

War in Ukraine. Day 412. Monthly update 2023, #2.

Prepared by Sofiia Dalibozhak, Sofia Oliynyk, Maryana Zaviyska

Damages and recovery. ‘The full year of war has resulted in more than **US\$135 billion** in direct damage to buildings and infrastructure,’ [indicates the second](#) Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment, jointly developed by the World Bank Group, the Government of Ukraine, the European Commission, and the United Nations. The most affected sectors have been housing (38 percent), transport (26 percent), energy (8 percent), commerce and industry (8 percent), and agriculture (6 percent). 6 regions have sustained the greatest direct damages - Donetsk, Kharkiv, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, and Kherson regions.

‘Total estimated reconstruction and recovery needs exceed **US\$411 billion**, which is 2.6 times the actual GDP of Ukraine in 2022’. It will take an estimated 10 years considering inflation, market conditions, surge pricing in construction commonly seen in areas of mass construction, higher insurance premiums, and a shift toward lower energy intensity and more resilient, inclusive, and modern design. The highest estimated needs are in transport (22 percent), housing (17 percent), energy (11 percent), social protection and livelihoods (10 percent), explosive hazard management (9 percent), and agriculture (7 percent), says the report.

Anti-corruption. The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), the Council of Europe’s anti-corruption monitoring body, [presented](#) an interim compliance report on Ukraine’s corruption prevention measures in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors, covering the period of 2022. According to the report, Ukraine has implemented satisfactorily or dealt with in a satisfactory manner fifteen out of the thirty-one recommendations. Nine of the remaining recommendations have been partly implemented and seven have not been implemented. It acknowledges the efforts of the National Agency on Corruption Prevention to provide guidance and training for parliamentarians regarding their integrity-related obligations. As to prosecutors, GRECO particularly points out the appointment of the Head of the Specialised Anti-Corruption Prosecutor’s Office (SAPO) and issuing a Commentary to the Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct of Prosecutors as well as other positive developments. The judiciary as a whole, however, has yet to undergo the necessary changes. Specifically, no progress has been reported on introducing clear, uniform, and objective criteria for periodic evaluation of judges, and the judges are still allowed to take part in their own recusal proceedings, with no appeal avenues against recusal decisions.

Justice. The European Council presented [conclusions](#) on Ukraine on March 23 in the frame of the exchange of views with United Nations Secretary-General Guterres. The European Union is committed to ensuring full accountability for war crimes and the other most serious crimes committed in connection with Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine. To achieve above-stated, it is important among all to establish an appropriate mechanism for the prosecution of the crime of aggression, which is of concern to the international community as a whole. In this context, the European Council welcomes the agreement to create the new International Centre for Prosecution of the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine (ICPA) in The Hague, which will be linked to the existing Joint Investigation Team supported by Eurojust.

Sports. On March 27, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland made [a joint statement](#) regarding the prevention of Russian and Belarusian athletes from participating in international sports competitions. They dwelled upon the fact that it is not athletes’ nationality that determines their role, but the fact that they are sponsored/supported by their governments or businesses backing up the Kremlin regime, which continues its war of aggression against Ukraine, or even they are affiliated with the Russian military directly. Finally, they urged the International Olympic Committee to reconsider its plans and return to the original well-proven stance supported by the international community.

The International Olympic Committee issued [recommendations](#) for International Federations and international sports event organisers on the participation of athletes with a Russian or Belarusian passport in international competitions. Therefore, athletes with a Russian or a Belarusian passport must compete only as Individual Neutral Athletes, while no teams of athletes with a Russian or Belarusian passport can be considered. In addition, athletes and support personnel who actively support the war cannot compete or enter. Athletes who are contracted to the Russian or Belarusian military or national security agencies cannot compete. The same applies to the support personnel. However, the issued recommendations do not concern the participation of athletes and

their support personnel with a Russian or Belarusian passport at the Olympic Games Paris 2024 or the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Youth and Sports of Ukraine Vadym Huttsayt [said](#) that the Russian war has taken the lives of 262 athletes. In addition, the Russian army has also destroyed 363 sports facilities in Ukraine.

Cities under the attack. On Monday, March 27, Russian occupants [shelled](#) the centre of Sloviansk, Donetsk region. Russian troops hit the city with S-300 missiles. Administrative and office buildings, five high-rise buildings and seven private houses were destroyed. Twenty five people were injured, while two were killed. Another city in the Donetsk region, Avdiivka, was [placed](#) in the red zone and has been closed to entry since March 27. In particular, journalists and volunteers will not be able to enter the city. In addition, last week mandatory evacuation of children [took place](#) following implementation of the respective mechanism introduced back in March.

As for Kherson region, on April 3, the Russian army [launched](#) 61 attacks on the Kherson region, the total of fired shells amounting to 224 in a single day. The Russians attacked Kherson city four times, with ten projectiles hitting a residential area and the territory of a medical institution.

Human rights. On April 5, 50 UN member countries [condemned](#) the Russian Federation actions in Ukraine, including and in particular children's rights violations. The Statement comes in response to Russia's arria-meeting on the unlawful forced deportation of children by the Russian Federation. The statement highlighted that Russia presents its action in Ukraine as the ones that follow international law, including the ones related to deportation of children.

