

War in Ukraine. Daily update. Day 202-203

Prepared by Sofia Oliynyk, Maryana Zaviyska, Anna Dovha

Human rights violations. Following its successful counteroffensive in Kharkiv Oblast, Ukraine has begun recovering liberated territories in the region. A mass burial site containing around 440 graves has been found in liberated Izium, Deputy Police Chief of Kharkiv Oblast Serhii Bolvinov [told](#) Sky News. He said the bodies individually buried at the makeshift site would be exhumed and taken away for forensic examination. In addition, law enforcement officers found a torture chamber that the Russian military had set up for local residents. It was organized in the basement of the police department and in the publishing house opposite. According to Bolvinov, the occupiers always kept at least 40 people captive, feeding them twice a day only with porridge. Through local collaborators, they were looking for those who served or had relatives veterans. They were also looking for people who helped the Ukrainian army.

The State Emergency Service [reported](#) that it found five teenagers who were trapped in a basement in Kharkiv Oblast for a week after being forced to go through 'filtration measures' by the Russian occupiers. These children, aged 15-17, were from Kupiansk, Izium, and Chuhuiv districts, [according](#) to the Suspilne media outlet. In other liberated areas, head of the Derhachi community Viacheslav Zadorenko [said](#) evacuation is underway for residents who wanted to flee their hometown but couldn't because they didn't have a car. In Kutuzivka, remaining citizens of the village [lived](#) in the basement of the kindergarden for more than a month. 120 adults and 40 children survived for more than a month without water, electricity and gas.

Currently, police [have already opened](#) criminal proceedings on the facts of war crimes committed by the Russian invaders in the cities and villages of the Kharkiv region that were liberated in recent days. Overall, the scale of destruction of, for example, Izium region, equals several cities like Borodyanka, Kyiv region and in terms of casualties - two Bucha, [said](#) the Ministry of Defense.

A Ukrainian volunteer medic Yuliya Payevska (Taira) captured by Russian forces during their deadly siege of the port city of Mariupol delivered devastating testimony before US lawmakers on Thursday, recounting her experiences of torture, death and terror, Guardian [reports](#). Payevska, who was detained in Mariupol in March and held by Russian forces for three months, spoke before the Helsinki Commission, a government agency created in part to promote compliance with human rights internationally.

Cities under occupation. Repression in Crimea continues. In the temporarily occupied Crimea, a teacher [was fired](#) from a technical school in the city of Bilohirsk, who played a song about the Bayraktar drone in the audience. The illegal formation, which calls itself the "Bakhchisarai District Court", [considered](#) two reports on an alleged administrative offense against Akhtem Hemeji, who was a DJ at a Crimean Tatar wedding and turned on the Ukrainian song 'Oy u luzi chervona kalyna', as well as against the organizer wedding of Elvira Abdullaeva.

In the Kherson region, the police recently [opened](#) 27 criminal proceedings regarding the crimes of the Russian army and its accomplices in the territory of the Kherson region. Among recent cases, the representatives of the occupation authorities and security forces of the Russian Federation broke the entrance door and seized the premises of the regional children's library. The entire library stock, furniture, computer and office equipment came under the control of the occupiers. Also, in the regional center, the Russian military seized the administrative premises of a bank with material assets worth over one and a half million hryvnias. In the city of Nova Kakhovka, representatives of the occupation authorities seized the building, workshops and boxes of the power company's linear section. Material valuables worth more than half a million hryvnias were stolen.

Russian border guards do not allow those who received Russian passports in occupied territories since 2014 to cross the border, [says](#) Mykhailo Podoliak, Adviser to the Head of the Office of President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy. *'The fate of RU passport holders – to be outcasts not only in the world, but also in their beloved Russia. Motherland will leave you behind, son. Always.'*

Cities under attack. On September 15 Russian forces targeted recently liberated areas in the oblast, including around Izium and Kupiansk, damaging residential buildings and injuring 12 civilians, including two children aged 12 and 13. Russian forces struck Kharkiv's Slobidskyi District on September 15, setting a car on fire near a residential building. Casualties are unknown at the moment. Russian forces used various weapons to strike at Ukrainian settlements throughout the oblast on September 15. No casualties have been reported, but the city of Seredyna-Buda lost power after an electrical station was hit.

