of Kyiv, and Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Kherson, Kyiv, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia regions) in places which were under Government control when casualties occurred.

Most of these casualties were caused by the use of explosive weapons with a wide impact area², including shelling from heavy artillery and MLRS³, and air strikes.

OHCHR believes that real figures are considerably higher, especially in Government-controlled territory, as the receipt of information from some locations where intensive hostilities have been going on was delayed and many reports were still pending corroboration.

In this context, OHCHR notes reports of information from the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, indicating 352 persons (338 adults and 14 children) were killed, and 1,684 persons (1,568 adults and 116 children) were injured as of 27 February. They did not provide disaggregated data regarding civilian and military casualties.

¹ Since 2014, OHCHR has been documenting civilian casualties in Ukraine. Reports are 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; 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. 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.

Since 24 February 2022, in the context of the Russian Federation's military action in Ukraine, HRMMU has been unable to visit places of incidents and interview victims and witnesses there. All other sources of information have been extensively used, including HRMMU contact persons and partners in places where civilian casualties occurred. 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.

² The use of explosive weapons with a wide impact area should be avoided in densely populated areas, due to the significant likelihood of indiscriminate effects. Weapons with a wide impact area include: a) munitions with a large destructive radius, such as large bombs or missiles; b) weapons that tend to have an inaccurate delivery system, such as unguided indirect fire weapons, including artillery and mortars; and c) weapons designed to deliver munitions over a wide area, such as multi-launch rocket systems and cluster munitions.

³ Multi-launch rocket systems.