

**Ukraine Situation Report  
June 23rd-July 24th, 2022  
Key trends of the month**

**CONFLICT DEVELOPMENTS**

- During the fifth month of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russian troops continued to exert control over 95% of the Luhansk oblast, while also attempting to reach the administrative borders of both the Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts. However, they failed to make any major advances in the latter. Ukraine maintains control over all major cities in the Donetsk oblast. However, they are incessantly shelled by Russian artillery fire and intensified sorties by its air force. The large-scale escalation that was expected in mid-July (which would have coincided with the announced meeting of the Russian State Duma) has not happened. This may be down to the Russian Federation (hereinafter Russia) lacking the necessary resources to strengthen its offensive.
- According to Russian human rights activists, nearly 1800 Russian servicemen have refused to deploy and fight in the war against Ukraine. Because the Russian government has not officially introduced a general mobilization in the country, this means that no harsh punishment can be inflicted on these people. Consequently, this encourages others to follow suit. In light of this personnel crisis within the Russian military, efforts are under way to form new military units (especially ethnic ones), to be deployed to Ukraine. Such units are being formed in Bashkortostan, Chechnya, Tatarstan and other Russian regions. The forced mobilization of the populations residing in Ukraine's occupied territories is also taking place.
- The Armed Forces of Ukraine (hereinafter AFU) have managed to significantly weaken Russia's offensive thanks to the high-precision, long-range weapons delivered by the West. For example, the use of High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) and similar such systems, has been conducive to destroying tens of Russian ammunition depots in Kherson, Nova Kakhovka, Skadovsk, Melitopol, Donetsk, Luhansk, Kadiivka, Horlivka, Torez, Shakhtarsk, Snizhne, Makiivka and other cities. Logistical infrastructure and objects have also been [damaged](#). For example, the Antonivskiyi bridge over the Dnipro and the Dariivskiyi bridge over the Inhulets river. Therefore, in several cases the Russian army has been deprived of significant amounts of ammunition as well as their prompt delivery to the frontline due to destroyed infrastructure or disrupted supply lines. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the intensity of artillery strikes by Russia and a reduction in the [casualties](#) incurred by the Ukrainian military. However, the weapons that the Ukrainian army now has at its disposal are insufficient for a full-scale counteroffensive, although it is already happening in some areas, especially in South Ukraine.
- One of the major achievements of the AFU last month was the military operation in the Black Sea, which resulted in Russian troops being forced to leave [Snake Island](#) on 30 June. The presence of Russian troops on the island had allowed Russia to establish control over the entire western part of the Black Sea. Following the island's liberation, Ukraine has managed to partly lift the blockade of trade routes in the Black Sea. A further noteworthy achievement of the AFU was the encirclement of a large Russian military unit in the Kherson oblast (according to unofficial sources, Russian soldiers were surrounded in a cauldron).

- Fewer cases of artillery shelling have had no effect on the number of missile strikes. During five months Russia has launched over [3000 missiles](#) from planes, ships and ground-to-ground missile systems. In July, the cities of Kharkiv, Dnipro, Mykolayiv, Kramatorsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kropyvnytskyi, Kryvyi Rih and tens of other settlements and territories located on the Russian border have been subjected to missile strikes. On 27 June a shopping mall in the city of Kremenchuk was demolished by a missile, claiming 20 lives and injuring over 50 more. On 1 July, Russia launched three air-to-ground cruise missiles on the small resort town of Serhiivka. A recreation center and an apartment block were destroyed, leaving 21 people dead and 39 wounded. A heinous missile strike on two residential buildings in Chasiv Yar on 11 July killed some 50 people while an air strike on Vinnytsia's city center on 14 July claimed the lives of over 25 citizens.
- On 23 July, one day after a deal was signed that would allow the resumption of grain exports from Ukrainian ports, the Russian army carried out a missile strike on Odesa's port, despite Moscow promising not to launch any strikes the day before. It was an outrageous act with some experts suggesting that Russian politicians are deliberately trying to paint an image of themselves as a bunch of irrational and uncontrollable maniacs, so that democratic countries will fear them and be willing to make concessions. After such an appalling attack the negotiation process has been seriously undermined. The Ukrainian government understands that Russia is intent on neither complying with any agreements nor on working out any compromises, the Kremlin expects Ukraine's full surrender, along with that its allies.

