



**October 2025**  
**Ukraine Monthly Situation Report**

## **CONFLICT DEVELOPMENTS**

- In October 2025, the main efforts of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (AFRF) were focused on capturing Pokrovsk and Myrnohrad in Donetsk province, as well as Kupiansk in Kharkiv province. At the same time, the attempts to break through near Dobropillia were thwarted by the Defense Forces of Ukraine (DFU) while a number of settlements in Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia provinces were de-occupied. Russian infantry continues infiltrating the defensive positions of the DFU in small groups, supported by special units of the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the AFRF. Armoured vehicles are used occasionally, as Russian reserves have been substantially depleted. One of the few attacks involving 29 armoured vehicles was launched by the AFRF on 27 October near Dobropillia. As a result, approximately 15 vehicles were destroyed, with most of the personnel involved being either killed or forced to retreat.
- According to the Ukrainian government, total Russian military losses by the end of October amounted to approximately 1,142,000 service members, including over 345,000 in 2025 alone.
- In October, both sides exchanged a series of strikes on energy facilities. On the night of 31 October, the Ukrainian Navy carried out a missile strike on the Orlovskaya thermal power plant and the Novobryansk electrical substation in Russia. Strikes on Russian oil industry facilities also continued, which led to the shutdown of 37% of the country's oil refining capacity, fuel shortages in 57 regions across Russia, and ban (to last for several months) on the export of certain types of petroleum products. At least six major oil refineries on Russian territory and several oil depots in both Russia and the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine were damaged in October. For its own part, Russia launched strikes that have considerably reduced Ukraine's capacity for electricity generation and natural gas extraction, which, among other things, resulted in the country increasing gas imports from EU states.
- The AFRF continue to strike Ukrainian settlements using cruise missiles, aerial bombs and kamikaze drones. In October the cities of Kyiv, Kharkiv, Lviv, Chernihiv, Dnipro, Sumy, Kherson, Mykolayiv, Zaporizhzhia, Cherkasy, Podilsk, Kryvyi Rih, Pavlohrad, Nikopol, Sloviansk, Kramatorsk (on 23 October, two journalists were killed after a drone hit a civilian car), Losova, Chuhuiv, Balakliya, Novhorod-Siverskiy, Nizhyn, Pryluky, Brovary, Shostka and Chornomorsk, as well as other settlements were subject to attacks. The main targets of the attacks were energy and gas infrastructure. However, civilian infrastructure and residential buildings are also destroyed every day. In particular, according to an IAEA statement, a combined Russian missile and drone strike on October 30 damaged substations critical to nuclear safety and protection in Ukraine. Railway infrastructure as well as rolling stock of Ukrzaliznytsia also came under attack repeatedly. Over 300 railway infrastructure facilities were hit from early August to late October alone.
- The Russian side has started using upgraded guided aerial bombs (KABs) capable of covering distances of over 150. These bombs have already been deployed to strike settlements in the provinces of Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, Odesa and Poltava, which were previously considered beyond the reach of such munitions.



- In view of the advance of Russians near Kupiansk, **in October, mandatory evacuation was launched of families with children from 40 settlements in Kharkiv province**. Evacuation also continues from front-line areas of Donetsk province, including parts of Kramatorsk, which in October became a target for fibre-optic unmanned aerial vehicles.
- **On 2 October, another prisoner exchange took place, as 185 Ukrainian service members and 20 civilian captives were brought back to Ukraine. Also in October, Ukraine managed to recover the bodies of 1,000 defenders killed in combat.**

