



Briefing Notes Summary

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

Ukraine – July to December 2022

01 January 2023

04 July 2022

Heavy fighting in Donbass, Ukrainian withdrawal from Lysychansk

Attacks by Russian forces in the Donbass and other contested areas of Ukraine continue to massively affect civilians. A Russian missile attack on a shopping centre in the city of Kremenchuk in Poltava Oblast killed at least 19 people and injured 66 others on 27.06.22, according to authorities. Air strikes on residential areas in the Odessa region killed at least 21 people on 01.07.22, according to media reports. In the eastern Ukrainian city of Slovyansk, six people were reported killed and 15 injured after a missile attack on 03.07.22, according to local authorities. Meanwhile, Ukrainian forces announced their withdrawal from the heavily contested city of Lysychansk in the Luhansk region. On 03.07.22, Russian news agencies reported the occupation of the entire Luhansk region. The Russian side holds the view that this is the territory of the self-proclaimed Luhansk People's Republic, which is recognised by Russia. According to media reports, an authority for issuing Russian passports has been set up in the city of Luhansk, and residents of the region are no longer required to travel to the Russian Federation to obtain Russian citizenship. There are also reports that Russian citizenship can be applied for with the de facto administrative authorities installed there by Russia in the Russian-occupied regions Zaporizhzhya and Kherson. According to the Ukrainian General Staff, Russian forces continue to advance towards the cities of Slavyansk and Kramatorsk in Donetsk Oblast following military gains in Luhansk Oblast. On the southern front line in the Kherson region occupied by Russian forces, Ukraine is preparing a counter-offensive, according to media reports. A request by the Russian President's press spokesman to Ukraine on 03.07.22 to resume peace negotiations and accept Russian peace terms was rejected the same day by a representative of the Ukrainian Presidential Office.

11 July 2022

Call for evacuation of civilian population, announcement of Ukrainian counter-offensive

On 08.07.22, in the context the announcement of a counter-offensive by Ukrainian forces in the Russian-occupied parts of southern Ukraine, the civilian population in the Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions was called upon to flee their homes immediately. If necessary, they should leave in the direction of the Russian-annexed Crimean peninsula. According to information from the Ukrainian Defence Minister on 10.07.22, President Selenskyj had ordered the recapture of the coastal areas occupied by Russian forces. The Ukrainian regional military administration of the Zaporizhzhya region said that 80% of the civilian population in the contested parts of the region had already left their homes; 87 settlements were currently without electricity. Meanwhile, warfare in the form of attacks on civilian infrastructure, especially near the military frontline, continue. On 08.07.22, a rocket hit a multi-storey residential building killing 18 people in the eastern Ukrainian town of Chasiv Yar, according to media reports. Following the incident, President Selenskyj renewed the announcement that members of the Russian armed forces would be punished for crimes against civilians. On 07.07.22, several buildings of the Kharkiv Pedagogical University were destroyed in missile attacks on the city of Kharkiv, according to Ukrainian sources.

According to current information from the Ukrainian Ministry of Education, more than 2,100 educational institutions had been damaged or destroyed in the course of the war until the beginning of July. According to WHO data, 369 cases of attacks on medical facilities have been documented since the beginning of the Russian military invasion on 24.02.22. On 11.07.22, the Ukrainian General Staff reported large-scale Russian artillery fire on localities in the Donetsk and Kharkiv regions. According to media reports, explosions and fires were reported in the cities of Donetsk and Luhansk that are controlled by pro-Russian forces. In response to public criticism, the Ukrainian military leadership revoked an order stipulating that conscripts are not allowed to leave their places of residence without permission from the local military authorities, on 06.07.22 - only one day after it was issued. According to the Ukrainian Ministry of the Interior, more than three million conscripts are currently registered at registration and conscription offices outside their places of residence. In Ukraine, martial law and general mobilisation are currently in force until the end of August 2022; men between the ages of 18 and 60 are subject to a general ban on leaving the country.

