



## **INEW is deeply concerned by the intensification of bombardment on civilian infrastructure in Ukraine**

Since July 2024, there has been an increase in Russian attacks on Ukrainian territory. The latest ground offensives in the Donetsk oblast have been coupled with an intensification of air attacks by Russian forces using missiles, guided bombs, and armed drones on civilian infrastructure, which is causing extensive suffering and harm to civilians. Since August, Ukrainian forces launched an incursion into the Kursk oblast on Russian territory and declared to control an area of over 1,000 square kilometres and more than 100 settlements.

The past six months have seen a troubling rise in the number of civilian casualties in Ukraine. Between March and August 2024, the number of civilians killed or injured [rose by 28%](#) compared to six months prior. In July alone, 339 incidents were recorded in Ukraine according to the [Explosive Weapons Monitor](#), which made this month the [deadliest](#) since October 2022, with at least 1,237 civilian casualties – 219 killed and 1,018 injured. Coupled with August, the second deadliest month of 2024, [2,277 civilian casualties](#) have been recorded in Ukraine. Similarly, critical civilian infrastructure such as energy facilities located in cities outskirts were also heavily destroyed over the past nine months, becoming a ‘daily destructive pattern’ according to the [UN](#).

In the light of increased civilian casualties and intensifying use of explosive weapons, we, once again, chose to highlight 20 significant incidents<sup>1</sup> that occurred over the period running from July to October 2024, indicating that the massive use of explosive weapons over towns and villages continued to claim civilian lives excessively:

### **July 2024**

- On [3 July](#), the city of Dnipro was struck with missiles and loitering munitions, causing the death of 5 civilians and injuring 49 others.
- On [5 July](#), the city of Selydove in Donetsk oblast was attacked resulting in the death of 5 civilians and injuring 15 others.

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<sup>1</sup> The list below is not exhaustive and does not capture all incidents that occurred between July and September 2024. The attacks mentioned were chosen due to their significant impact on civilian lives and infrastructure.

- On [8 July](#), multiple populated locations in Dnipro City, Kyiv City, and Kryvyi Rih were attacked, killing at least 42 civilians and wounding at least 190. The Okhmatdyt Children's Hospital in Kyiv City was struck, shattering its toxicology department and damaging the nearby Center for Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery.
- On [13 July](#), a railway infrastructure in Budy, Kharkiv oblast, was hit, killing 2 civilians and injuring 25.
- On [19 July](#), a playground and high-rise buildings in the city of Mykolaiv were damaged by a missile, claiming 4 civilian lives, including a child, and injuring 14 others.

## August 2024

- Since 6 August, and the start of the Ukrainian army ground incursion into the oblast of Kursk, at least 12 people have been killed and 121 others injured, according to Russian authorities.<sup>2</sup>
- On [9 August](#), the 'Ekomarket' supermarket in Kostyantynivka was hit, killing 14 civilians and injuring 44 others.
- On [24 August](#), the Sapphire Hotel in Kramatorsk was hit, killing one British journalist and injuring 6 other civilians.
- On [26 August](#), multiple populated areas were attacked with 236 missiles and drones, marking the largest air attack on Ukraine since February 2022. At least 8 people were killed and over 23 wounded.
- On [30 August](#), the city of Kharkiv was struck with five guided aerial bombs, resulting in the death of 8 civilians and over 100 civilians injured.

## September 2024

- On [1 September](#), a shopping mall and the Palace of Sport were hit with missiles in Kharkiv, resulting in at least 47 people injured, including 5 children.
- On [2 September](#), a hotel in Zaporizhzhia was shelled, resulting in the death of 2 people and injuring 4 others. At the same moment, a kindergarten, seven private houses, and an enterprise were hit by missiles in Dnipro, injuring 6 people.
- On [3 September](#), a hospital in Poltava was struck by two ballistic missiles, killing at least 50 people and wounding 270 others.
- On [4 September](#), the city of Lviv was massively attacked with missiles and drones, damaging residential buildings, killing at least 7 people – including 2 children – and injuring 64.

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<sup>2</sup> The UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission noted in its [August report](#) that it has not yet been able to verify the circumstances of those casualties according to its standard methodology.

- On [10 September](#), a high-rise residential building was damaged in the town of Ramenskoye located in the Moscow region, following a large drone attack that killed at least one woman.<sup>3</sup>
- On [12 September](#), a humanitarian convoy from the ICRC was hit in the Donetsk region, killing 3 aid workers and injuring 2 others.
- On [15 September](#), a high-rise residential building was hit in the city of Kharkiv with several aerial-guided bombs, that caused the death of one person and injured at least 40 others, including children.
- On [21 September](#), the city centre of Kryvyi Rih was hit by missiles, killing a 12-year-old boy and 2 elderly women, and wounding 3 others.
- On [28 September](#), a hospital in Sumy was hit by two consecutive attacks 45 minutes apart, killing at least 10 people during the evacuation of the hospital's patients.
- On [29 September](#), residential and commercial buildings and railways were hit and damaged with 13 guided bombs in the city of Zaporizhzhia, wounding at least 16 civilians, including 2 children.

The use of explosive weapons in populated areas is one of the leading causes of harm to civilians in armed conflict worldwide. Civilians are killed and injured, with many experiencing life-changing injuries and yet more suffering severe psychological harm and distress. Damage and destruction of vital infrastructure including housing, hospitals, and schools causes further harm. Unexploded ordnance poses an ongoing threat to civilians during and long after hostilities have ended, impeding the safe return of refugees and displaced persons.

In Ukraine, like in all conflicts, the most vulnerable groups are disproportionately impacted by explosive weapons, particularly children, older people, and people with disabilities. In [July](#) and [August](#), 130 children were killed or injured, and almost all of these casualties (95%) were from explosive weapons. In addition to the direct harm of explosive weapons on children, the destruction of critical infrastructure like homes, schools, and hospitals, threatens children's survival and wellbeing for years to come.

We, once again, call parties in conflict to stop the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas and call on Russia and Ukraine to join [\*Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas\*](#) and take steps to immediately implement its commitments, including restricting and refraining from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas when such use is expected to cause harm to civilians and civilian objects.

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<sup>3</sup> This information on the number of casualties couldn't be verified by an independent actor.

The increase of violence and attacks is relentlessly flouting international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL), including the likelihood of violation of the principles of distinction, proportionality, and feasible precautions, the use of indiscriminate attacks, the use of internationally prohibited weapons, such as landmines and cluster munitions. Evidence collected also indicates attacks on civilians and civilian objects, including health facilities and other critical civilian infrastructure, and attacks against medical and humanitarian workers.

With the aim to reduce human suffering caused by the use of explosive weapons, to this day 87 States have endorsed the Political Declaration, which requires changes in military policy and practice to strengthen the protection of civilians by limiting the use of explosive weapons. The same Declaration also calls for assistance to victims and rapid, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access, which is increasingly denied in Ukraine.