

**February 2025  
Ukraine Monthly Situation Report**

**CONFLICT DEVELOPMENTS**

- **The Russian army continues to advance in the Donetsk province, with the Pokrovsk direction remaining the most dangerous area of the front. At the same time, the Ukrainian Defence Forces (FDU) are containing the Russian offensive, having recaptured several strategically important settlements and communication routes in February.** According to the Ukrainian government, the total losses incurred by the Russian Federation (Russia) amount to approximately [875.000](#) soldiers as of February 2025. The Russian army sustained 36.000 casualties in February alone.
- **The Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (AFRF) continue launching strikes on Ukrainian settlements and energy infrastructure, using cruise missiles, aerial bombs, and kamikaze drones. For example, on the night of 23 February (the Soviet and, therefore, Russian Army Day) the AFRF launched a [record](#) number of drones (267) on Ukraine, the highest number since 24 February as well as three ballistic missiles.** In February the cities of [Kyiv](#), [Zaporizhzhia](#), [Kherson](#), [Sumy](#), [Hlukhiv](#), [Mykolayiv](#), [Poltava](#), [Kharkiv](#), [Balakliya](#), [Huliaypole](#), [Odesa](#), [Kupyansk](#), [Izyum](#), [Kryvyi Rih](#), [Kramatorsk](#), [Sloviansk](#), [Kostyantynivka](#), [Pokrovsk](#), [Marhanets](#) and other settlements were subject to air strikes. **On 14 February, a Russian unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) hit [a sarcophagus](#) covering nuclear reactor number 4 of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant (CNPP), jeopardising the entire plant, whose destruction could lead to a nuclear disaster.**
- The FDU continues to launch strikes on Russian oil industry facilities, military staff, depots, and other facilities located on Russian territory and in the occupied territories of Ukraine. Technological solutions have also been found that help resist Russian-guided aerial bombs. The Ukrainian army has learned how to shoot them down or blow them off course. For months on end, these bombs have been Russia's most powerful and effective weapon. Also, in February at least one Russian fighter jet SU-25 was [shot down](#).
- In February 2025, a wave of attacks, targeting military personnel, took place. For example, employees of recruitment centres were attacked. On 1 February, in the city of Pyryatyn, a serviceman was shot, while in Rivne an explosion occurred in a local recruitment centre. Also, employees of recruitment centres in the Rivne and Kharkiv provinces were attacked. On 15 February, a group of servicemen were attacked in Mykolayiv, killing one and injuring a further 8 people. The female assassin was killed. Unbeknownst to her, she played the role of a kamikaze for the Russian secret services. Recruiting Ukrainians (in particular, teens) and having them carry out terror attacks against the military are new tactics deployed by Russian secret services. They have switched from recruiting people to setting fire to vehicles belonging to the military.
- **On 5 February, a massive swap of prisoners of war (PoWs) took place between Ukraine and Russia, resulting in the release of 150 Ukrainian servicemen.** On 14 February, the bodies of 757 fallen Ukrainian soldiers were [repatriated](#) to Ukraine. On 15 February, 8 children, who had previously been held in the occupied territories of Ukraine and Russia, [returned](#) to Ukraine. More footage of Ukrainian PoWs being executed by Russian soldiers were released. The Ukrainian government lodged another formal complaint against these systematic war crimes committed by Russia.

- **Ukraine is launching a joint enterprise with the Norwegian company [Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace](#) which produces the famous air defence systems NASAMS.** The enterprise will start its operations in the coming months and is supposed to blend Norwegian technologies with Ukrainian innovations that have been developed during the war. After the war ends, the enterprise will become part of a global network of weapons supply of air defence systems and missiles for them.

