

War in Ukraine. Daily update. 10.00 am, 31.03.2022.

5 weeks of invasion have passed. Ukraine is resisting.

Withdrawal vs Redeployment. Shelling around the Kyiv and Chernihiv regions continues regardless of Russia's claimed withdrawal of the troops. Spokesperson of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine [reported](#) that Russian troops have not fully given up trying to seize or at least surround Kyiv and Chernihiv. The White House [confirms](#) this indicating that movement of the forces around Kyiv is a redeployment and not a withdrawal. In addition, a major offensive against other parts of Ukraine should be expected. The UK Ministry of Defense [confirms](#) the situation on the ground - despite the Russian statements, heavy shelling still targets Kyiv and Chernihiv. Heavy fighting most likely is to be expected at the outskirts of Kyiv in the upcoming days, UK Intelligence says.

Negotiations. The next round of the negotiations [will resume](#) on April 1 in the digital format. A meeting between President Volodymyr Zelensky and Putin may take place in the near future, Mykhailo Podolyak, Adviser to the Head of the President's Office said. According to him, the working subgroups continue to work, in order to explain and clarify certain points of the future agreement. In the light of the negotiations outcomes, the German Chancellor told the Ukrainian President that his country 'in general' is ready to act as a guarantor of Ukraine's security, [reports](#) Reuters. Whether the role of security guarantor will also include a military component is unclear so far.

Foreign policy. Slovakia expels 35 Russian Embassy staff members referring to their unacceptable activities. Previously in March, they already expelled 3 of the Embassy representatives. Slovakia continues its anti-spy campaign. Within a month, nearly 100 representatives of the Russian Embassies have been expelled back to Russia.

President Zelenskyi and President Biden held a one hour phone call on the latest assessment of the battlefield and negotiations. The Presidents discussed further sanctions, macro-financial and humanitarian aid. As a result, the US intends to provide Ukraine with \$500 million in direct budgetary aid.

Cities under attack. In the **Donetsk region**, the Russian military shelled Marjinka, Georgiivka, Novokalynovo, and Ocheretyna — no civilians were injured, but several houses were damaged. In **Mariupol**, the Russian troops fired on a building with a Red Cross sign, [confirms](#) Ukraine's Ombudsman. The building came under fire, though it is an internationally recognised sign of the wounded or civilians inside the building. **Irpın, Kyiv region** is under Ukrainian control, however shelling from the neighboring municipalities continues. City's Mayor [reported](#) around 300 killed civilians, numerous cases of the torture, rape, abduction. In **Mykolayiv**, 80 civilians have been killed and around 450 wounded since the beginning of the war according to the local mayor. In **Kharkiv**, around [15%](#) of the city's infrastructure is destroyed including nearly 1300 residential houses, 76 schools and 16 hospitals. In **Dergachi, Kharkiv region**, the administrative building of the city council was fully destroyed and a number of the residential houses were damaged due to the shelling. In **Severodonetsk, Luhansk region**, shelling hit a school and damaged five residential houses. Russian troops [shelled](#) Maryinka, Krasnohorivka and Novomykhailivka, **Donetsk region** with forbidden phosphorus bombs. 11 wounded civilians from the Mariinsky community were taken to the hospital, including 4 children.

Attacks at the **oil depots** continue. After two days, State Emergency Services finally extinguished the fire at Rivne oil depot. However, yesterday missiles fully destroyed oil depots in Dnipro and [Lysychansk](#).

In the temporarily occupied **Kherson**, Russian occupants are preparing grounds for holding the so-called [referendum on establishing the 'Kherson People's Republic'](#). It is an attempt to repeat the 2014 Donetsk and Luhansk scenario. The General Staff of Ukraine reports that there is heavy resistance among the population, proved by numerous peaceful rallies against occupation.

[Current map](#) of the situation in Ukraine.

Human rights violations. Over the last week, reported cases of rape and torture have increased. Secret Services of Ukraine [intercepted](#) the conversation between Russian militants discussing the rape of the 16 year old girl. The Time magazine [published](#) a testimony of a woman fleeing her village in Kyiv region. Also, targeted abductions of people continue. Since the beginning of the war at least [13 heads of territorial](#)

[communities](#) were kidnapped. Along with them, their deputies, assistants, as well as local representatives got targeted also.

Health care. Dozens of medical workers and patients have been killed in more than 80 attacks since Russia invaded Ukraine, the [World Health Organization](#) representative said at a news conference on Wednesday.

Energy security. International news agency AFP, referring to Pentagon sources, [informs](#) that Russia started withdrawing some of their troops from Chornobyl NPP. Rafael Grossi, Head of International Atomic Energy Association, visited Ukraine yesterday. The visit is aimed at providing the IAEA's technical assistance for the safety and security of the country's nuclear facilities. [This will include](#) sending IAEA experts to priority sites and transporting vital security items, including monitoring and emergency equipment. The Agency still does not receive remote data transmission from its monitoring systems installed at the Chornobyl NPP, however some data is provided from other operational NPPs in Ukraine.

[Bloomberg](#) reports that the European Union officials raided the offices of Gazprom PJSC's German units as part of a probe into the Russian gas giant's role in pushing prices on the continent to record numbers, according to people familiar with the matter. The raid comes as Europe steps up its investigation into whether Gazprom's behavior caused a spike in gas prices and worsened the region's energy crunch, the people said. Previously, G7 leaders refused Russia's demand to pay for the gas in Russian rubles.

Opinion polls. Latest Russian [poll](#) shows that public support of Russian major state institutions increased significantly: 83% approve of the president, 71% approve of the prime minister, 70% approve of the government, and 59% approve of the State Duma. In March, the share of those who believe that things in the country are going in the right direction increased to 69% (compared to 52% in February). The share of those who believe that the country is moving in the wrong direction is 22% (38% in February).

[American poll](#) held by Pew Research Centre says around 72% of Americans have a lot or some confidence in Zelenskyi, higher than any other international leader mentioned in this new Pew Research Center survey. Only 6% say the same about Putin.

Reading list:

- [How Ukraine's Mykhailo Fedorov is fighting a digital war - The Washington Post](#)

Statistics:

- General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine announced the total estimated losses of the Russian military as of 10 a.m., March 31, 2022: personnel – around 17,500, tanks – 614, APV – 1,735, artillery systems – 311, MLRS – 96, anti-aircraft warfare systems – 54, fixed-wing aircraft – 135, helicopters – 131, soft-skinned vehicles – 1,201, boats and light speed boats – 7, fuel tankers – 75, operational-tactical level UAV – 83, special equipment – 23, mobile SRBM system - 4. Also follow the interactive [counter](#) of Russian losses.

Every action counts, no contribution is too small!

- **Support volunteers helping Ukrainian army – [NGO 'Come Back Alive'](#)**
- **Share this up-to-date information about the situation in Ukraine, either on social media, with local media or by spreading around this brief update.**
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- **You can support our project with donations via PayPal. More information [here](#).**

Thank you for supporting Ukraine! Slava Ukraini! Glory to Ukraine!