Iryna Danilovych, nurse and activist in Crimea, who is illegally detained by Russian authorities, [was](#) on a dry hunger strike until [urgent needed medical assistance](#). Iryna cooperated with several Ukrainian media outlets in the past and had been in detention by Russian authorities since April 2022. On December 28, 2022 she was sentenced to seven years allegedly for handling explosives. On March 22, 2023, Iryna announced a dry hunger strike "*until her diagnosis is organised and treatment begins, or until her biological death*". In letters to her family, Danilovych [reported](#) a sharp deterioration in her health, and on March 2, she told the Assistant Commissioner for Human Rights in Crimea, when he visited the Simferopol detention centre. She has not received any medical care since then, and has almost stopped hearing in one ear. On April 6, she stopped the hunger strike in exchange for medical assistance.

Ukraine is among the top five countries, along with Colombia, Mexico, Brazil, and Honduras, where human right defenders [are specifically endangered](#). The incidents happen in the context of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, where defenders are engaged in humanitarian response and human rights journalists have been also specifically targeted by Russian forces. There are at least 50 documented killings by Russian military forces.

Life under occupation. The occupants are strengthening the counter-sabotage regime in Crimea. In the occupied Krasnoperekopsk, Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation officers conduct [humiliating filtration procedures](#), strip-searching, interrogations with beating of civilians, etc.

In the Kherson region, Russians [threaten](#) people with a "pit" for refusing to receive Russian passports, i.e., they put a bag on the victim and throw them into a trench. Russians also raided the village of Azovske, where they conducted "preventive searches" and threatened residents who did not have Russian passports. The purpose of such repressive measures is to exert psychological pressure.

Food security. The trilateral agreement between Ukraine, Turkey, and Russia on the "grain initiative" is [extended](#) for another 120 days. Meanwhile, the Russian Foreign Ministry [announced](#) the extension of the grain deal until May 18 and threatened to withdraw from the initiative. The UN did not specify a timeframe.

Priority demining of agricultural land [has begun](#) in the Mykolaiv region. According to preliminary estimates, more than 470854 hectares of agricultural land in 9 regions of Ukraine (Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, Mykolaiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Kherson, Chernihiv and Cherkasy) need to be surveyed and, if necessary, demined (humanitarian demining). Therefore, based on the results of a non-technical or technical survey, the area in need of humanitarian demining may be significantly reduced.

Energy security. Since 10 October 2022, Russia has launched more than 1,500 missiles and drones, as well as shelling and grenades, targeting the energy infrastructure of Ukraine, out of which more than 100 missiles are estimated to have hit large energy facilities, [says](#) Ukraine Energy Damage Assessment report. In the electricity sector, the generating capacity has been reduced by 61 percent, due to the damage caused. In addition, a total of 41 out of 94 crucial high voltage transforming substations located in government-controlled territories have been damaged or destroyed by missiles or drones. More than half of these 41 substations have been hit more than once. What concerns the coal and mining sector, approximately a quarter of Ukrainian state-owned mines are located in territory currently under military control of the Russian Federation.

On March 30, the Energy Community and Naftogaz of Ukraine [agreed](#) to create an expert group to design tools for boosting Ukrainian energy security. The group will also analyse the current situation in Ukraine's energy sector, look into current and potential risks, and offer possible solutions.

Rafael Grossi, the Director General of International Atomic Energy Agency, [held](#) his second visit to Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP). The visit had allowed him to see the damage the plant had sustained since the last time he was there in September and especially during shelling in November. The ZNPP has also experienced repeated power blackouts, forcing it to temporarily rely on emergency diesel generators for reactor cooling and other nuclear safety and security functions.

Support for the economy. On March 20, the UK [signed](#) a pivotal digital trade deal with Ukraine that will support the country's economy and greatly enhance the UK-Ukraine trade and investment relationship. The agreement is said to help Ukraine support its economy through the current crisis and lay foundations for its recovery and revival. Ukraine will have guaranteed access to the financial services crucial for reconstruction efforts through the deal's facilitation of cross-border data flows. Ukrainian businesses will also be able to trade more efficiently and cheaply with the UK through electronic transactions, e-signatures, and e-contracts. The UK also continues to support Ukraine through decisive sanctions against Russia.

Holodomor recognition. Within the course of March, three more parliaments of European countries have recognised the Holodomor as genocide against the Ukrainian people, in particular Holodomor was recognized as "genocide perpetrated by the totalitarian government in Moscow against the people of Ukraine". These are [Belgium](#), [Iceland](#) and [France](#).

Recent polls. Bertelsmann Stiftung think tank has [published](#) a survey on Europeans' attitudes towards Ukraine. According to the findings, 65 percent of Europeans believe that Ukraine should become a member of the EU in the coming years. Moreover, 67 percent say that Europe should become less dependent on energy from Russia, even if this leads to more inflation. In addition, 61 percent are in favour of the EU supplying Ukraine with weapons.

Meanwhile a survey of Ukrainians' attitudes conducted by the International Republican Institute [demonstrates](#) that Ukrainians show record high support for Ukraine's NATO membership – 82%. The number has gone 10% up since the last survey in June 2022 and 23% up since the April 2022 results. Joining the EU is supported by 85% of respondents compared to 80% in June and April 2022.

Watchlist. The investigative [documentary](#) about survival escape of two teenage girls from Kherson. 16-year-old Masha and 18-year-old Nastia from Kherson have survived Russian occupation and escaped from detention, after being held in cold rooms and threatened to be sent to the "pit" where the military commandant's office and the FSB tortured Ukrainian teenagers.

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