## HUMANITARIAN DIMENSIONS

- **According to official information shared by juvenile prosecutors,** over 2,370 Ukrainian children [have been affected](#) by Russia's full-fledged invasion. As of 28 February, 599 children were killed with over 1,771 having been wounded with different degrees of severity. 157,916 war crimes and crimes of aggression have been registered as well as 21,028 crimes against Ukraine's national security. Ukraine's National Police has [revealed](#) 108 locations (arranged by the Russian military) of illegal detention of Ukrainians in the occupied and de-occupied territories of Ukraine. 143.000 crimes and 3.700 suspected war-related crimes have been registered. Almost 63.000 people (both civilians and servicemen) are [considered](#) missing in Ukraine.
- **Ukraine continues to work on returning the bodies of its fallen soldiers and having its citizens released.** Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion Ukraine has [conducted](#) 75 procedures of repatriation, having brought back the bodies of 7,017 fallen Ukrainian fallen soldiers. Also, 61 swaps of PoWs have taken place, resulting in the release of 4,131 Ukrainian citizens.
- **Russian aggression is inflicting irreparable damage on Ukraine's cultural heritage.** The total number of historical heritage sites damaged in Ukraine [stands at](#) 1,390. At the same time, 2,205 facilities of cultural infrastructure have suffered losses, with 409 of them (18,7%) being completely destroyed. 112 Ukrainian journalists have been kept in Russian captivity. 30 of them are still being [detained](#). As of February 2025, 21 Ukrainian musicians were being held in Russian captivity, among them laureates of international contests, composers, conductors, and talented vocalists. The number of victims of Russian aggression continues to grow. As of 26 February, 183 Ukrainian artists, figures from the field of culture, and 98 employees from the media sector [were killed](#). 26 buildings located in the centre of Odesa and under the protection of UNESCO were [damaged](#) following a Russian ballistic attack on the evening of 31st January.
- **Russia is destroying Ukraine's critical infrastructure and illegally exploiting its resources.** As of early February 2025, 1,982 healthcare facilities [were damaged](#) and another 301 completely destroyed in the wake of Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine. The damage caused by Russian poachers to Ukraine's fishery due to illegal fishing in the Sea of Azov [amounts](#) to over 4,1 billion UAH.
- **Since the beginning of the full-scale war Ukraine has [documented](#) over 7.500 environmental crimes committed by Russia.** According to preliminary estimates, the damage caused to the environment has reached some 82 billion EUR. The emission of greenhouse gases caused by hostilities [increased](#) by 30% in 2024. The climate toll of the Russian invasion has reached 230 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> since 24 February 2022. In temporarily occupied Crimea and Sevastopol over 1,300 tons of sand and soil contaminated by oil products have been [gathered](#) following accidents involving tankers in the Kerch Strait. The damage caused by oil products spillage in the Black Sea is estimated at 14 billion USD.
- **Russia continues to jeopardise Ukraine's nuclear security.** On 14 February, a Russian UAV [hit](#) a secure new sarcophagus of the nuclear reactor number 4 of the CNPP. As a result of the hit and the

ensuing fire, the outer shell of the sarcophagus and the equipment stored in the garage for operation cranes were damaged.

- **Russia carries on with the policy of militarising children residing in the occupied territories of Ukraine, by resorting to coercion and propaganda.** In the Luhansk province, the Russian occupants are [exploiting](#) children in their propaganda events, engaging them in rallies glorifying the Russian army and imposing a distorted view of history on them with the purpose of militarising them and destroying the Ukrainian identity. The Russian occupiers [organised](#) an excursion for senior school-children to a test range located in Ukraine's temporarily occupied territories, where Russian UAV operators make drills. One of the main [methods of influence](#) used by the occupiers is changing the content of education curriculums as well as engaging children in creative propaganda contests.
- **The Russian occupational administration in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine is [pursuing](#) the policy of assimilation of local populations.** One of the methods of this policy is forcibly bringing in people from backward Russian regions who have no opportunity to be employed there. For example, in the occupied province of Luhansk, the so-called 'Ministry of Labour and Social Policy' has claimed that it cooperates with Russian regions that have surplus labour. According to this 'Ministry', contracts have been signed with the Republics of Altai, Dagestan, Ingushetia, Kalmykia, North Ossetia-Alania, and Chechnya.

## INFORMATION WARFARE DIMENSIONS

- **On negotiations and a 'peace' exclusively on Russian conditions.** In response to the calls for peace, Russia is spreading messages about conditions of and obstacles to the relevant dialogue in early February. For example, Russian officials [asserted](#) their readiness for negotiations, while also claiming that they were not in a hurry to do so and that things were going according to plan. On 10 February, after a call between Putin and Trump, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that it was the US President's team who expressed interest in initiating a dialogue between Washington and Moscow and that Russia was ready for it, but only as an equal partner and on mutually acceptable terms. Deputy head of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Ryabkov, [said](#) that Moscow was not ready to engage in the language of ultimatums and outrageous claims. Nor would Russia tolerate any attempts to make it believe that Moscow was granted a big favour in exchange for demands that were deemed inexecutable in advance.
- Russian official propaganda [claims](#) that Russia 'has not only a strategic but also a historical vision of a long will' unlike the leaders of the Western world.
- At the same time, in parallel to Russia's readiness to hold negotiations, Moscow is spreading [narratives](#) in its official propaganda outlets that 'hostilities will come to an end as soon as Russia sees a real readiness on the part of the West to give up on Ukraine'. The war will end after 'the West acknowledges that it has lost Ukraine'. Also, in late February the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov, [said](#) that a frozen front line was not possible just as the deployment of European peace forces in Ukraine was not possible either. He added that 'the parts of territory left to Ukraine will also have to be liberated from racist laws'.
- **Working with the USA on 'restoring relations'.** Russian official discourse is full of narratives about restoring relations with the Trump administration – 'a resolution on Ukraine without Russophobia is the [first step](#) towards restoring relations between Russia and the US'. Putin [referred](#) to Trump's proposal on reducing the military expenditures of Russia and the US as 'nice'. Russian media [positively](#)

assessed a proposal made by the US regarding 'rare-earth elements' and the provision of technology by the US for Russia.