18 July 2022

War and humanitarian situation

The war in Ukraine continues to massively affect the civilian population. According to media reports, Russian forces are currently mainly attacking by flying air strikes on areas close to the front line. Rocket explosions with civilian casualties and deaths were reported from the cities of Kharkiv, Dnipro, Mykolaiv, Bachmut, Sloviansk, Kramatorsk as well as from the regions of Dnipropetrovsk and Sumy on 17.07. and 18.07.22. However, areas of Ukraine far from the front line suffer continuous direct attacks as well; on 14.07.22, missile strikes in the city of Vinnytsia killed at least 24 people and injured over 200, according to local authorities. According to Ukrainian government figures, over 17,000 civilian and 300 military targets have been attacked in Ukraine since the Russian onslaught began on 24.02.22. Media report the end of the Russian forces' operational pause as fighting in the Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine is stepped up again. The humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate throughout the country, most seriously in the directly contested or occupied areas of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhya in southern and eastern Ukraine. Current UN estimates put the number of people in need of food at around 10.2 million and the number of people in need of water and sanitation at around 13 million. On 17.07.22 President Zelensky announced the dismissal of the Ukrainian Prosecutor General and the head of the domestic intelligence service SBU citing incidents of cooperation between Ukrainian officials and Russian occupation authorities in Ukraine. A total of 651 criminal cases for high treason and collaboration have already been registered against employees of the prosecution and law enforcement agencies. Since the stricter legislation in this field entered into force on 15.03.22, collaboration with institutions of the Russian Federation can be punished with up to 15 years' imprisonment. According to an OSCE report on the human rights situation in Ukraine of 14.07.22, human rights violations committed by the Russian Federation in Ukraine are manifested by the establishment of so-called filtration camps for the civilian population and the tendency to circumvent international obligations for persons taken into custody by extraditing them to the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics in eastern Ukraine. The de facto government of the Donetsk People's Republic announced on 08.07.22 that it was lifting the current moratorium on the death penalty. On 09.06.22, two British and one Moroccan national had been sentenced to death in Donetsk for "mercenary activities"; all convicts had joined the Ukrainian army to support the war effort as volunteers (cf. BN of 13.06.22).

25 July 2022

Development of the situation in Ukraine

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky announced an overhaul of the staff of Ukraine's Security Service of (SBU) and had suspended its director, Ivan Bakanov, from duty already on 17.02.22. According to official statements, Bakanov had not fulfilled his official duties properly. The Prosecutor General of Ukraine, Iryna Wenediktova, was suspended as well. The suspensions were related to a high number of criminal cases against employees of the SBU and the prosecutor's office for treason, which also gave rise to "serious questions" about the leaders, the president said. On 20.07.22, the Ukrainian Interior Ministry announced the dismantling of 45 smuggling networks from Ukraine for men of compulsory military age. In the process, 64 persons were arrested who allegedly enabled people to leave the country by using false documents or in other ways, either on foot, by swimming or by vehicles, for their

own financial benefit. According to media reports, cases of corruption became known in the military recruitment centre of Odessa Oblast. Officials had issued certificates of unfitness for military service against payment of money, enabling the holders to leave the national territory unhindered.

No end to the fighting can currently be expected. Last week, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov declared that the "geographical targets" of Russian military action in Ukraine had expanded due to Western arms deliveries and held out the prospect of occupying further territories in addition to the complete conquest of the areas of the so-called Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics. His country was seeking the overthrow of the Ukrainian government and a change of regime, Lavrov said. On 22.07.22, Human Rights Watch (HRW) published a report on war crimes committed by Russian forces in the occupied southern Ukrainian regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhya, including torture, unlawful detention and forced disappearances of civilians.