## **ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS**

- Ukraine has held a first donor conference for its economic recovery. At a conference in Lugano on 4 July, Ukraine presented a draft recovery plan for before and after the end of the war. The plan estimates that some 750 billion USD of investments need to be attracted over the next 10 years. The conference was well received by the international community and successfully portrayed Ukraine's recovery needs, as well as giving a systematic assessment of the amount of economic losses and destruction of infrastructure, the package of economic reforms, programs and projects that may provide an incentive for the recovery of Ukraine's economy. For example, Ukraine's direct infrastructure losses amounted to more than 100bn USD. However, one of the conference's drawbacks was the recovery plan's focus on the resources of international financial organizations and state grants of partner countries. The business sector and experts hope that the key task of the conference, i.e., the attraction of private capital, drawing attention of transnational corporations and attraction of technological innovations should gain more currency at future donor conferences. According to Ukrainian Prime Minister, Denys Shmyhal, arrangements have been made for 1,9 billion USD of financial aid. 600 million USD are to be part of a financial support package, with 500 million USD being allocated for the agricultural sector. A further \$500 million USD will be earmarked for the preparation for the heating season and 250 million USD will be spent on the implementation of digital transformation projects.
- The war and the corresponding huge loss of a significant part of Ukraine's economy and export capacities has undermined the country's sovereign and investment rating. Fitch Ratings has downgraded Ukraine's

Long-Term Foreign-Currency (LTFC) Issuer Default Rating (IDR) to “C” from CCC (default-like). This is connected to Ukraine’s plans of reaching an agreement with creditors to postpone state debt payments for two years.

- Lifting the blockade of ports and ensuring the free passage of ships in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov plays a crucial role in Ukraine’s national security and in supporting its economic and export potential.
- Following Snake Island’s liberation, Ukraine managed to partially resume grain exports. The first international export ships have already arrived in Ukrainian ports. The next step was to agree on “grain corridors” that would be set up for 120 days with the possibility of a prolongation. These agreements were signed by Ukraine and Russia separately. Each side signed an identical document with Turkey and [António Guterres](#), Secretary-General of the United Nations.
- Potentially, Ukraine now has the opportunity (though possibly only temporary) to sell grain and fulfill its budget, as well as save its agricultural sector and producers from bankruptcy. According to President Zelenskyy, the grain that Ukraine has at its disposal amounts to approximately 10 billion USD.
- At the same time, there are risks related to the implementation of the agreements as well as possible Russian provocations. The Kremlin will try to either accuse Ukraine of reneging on the agreements or exploit the situation in order to make another attempt to capture the Odesa and Mykolayiv oblasts from the sea. According to the director of the Ukrainian Institute of Future, the likelihood of the blockade of Ukrainian ports being lifted is quite low.
- A food crisis in Africa could bring about a migration crisis in the EU. This is Putin’s main tool of pressure on Europe (not the energy issue, but that of migration). Missile strikes launched on Odesa and the city’s port premises have once again shown that agreements reached with Russian are not to be trusted. Agreements that do not include any obligations or system of guarantees are part of Russia’s situational political game.
- Ukrainian grain and other commodities, such as metal and natural resources, are being stolen by Russia, particularly via Crimea and ports located in the Sea of Azov. Russia also continues to shell Ukrainian fields and destroy the harvest.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS**

- Russia continues to pose a serious threat to Ukrainian nuclear power plants. Low flying Russian missiles have been repeatedly spotted over nuclear plants. Other provocative acts include Russia shelling Ukrainian settlements from nuclear power plants and storing ammunitions and military equipment on their premises. On 26 June the Dzhherelo Neitroniv nuclear center, located in Kharkiv, was subjected to shelling. The damage caused to the center could lead to nuclear contamination. On 10 July, the Russian military and propagandists penetrated the premises of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, including entering restricted access areas. Nevertheless, the nuclear power plants under government control are already functioning in line with the European energy system by exporting energy to the EU. After the adoption of additional technical measures, the capacity to export energy abroad could reach the level of 4-5 GW.

- The environmental situation in Mariupol remains difficult. Over 90% of the city's citizens do not have access to water supply. Waste disposal services have not resumed. The healthcare system has been destroyed. The same fate has befallen other cities that have borne the brunt of Russian shelling and occupation.