Kryvyi Rih in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast is dealing with the aftermath of a flood that erupted following Russian missile strikes on September 14. A barrage of cruise missiles had damaged a major dam and sent water gushing downstream. The State Emergency Service [reported](#) on Sept. 15 that over 100 houses and farmsteads were flooded by the Inhulets River. Also on Sept. 15, another cruise missile hit an undisclosed industrial site in Kryvyi Rih, head of the city's military administration Oleksandr Vilkul [reported](#). He said there were no casualties reported.

Foreign policy. On Wednesday, during the annual State of the European Union address, Ursula von der Leyen underlined that

further continuous support of Ukraine is essential, while helping to keep the resistance against Russian and fight for democratic values. In her speech she addressed the possibility of giving Ukrainians access to the EU's free mobile roaming area, as well as promising she would help Ukraine boost its exports to the EU's massive market, following the example of grain trade.

On Thursday, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen [held](#) her third visit to Ukraine since the start of the full-scale invasion. The meeting touched the questions of financial and energy support. Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Ursula von der Leyen discussed the continuation of pressure on Russia, in particular through the adoption of the 8th sanctions package. In addition, the EU jointly funded military aid for the first time in its history to support Ukraine this year, through the European Peace Facility, [underlines](#) Reuters. *'Von der Leyen said further support from the programme would likely be forthcoming in future, and described Ukraine's recent lightning counter-offensive in its north-east and south as "lifting spirits, not only in Ukraine but all over Europe.'*

U.S. President Joe Biden [announced](#) a new \$600 million arms package to help the Ukrainian military battle Russia, according to a White House memo sent to the State Department on Thursday. The White House memo also mentioned the money will be used for military education and training. Washington has sent about \$15.1 billion dollars in security assistance to the Kyiv government since Russia's invasion.

Ecocrimes. The amount of pollution in the air has increased 25 times due to Russian aggression, [says](#) the Minister of Environmental Policy. The attacks on infrastructure facilities, in particular oil depots, have been the main air pollutants. In addition, today, 200,000 square kilometers of our country need demining. Mined territories continued causing destruction to the living nature. The animals that remained in the forest or returned there after the de-occupation of the territory, when they stopped shooting there, do not understand whether it is a mine or something else. They run into her, there is an explosion and another forest fire.

Economic security. Ukraine received the first payments in the amount of 500 million euros of immediate aid from the European Investment Bank to meet urgent needs. The allocated funds will help the Ukrainian government to cover the priority short-term financial needs, to ensure the urgent repair of damaged roads, bridges and railway infrastructure. The funds will also serve as support for strategic state enterprises 'Ukratodor' and 'Ukrzaliznytsia'. Repair of railway connections, roads and bridges will help Ukraine to continue transportation of people, cargo and grain, says the [statement](#). Since Ukraine is one of the largest exporters of grain in the world, these important measures will help restore the country's economy and improve connections with the EU.

The Group of Creditors of Ukraine, including the United States, concluded a Memorandum of Understanding to implement Ukraine's request for a coordinated suspension of debt service through the end of 2023, [reads](#) the statement. The suspension of debt service by official creditors will ease liquidity pressures on Ukraine and allow its government to increase social, health, and economic spending in the face of Russia's unjustified and unprovoked war of aggression.

The European Parliament approved a €5 billion macro-financial loan to help Ukraine cover its acute financing needs caused by Russia's invasion. This is the second, and largest, tranche of a €9 billion EU support package. The loan will provide additional and significant relief and help cover part of the current financial shortfalls. The EU loan will also contribute, the text says, "to the public debt sustainability of Ukraine and its ability to ultimately be in a position to repay its financial obligations".

Energy security. Connection of Zaporizhzhia NPP with a third back-up power line has been renewed, [says](#) IAEA. Ukrainian engineers have made further headway in repairing vital power infrastructure in the vicinity of the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP), providing the plant with renewed access to the back-up power line. This means that all three back-up power lines to the ZNPP – Europe's largest nuclear power plant – have been restored over the past few days. On Thursday, IAEA Board of Governors [passed](#) a resolution demanding that Russia end its occupation of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine. The resolution is the second on Russia's invasion of Ukraine passed by the International Atomic Energy Agency's board

The Russian invasion affected 90% of Ukraine's wind power capacity and 30% of its solar power capacity, representing around a quarter of the total wind capacity and a fifth of the solar capacity in the region, says a recent United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) [report](#). This affected nearly a quarter of the region's total wind capacity and a fifth of its solar capacity since Ukraine has been a leader in renewable installations and investment in recent years. Bloomberg highlights Among the 17 countries in the region, Ukraine had made the greatest recent gains in solar and wind power, adding 8.3 gigawatts (GW) of capacity between 2017 and 2021. The sections impacted by Russia's invasion represent a quarter of the bloc's total wind capacity and a fifth of its solar power.