01 August 2022

Development of the war effort

The military confrontation between the two states continues to focus on the east and the south of Ukraine. The Russian Federation continued its nationwide missile attacks on the neighbouring country. The missiles hit the region of the capital Kiev and the Kharkiv region, among others. The Ukrainian army staged its largest counter-offensive since the Russian Federation's attack on 24.02.22 in the south. The counter-offensive is specifically aimed at recapturing the strategically important city of Kherson. In view of the fighting there, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky announced the mandatory evacuation of civilians in the Donetsk region organised by the authorities, on 30.07.22. On 31.07.22, the Polish border authorities reported that 5.15 million people had fled from Ukraine to Poland since the beginning of the war. 3.25 million people have returned to Ukraine meanwhile.

08 August 2022

Development of the situation in Ukraine

According to a report by Amnesty International (ai) published on 04.08.22, the Ukrainian armed forces used combat tactics that put civilians at risk by setting up bases and weapons systems in residential areas, and in particular in schools and hospitals. According to the organisation, this is contrary to international humanitarian law. The Ukrainian government denies the use of such tactics and strongly criticises the report. According to Mikhail Polkadok, advisor to the head of the Ukrainian presidential office, ai is thus participating in a "campaign of disinformation and propaganda". In the Zaporizhzhya region, shelling of Energodar, where the Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant is located, continues. According to the Ukrainian public nuclear power plant operator Energoatom, three impacts were recorded near one of the power plant units, which also houses a nuclear reactor. Both sides continue to accuse each other of creating a situation of nuclear hazard with their fighting. In Kherson oblast, fighting is taking place in the area of the village of Blagodatnoye near the motorway to Mykolaiv. In Donetsk oblast, Russian forces are trying to advance in the areas of Sloviansk and Bakhmut, Avdeevka and Peski.

15 August 2022

Development of the war effort

Fighting around the Donetsk region in eastern Ukraine continues and, according to media reports, is currently concentrated mostly on the city of Bachmut and its surroundings. On 14.08.22, numerous Russian air strikes were reported along the front lines, including near Mykolaiv, Kharkiv and Zaporizhzhya. The ongoing warfare in the area of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, which is occupied by Russian forces, triggered international concern about the safety of the nuclear facility; previously, the parties to the conflict had blamed each other for acts of aggression against the plant (cf. BN of 08.08.22). In a joint statement on 14.08.22, 42 states and the EU called on the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw its forces from the site of the power plant. The town of Nikopol, located near the power plant, was shelled several times by Russian missiles between 12.08. and 15.08.22, according to Ukrainian sources. Local authorities say that residential buildings were damaged, electricity and gas supply was interrupted, and the civilian population was asked not to leave their homes. President Zelensky submitted bills to extend the current martial law and general mobilisation for another 90 days to the Ukrainian parliament on 12.08.22. Approval

of both bills is expected; most recently, the parliament had confirmed the extension of martial law and general mobilisation on 22.05.22 until 23.08.22.

22 August 2022

Civilian deaths after air strikes on Kharkiv and the Donetsk region

The war in Ukraine has intensified, especially in the northeastern city of Kharkiv. According to local authorities, at least 21 people were killed by Russian missile attacks on civilian buildings in Kharkiv on 17.08. and 18.08.22, another 42 people were injured. An all-day curfew is to be imposed in Kharkiv on 24.08.22, Ukrainian Independence Day. According to President Zelensky, Russian attacks are expected to intensify on the occasion of Ukrainian Independence Day. In the capital Kiev, public gatherings between 22.08. and 25.08.22 were banned due to the dangerous situation. In the Donetsk region, at least five civilians were killed in air strikes on 18.08.22, according to the local Ukrainian military administration and two more people were killed by missile strikes on 21.08.22. Ukrainian authorities estimate the total number of civilians killed in the Donetsk region since the start of the Russian attack on 24.02.22 to be at least 757 and the number of injured at least 1,943. According to the Ukrainian Military General Staff, Russian ground attacks were reported on the front lines of Mykolayiv and Donetsk regions on 21.08.22. The security situation at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant in southern Ukraine, which has been captured by Russian forces, remains critical, according to media reports. On 18.08.22, President Zelensky called on the UN to find a solution to demilitarise the plant and ensure its security. The parties to the conflict report continued military action on the territory of the nuclear power plant. Meanwhile, on 15.08.22, the Ukrainian parliament confirmed the bills submitted by President Zelensky to extend martial law and general mobilisation for another 90 days after 23.08.22 (cf. BN of 15.08.22). According to Ukrainian authorities and human rights organisations, there are still numerous cases of forced recruitment by the de facto authorities in the areas of the Donbass controlled by Russia and the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics.