- **'Putin has won the war'. 'Europe has suffered defeat' and the dominance of anti-European statements.** Following the call between Trump and Putin on 12 February, Russian propaganda sources continued to [circulate](#) the narrative about 'Putin having won the war'. Russian media also claim that 'strength lies in strength'. According to them, it is through 'strength' that President Putin is conducting negotiations with President Trump, and it is through 'strength' that Russia is liberating its so-called historical territories with 'fire and steel'. Another narrative has it that 'God is surely on Russia's side'. Anti-European messages are also being [spread](#), referring to Europe as 'bloodthirsty' and 'powerless', claiming that 'Brussels has to admit its defeat' and that 'EU countries have nothing to do with the negotiations between the US and Russia' (a narrative promoted by Kremlin Spokesman, Dmitry Pushkov). According to yet another narrative, Europe has '[cheated](#)' Russia during the process of implementing the Minsk agreements, which is why Russia deems all peacemaking efforts undertaken by Europe as unnecessary, refusing to consider the concept of Europe 'from Lisbon to Vladivostok'.
- On the whole, Russian internal propaganda's agenda abounds in [messages](#) about 'the military confrontation with NATO, which has positioned itself as the strongest alliance of modern time', has been won by Russia fair and square.
- **Discrediting Ukrainian political leadership. 'Our help was not free of charge'.** Zelenskyy's statement about access for the US to Ukraine's rare-earth elements is being castigated. The Russian media [promote](#) the narrative of 'Trump making Ukraine part of the USA', of 'the USA protecting its new assets from Russia' and of Ukrainian political leadership '[selling](#) Ukraine'. The controversial rhetoric of President Trump vis-à-vis President Zelenskyy is described in detail. Russian media conclude that 'in a personal meeting between Trump and Putin the two presidents will have something to laugh about'. Against the backdrop of 'the agreed meeting between Putin and Trump' a narrative is being circulated about 'Ukraine having to get itself prepared for surrender' ([Dmitry Medvedev](#)).
- Traditional propaganda messages are being spread regarding the so-called [illegitimacy](#) of the Ukrainian President.
- **'The new world order'.** The Russian media is analysing the outcome of the start of negotiations between the US and Russia, claiming that it would mean victory for the latter and bode ill for Europe in all possible ways. Moscow insists on Russia's agency. According to Russian [narratives](#), Trump's motivation regarding the negotiations lies in Russia being arguably a strong country that has demonstrated phenomenal survival skills, having won and ridden itself of Europe.
- **Regarding Putin's support and the so-called 'special military operation'.** Russian media are sharing the [data](#) from state-commissioned surveys regarding the support of the so-called 'special military operation' (SMO) by Russian society. For example, in February the survey showed that the vast majority of Russians ([67%](#)) were inclined to somewhat support the SMO, with 65% believing that this operation is going smoothly for the Russian army. According to the [data](#) provided by official Russian sociologists ([Russian Public Opinion Research Center](#)), the majority of Russians (73%) refer to the combatants of the SMO as heroes on a par with veterans of the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945). Also, Dmitry [Peskov](#) said that [79,8%](#) of Russians trust Vladimir Putin.
- **The so-called 'integration' of Ukraine's temporarily occupied territories in Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson provinces.** Russian official propaganda continues to spread [narratives](#), claiming that 'according to neither confirmed nor refuted data', the US will pressure Ukraine into 'recognising Russian territorial gains'. Also, Moscow claims that Ukraine was promised membership in the

EU and that it would happen in five years, as well as continuous US military and financial support. At the same time, a Russian ambassador-at-large [said](#) that Russian territories are not subject to discussion 'until constitutional territories of Russia are liberated and Ukraine ceased to pose a threat to Russia'. Russia insists that the EU's 16th package of sanctions is not [capable](#) of preventing the so-called 'integration' of Crimea, the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia provinces into the social and economic space of Russia as it has already happened.

- **Discrediting the Ukrainian army and declaring the might of its Russian counterpart.** Russian media have not grown tired of spreading [narratives](#) about 'heroic efforts' aimed at helping the population living in the Kursk oblast even though the Armed Forces of Ukraine are controlling the territory where they are residing.