## HUMANITARIAN DIMENSIONS

- **Russia continues to commit systematic war crimes against Ukrainian children, turning them into victims, hostages and instruments of propaganda.** As of October 27, 661 children were killed, 2,203 injured, and more than 19,000 abducted or deported. Over 4,500 schools and kindergartens and 1,294 hospitals have been destroyed, while cases of sexual violence against children have also been documented. Ukrainian intelligence services have identified the whereabouts of more than 300 abducted children with a view to facilitating their return. At the same time, Russia carries on with the militarization and Russification of Ukrainian children residing in the occupied territories. Through the *Yunarmiya* (Russian for 'youth army') network, more than 6,000 minors have been involved in military training. In September and October 2025, the Russian occupants arranged further deportations disguised as 'cultural tours' from Donetsk province to Saint Petersburg and from Kherson province to Novorossiysk, having relocated up to 5,000 children.
- **Russia is stepping up repression, torture and unlawful trials against Ukrainians in the occupied territories and held in captivity.** In Rostov, 15 service members of the *Aidar* battalion were given sentences of between 15 and 21 years in prison. A journalist, Anastasia Hlukhivska, has been detained for more than two years without any charges. Yana Suvorova, the administrator of the *Melitopol Is Ukraine*, was sentenced to 14 years in a penal colony. Human rights defenders have also documented 103 cases of civilian abductions from Kherson and Zaporizhzhia provinces, followed by deportation to Crimea.
- **In October, Russia carried out a series of targeted attacks on railway stations, hospitals, mines and humanitarian missions.** Shelling in Odesa, Konotop, and Shostka have led to civilian casualties; a drone hit a perinatal centre in Sumy; an air bomb demolished a church in Kostiantynivka; and in Kherson province, a UN humanitarian mission was attacked. Russian forces struck DTEK coal mines while hundreds of workers were underground, also shelling a children's hospital in Kherson, and attacked railway infrastructure in several regions, causing injuries, fires and other destruction.
- Russia continues increasing the threats posed to nuclear and global security. On 30 October, Russian strikes damaged substations critical to the operation of Ukraine's nuclear power plants, which resulted in reduced reactor capacity and the loss of power to the line supplying the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. At the same time, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the testing of the *Burevestnik* nuclear missile, further posing the increased threat of nuclear escalation and global destabilisation.
- **Russia continues pursuing a deliberate policy of eradicating Ukrainian identity and establishing total control over the occupied territories.** Moscow has legalised the appropriation of homes belonging to Ukrainian citizens, forcing mobilisation in the temporarily occupied territories,



introducing mass Russification and [propaganda](#) in education, [punishing](#) children for using the Ukrainian language or Ukrainian symbols, while keeping [Crimean Tatars](#) and [pro-Ukrainian activists](#) under arrest or [forced examination](#). Russian occupants are [opening](#) 'anti-terror schools', [establishing](#) 'Cossack youth groups', [imposing](#) religious-military education, and prosecuting [employees of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant](#). Such actions bear the sign of a [genocidal strategy](#) aimed to [suppress](#) Ukrainian identity and subjugate the population.

- Russia is systematically destroying Ukraine's cultural heritage. Since the start of the full-scale invasion, 236 Ukrainian artists and 116 journalists have been [killed](#), which attests to a deliberate effort to annihilate the cultural community. The Main Intelligence Directorate has [documented](#) over 170 cases of illegal removal of artifacts. Shelling has also [damaged](#) the Hetmanate Museum in Kyiv, [destroying](#) a third of the Kherson Regional Museum building, and [obliterating](#) a book warehouse in Dnipro. In Mariupol, Russians [destroyed](#) part of the *Conquerors of Space* mosaic under the guise of 'restoration'. Overall, the war has [led](#) to the destruction or damage of 1,599 cultural heritage sites and over 2,400 cultural infrastructure facilities. The Ministry of Culture is [updating](#) evacuation protocols for cultural assets, while also relaunching the *Great Restoration* programme.
- **Russia continues to destroy Ukraine's environment, inflicting environmental damage and turning the war into a large-scale environmental catastrophe.** Russian shelling has triggered fires and [air pollution](#) in several regions. In [Chernihiv](#), losses exceeded UAH 5 million, in [Nizhyn district](#) they amounted to UAH 2.6 million, in [Odesa province](#) to UAH 1.4 million, and up to UAH 130,000 in [Kharkiv province](#). The total damage to the natural reserve fund in Kherson province stands at over UAH 782 billion, and in [Volyn province](#) at more than UAH 1.3 billion. In Donetsk province, damage to an ammonia pipeline during shelling did not cause a major leak. However, it did [highlight](#) the constant risk of environmental disasters in the combat zone.
- **An environmental crisis is also deteriorating on the occupied peninsula.** Throughout October, new fuel oil spills were recorded on the beaches of [Anapa](#) and [Sevastopol](#), as well as an oil leak at a storage facility in the [Kerch district](#) and massive contamination following a [floating crane accident](#). Russians remain generally ignorant of the ecological threats in occupied Crimea, where ongoing [fuel spills](#), [chemical pollution](#), and [water crisis](#) keep degrading the environment as well as posing a threat to the population's lives.
- **At the same time, Ukraine demonstrates resilience in the field of environmental security in spite of the war, continuing to restore its natural resources.** Under the state humanitarian demining compensation programme, more than 5,100 hectares of agricultural land across four regions have been [cleared](#), enabling farmers to safely resume production. Ukrainian farmers have [harvested](#) over 40 million tonnes of grain, ensuring Ukraine's food stability. In Mykolaiv province, efforts [continue](#) to restore forest shelter-belts destroyed during fighting, covering a total area of 7,800 m<sup>2</sup>.

## ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS

- The [first 100 days](#) of Yuliia Svyrydenko's government were marked by financial stabilisation and the search for a **balance between survival and development**. Ukraine's economy is showing signs of recovery, but it remains significantly below its potential level.
- The **key economic trend** lies in the activation of both private and public demand amid sluggish production constrained by the war and monetary policy. This, in turn, leads to an **expanding trade deficit as well as increasing currency risks**. According to the Ministry of Economy, GDP growth for



January and August 2025 was +1.4%, considerably below the government's forecast under the 2025 budget (+2.7%). In the recently released [draft budget](#) for 2026, a goal has been set for Ukraine to secure around USD 46.5 billion in external assistance. At the same time, the government projects an average exchange rate of UAH 45.6 per USD 1, which is substantially higher (by 10–11%) than the present rate.

- **The main constraints on the economy:**

1. **Military risks:**

- the budget deficit has risen to 25% of GDP in 2025 due to additional military spending (up from 20% in 2024).
- Ukraine's minimum defence needs for 2026 are expected to reach USD 120 billion.
- The IMF forecasts exceptionally high risks of escalation, which may reduce GDP growth by between 1% and 2% in 2025–2026. According to a forecast by the National Bank of Ukraine (NBU), economic recovery could slow to 2% of GDP in 2026 if the war continues.

2. **Damage caused to the energy sector:**

- 203 facilities require the protection of air defence systems (according to Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy)
- Russian attacks have damaged 40% of gas production capacity in early 2025, limiting industry and export capacity
- Electricity capacity deficits have risen to 5–7 GW (up from 3 GW in September) and could reach 10 GW in December given the inability to transfer energy from west to east
- UN HRMMU: '*There is a significant risk of prolonged power outages in winter*' (December 2025 - blackouts up to 50% of the time)
- IEA: If attacks should continue, the deficit could reach 10 GW, with a 60–70% probability of full blackouts in the eastern regions or the left-bank part of Ukraine
- Gas import has increased by 20–30% in November, but there is a risk of 'gas blackouts' (heating shutdowns) in eastern regions of between 40% and 50% during winter
- Foreign policy: escalation could lead to a complete collapse of gas networks by January 2026

3. **Stringent monetary control:**

- The NBU kept the key interest rate at 15.5% (23 October 2025) due to inflation risks, rendering loans expensive for businesses (commercial rates exceed the rate of 20%)
- The rigorous monetary policy will restrain GDP growth to between 2% and 3%. However, this will prevent a wage-price upward spiral.

4. **Labour shortages:**

- Despite a 20% year-on-year increase in wages (March 2025; source: [work.ua](#)), high unemployment persists
- Labour shortages are particularly severe in frontline regions and in the IT and construction sectors.

5. **Rising energy costs:**



- Additional business costs for uninterrupted operations during power outages have increased production expenses by between 10% and 15% (CES, September 2025).
- Gas imports have increased by 50% in 2025 due to infrastructure damage.

## **6. Low investment activity**

- **The key constraints:** fiscal incentives, a transport corridor, external assistance.

A UNDP study carried out in Ukraine [revealed](#) key growth clusters in the regions with the potential to scale up high value-added production, develop exports and attract investment to the regional economy:

- Agricultural production and processing **in Vinnytsia province**: over 2,700 agricultural enterprises, accounting for nearly **8% of Ukraine's agricultural output**
- Logistics and trade **in Odesa province**: over 40,000 employees in transport sectors and **51.4% of the turnover of trade enterprises**
- Pharmaceuticals and construction materials **in Kyiv province**: **12% of all pharmaceutical enterprises in Ukraine** as well as in the IT sector
- High-tech industries **in Kharkiv province**, where **95% of companies are small businesses**.