## HUMANITARIAN DIMENSIONS

- Ukraine's leadership continues to call for Russia to be recognized as a state sponsor of terrorism. After the missile strike on the shopping mall in Kremenchuk, Ukraine's President stated "Today in the morning I asked the USA to recognize Russia as a state sponsor of terrorism. The relevant resolution has already been approved by the US Senate. The relevant decision in its legal form can be adopted by the US Department of State. Such a decision is obviously necessary and it should be supported by the entire democratic world. I shared my view on this with the G7 leaders that have met in Germany". The Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, urged US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken to recognize Russia as a state sponsor of terrorism, or Congress would make a formal declaration on the matter if he did not.
- Russia continues to annex occupied Ukrainian territories. For example, plans are afoot to hold a "referendum" on the accession of these territories to Russia, with Russian politicians claiming that the Kremlin is ready to incorporate these territories into Russia.
- Occupation administrations continue to carry-out reprisals against local populations and leaders of local authorities in Ukraine's occupied territories. Local residents continue to be abducted, mugged and killed. Russian passports are forcibly being issued to Ukrainian citizens. At the same time, in the occupied settlements collaborators are being subjected to attacks that can be carried-out by both guerrillas and by competing Russian military units.
- During five months of full-scale warfare at least 358 children have been killed with 683 wounded. This data has been confirmed. Real figures may be much higher due to the inability to conduct research in the combat zones and occupied territories.
- Although a cease-fire agreement has not been reached, an exchange of prisoners of war and of fallen soldiers took place last month. On 29 June, 144 Ukrainian soldiers were freed, in particular the defenders of the "Azovstal" steel plant. In addition, 60 prisoners of war were freed from captivity (both civilians, volunteers and military representatives). Ukraine also managed to receive about 160 bodies of deceased soldiers.
- As a result of shelling, over 2000 educational institutions, almost 900 hospitals and over 220 religious objects have been damaged. At least 800.000 Ukrainians have either completely or partly lost their homes.
- The Ukrainian government has established the position of Commissioner for Internally Displaced Persons who will also perform the duties of the Deputy Minister for Reintegration of Temporary Occupied Territories. Furthermore, in July several high-ranking personnel changes took place. The Prosecutor General, Head of the Security Service and the Minister of Social Policy were fired. The composition of the

Ukrainian government is likely to undergo major changes in the coming months. This will also impact the work of the Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporary Occupied Territories.

## INFORMATION WARFARE DIMENSIONS

- In July, anti-West narratives and criticism of the sanction regime, as well as arms deliveries to Ukraine were spread in Russia. Narratives about the [inability](#) of the West to keep providing Ukraine with sustainable assistance are being disseminated in Russia by various political actors and through different information channels. Officials from Russia's State Duma [circulate](#) messages claiming that the US is allegedly weakening the EU by failing to solve the issue of "peace in Ukraine", and claiming that sanctions have been ineffective. Messages about the "second-class" nature of Ukrainians and the artificial nature of the Ukrainian state are also being spread. On 7 July, Putin [said](#) that "the West wants to fight us until the last Ukrainian standing. This is a tragedy for the Ukrainian people. However, it seems that this is exactly what is going to happen".
- Moscow denies any losses incurred by the Russian army as well as any advancements achieved by the Ukrainian military thanks to American weapons. The US is also [accused](#) of delivering weapons that [causes](#) destruction of civilian infrastructure. Russia emphasizes the fact that its army has established control over the Luhansk oblast.
- Information about the advantages of living in the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia oblasts is being actively shared. The Russian media refer to these oblasts as being "liberated by Russians". Russian government representatives speak about the accession of these territories to Russia, as well as the preparation of referendums. At the same time, the Kremlin is constantly emphasizing its "humanitarian mission" in Ukraine, while also promoting information about "providing humanitarian aid" for Ukrainian oblasts.
- Humanitarian crimes are denied, including the shelling of civilian infrastructure in Ukraine by Russia. Even the cruise missile strikes on Vinnytsia and [Odesa](#) are referred to as the "destruction of Ukrainian military infrastructure".
- At the official level Russia consistently deploys the rhetoric of overcoming economic problems created by sanctions. President Putin repeatedly stresses that Western countries suffer from their own sanctions. According to Putin, the goal of the West's sanctions on Russia is to weaken it as an independent and sovereign country.
- The rhetoric about the "special operation" and its goals remains the same. In the last few days, the Kremlin has spread the narrative of changes in and the [extension](#) of Russian demands, in particular of those regarding Ukraine's southern territories.
- Russia continues to carry-out hidden mobilization. For example, the Kremlin has positively assessed the "[initiative](#)" of governors to send "volunteer battalions" to war from different Russian regions. Russia is also [promoting](#) narratives about the need to train "volunteers" in all Russian regions.
- Russia continues to forcibly relocate Ukrainians to its territories. The process is referred to as "the evacuation without the involvement of the Ukrainian government". Since the end of February over 2,8

million Ukrainian citizens (among them nearly 380.000 children) have been [evacuated](#) from the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts to Russia. Some deportees manage to return to Ukraine through third countries.

- Russian citizens broadly support Putin’s war against Ukraine. [According](#) to the “Levada-center”, over half of Russian citizens (55%) follow developments in Ukraine. 24% of them are following the “special operation” very closely "while others are following it “quite closely”. 20% of respondents do not support the “special operation”. The military campaign is generally not supported by Moscow residents (a separate survey has been conducted in the Russian capital city) and youth in general.