Electricity connection in the Kharkiv region has been fully restored after intense weekend shelling. However, President Zelenskyy and regional authorities [held a meeting](#) to discuss how to ensure energy security during the winter season to avoid possible disruptions further.

Ukraine, Moldova, Romania [agree](#) to increase cross-border electricity trade. The foreign ministers of each country, along with

their energy ministers, met in Odesa on September 15 to discuss energy security and agreed on a number of projects to expand Ukraine's electricity supply to Moldova and Romania.

Food security. Russia has destroyed, damaged or seized control of 14% of Ukraine's crop storage capacity since invading in February, jeopardizing the global food supply and threatening future harvests, [Bloomberg reports](#) with a reference to a US government-backed report said Thursday. Researchers examined satellite images of 344 storage facilities – out of almost 1400 nationwide – and concluded that Ukraine's grain storage capacity fell to 49.8 million metric tons, down from a pre-war capacity of 58 million metric tons. Given Ukraine's role as a key food supplier for both the global market and humanitarian agencies, that loss could have widespread and devastating effects, according to the researchers. They said future harvests could shrink because farmers may cut back on planting over fear they won't have space to store their grain.

Sanctions. The U.S. Treasury Department [announced sanctions](#) against two entities and 22 individuals involved in Russian aggression against Ukraine. These include Chechen strongman Ramzan Kadyrov and his family, as well as Maria Lvova-Belova, Russia's presidential commissioner for children's rights. Lvova-Belova has '*led Russia's efforts to deport thousands of Ukrainian children to Russia,*' the Treasury Department said. The list also includes Task Force Rusich, a Russian neo-Nazi paramilitary group that has participated in combat alongside Russia's military in Ukraine, as well as Russian-installed judges in Crimea.

Internal security. According to the Security Service of Ukraine, a Ukrainian [court rejected](#) the appeal of the pro-Russian Opposition Platform – For Life political party on September 15 and 'thus finally banned its activities' in Ukraine. The party was led by Viktor Medvedchuk, a close ally of Russian dictator Vladimir Putin, who was charged with high treason.

Mental health. In Ukraine, for the first time since the beginning of the full-scale war, a [study of the mental health](#) conditions of the population was conducted. The majority of respondents (more than 90%) had manifestations of at least one of the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, and 57% of citizens are at risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder.

Culture. The European Commission has [published](#) a special call under the Creative Europe programme for Ukrainian artists worth €5 million. The project supports artists outside their country, cultural organisations in Ukraine, and preparation for the post-war recovery of the Ukrainian cultural and creative sector in the medium term.

Recent polls. Almost 90% of Ukraine [are not ready](#) for any territorial concessions. In all regions of Ukraine, the absolute majority of the population is against any territorial concessions. Even among residents of the East, which is currently undergoing intense fighting, 85% are against concessions (ready for concessions - only 10%), and among residents of the South - 83% are against concessions (ready - only 10%). It is worth noting that in the period from May to July in the East, from 68% to 77%, there were more people who were against any concessions, and in September this indicator increased to 85%. Now there is actually no difference between the views of residents of different regions.

Reading corner.

- [Ukraine Symposium – Russian Crimes Against Children | Lieber Institute West Point](#)
- [Ukrainians are joyful as the Russian occupiers flee, but we must be wary of an ambush by Nataliya Gumenyuk | The Guardian](#)

Statistics.

- Russia has [launched](#) over 3800 missiles at Ukraine since the start of full-scale invasion.
- General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine announced the total estimated losses of the Russian military as of 10 a.m., September 16, 2022: personnel – around 54050, tanks – 2199, APV – 4690, artillery systems – 1302, MLRS – 312, anti-aircraft warfare systems – 168, fixed-wing aircraft – 246, helicopters – 216, operational-tactical level UAV – 908, cruise missiles – 233, boats and light speed boats – 15, soft-skinned vehicles and fuel tankers – 3550, special equipment – 121.

Every action counts, no contribution is too small!

- **Support SharetheTruth project becoming one of the [volunteers translating](#) it into your local language.**
- **Subscribe to our daily updates on [Twitter](#) and [our website](#).**

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