**Conclusion:** these factors are interconnected, with the war exacerbating the energy crisis and labour shortages. Nevertheless, external assistance (USD 51.5 billion in 2025) and reforms can help mitigate the negative impact. According to the NBU/IMF forecasts, growth will stand at between 1.9% and 3%, though escalation risks could reduce it to 1%.

## **INFORMATION WARFARE DIMENSIONS**

- **Negotiations and 'peace' exclusively on Russian terms:** Moscow continues to promote the narrative of peace being only possible on Russia's conditions, i.e. Ukraine's neutrality, recognition of new territories, and security guarantees for Russia. The topic of peace is used as a tool of putting pressure – 'peace only on Russia's terms' - rather than as a genuine diplomatic proposal. Against the backdrop of proposals for a potential meeting between Putin and Trump in Budapest, Russia's political leadership claims that all objectives of the so-called 'special military operation' (SMO) have been and will be achieved ([a statement made by Lavrov](#)). In parallel, the narrative is being spread that Russia seeks peace, but 'Europeans and the so-called Kyiv regime' show absolute unwillingness to act in this manner ([claimed by Peskov](#)). Responsibility for prolonging the war is shifted to Ukraine – 'Kyiv is buying time', or 'Kyiv does not want peace', or 'Kyiv follows the West's will' or 'Ukraine [is not responding](#) to our initiatives, avoiding any dialogue'. Potential supplies of long-range weapons to Ukraine, including Tomahawks from the USA, are interpreted as nuclear escalation by the West ([a statement by Medvedev](#)).
- **'Nuclear threats' and attempts at escalation:** Russia [has conducted](#) exercises involving strategic nuclear missiles *Sineva* and *Yars*. Popular Russian shows have revived discussions on demolishing Ukrainian cities and civilian populations: 'There will be no life in Kharkiv, Poltava, Mykolaiv, or Odesa.'



These cities will cease to exist. Nor will Kyiv, providing civilians do not overthrow their Nazi government" ([a statement by Solovyov](#)). According to [propaganda data](#) issued by the [Russian Public Opinion Research Centre](#), there is high public trust in the Russian army and pride in the country's military strength (around 80%). Russians express a willingness to economise and limit their own needs to protect it (69%), with nearly half strongly agreeing with this statement (45%).

- **Complete denial of Ukrainian civic and national identity:** Official Russian propaganda sources are [circulating](#) documents alleging that the Ukrainian language does not exist, being a mere 'hybrid slang'. Russia completely [denies](#) the existence of Ukraine as a country, Ukrainian culture and Ukraine's existence as a state. Russian propagandists also frame the Ukrainian language as being at risk of [disappearance](#) in the context of European integration and the growing influence of English.
- **The so-called 'Russian success', escalation of the war, shelling of Ukraine's energy infrastructure, and attacks on Ukrainian cities:** Daily propaganda chronicles by TASS concerning the war in Ukraine are spreading messages about the so-called 'liberation of settlements', 'heavy losses sustained by the Armed Forces of Ukraine' and strikes on Ukraine's energy infrastructure. According to these Russian [sources](#), the Russian army has changed its tactics in terms of targeting Ukraine's strategic infrastructure, with entire energy districts being obliterated without the possibility of switching them to the backup mode. Russian narratives [interpret](#) the attacks on civilian energy and other infrastructure, even amid the so-called peace process, as 'a measure to systematically destroy Ukraine's military-industrial potential. The goal is to push the opponent into making political 'decisions'.
- **The so-called 'new historical regions', the occupied territories of Ukraine:** Narratives are continually being promoted about the normalisation of the occupation of Ukrainian territories. Russian [propaganda](#) regularly highlights events such as the Day of Reunification with New Regions, integration, and reconstruction, also portraying the occupation as normalised, a 'domestic' reality of Russia, and a stable condition.
- **Discrediting Ukraine's political leadership:** A systematic image is being shaped of Ukraine's President and the government as actors allegedly 'destroying statehood and democracy' in Ukraine. Narratives abound about the supposed isolation of Ukrainian leadership in the West, while Ukrainian institutions are '[despised](#)' by their partners. Russian narratives delegitimise Ukrainian authorities both among Russia's population and allies, reinforcing the idea of a 'failed state'. Actions by the Ukrainian government are [interpreted](#) as symptoms of a 'governance crisis' or 'diplomatic failure', creating the impression of internal chaos, loss of control over regions and international defeat.