29 August 2022

War events: Current developments

On 24.08.22, a missile attack by Russian forces on the railway station building in the village of Chaplyne in the Dnipropetrovsk region killed 25 people and injured 31, according to Ukrainian data. According to the Ukrainian General Staff, the war in Donetsk region continues to focus on Russian military advances and air strikes, including in the direction of the cities of Bachmut, Slowyansk and Kramatorsk; numerous Russian artillery attacks continue to be reported from the contested areas of Mykolaiv, Zaporizhzhya, Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk. According to the administration of the western Ukrainian region of Rivne, the town of Sarny was hit by several rockets on 28.08.22, damaging 30 residential buildings and a hospital. The administration of Mykolaiv Oblast reported that about 10,000 civilian buildings have been destroyed by attacks by Russian forces, and as of 27.08.22, 6,355 households in the Oblast have been cut off from the gas supply. On 26.08.22, the Ukrainian Prosecutor General's Office announced that 2,328 educational institutions had been damaged across Ukraine since the outbreak of war, of which 289 had been completely destroyed. In the cities of Kherson, Melitopol and Enerhodar, occupied by Russian forces, as well as other localities in the Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions, a temporary interruption of the electricity and water supply was reported on 25.08.22. The Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant operator said that the power plant, located in Enerhodar, was also briefly cut off from the power supply. According to media reports on 29.08.22, an inspection team from the International Atomic Energy Agency will be sent to the nuclear power plant affected by the war in the near future.

Report on filtration facilities

According to a report published by researchers at the US Yale University on 25.08.22, 21 so-called filtration facilities in and around the Donetsk region have been identified as being used by Russia or the de facto authorities of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic for the registration, detention and interrogation of Ukrainian civilians and military prisoners of war. There are also indications of other such facilities. The filtration system includes extrajudicial detention without contact with the outside world, overcrowded cells, insufficient food, lack of access to sanitary facilities or, in some cases, physical assault.

05 September 2022

Development of the war effort, more in internally displaced persons

According to media reports and Ukrainian government information, Ukrainian armed forces have launched counter attacks in the Russian-occupied Kherson region. The government informed that, among others, the village of Vysokopyllyia in the north of the region was recaptured on 04.09.2022. The fighting continues to be most intensive in the regions of Mykolaiv, Kherson, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhya and Kharkiv; according to Ukrainian military sources, Russian ground advances in the Donetsk region have been repulsed. At least two people were injured in air strikes on the city of Kharkiv on the evening of 04.09.22, local authorities said.

According to a recent IOM data survey, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is currently estimated at around 6.9 million, which represents about 16 % of the total population of Ukraine. Since July, the number of internally displaced persons has increased by around 330,000, most of whom have fled the areas of eastern and southern Ukraine that were particularly affected by the war. According to the data collected, almost half of the internally displaced persons of working age are currently not receiving any income. In addition, 30 % of the internally displaced persons surveyed who are staying in rural areas have no access to medical care. With the approach of the cold season the living conditions of many IDPs is further aggravated, also because the temporary shelters are not sufficiently winterproof. According to UN data of 29.08.22, at least 5,663 civilians have been killed and at least 8,055 injured since the beginning of the Russian attack on 24.02.22, and 268 civilian deaths have been documented in the period from 01.08 to 29.08.22. A report published on 01.09.22 by the human rights organisation Human Rights Watch (HRW) describes as violations of the law of war the cases of Ukrainian nationals allegedly forcibly taken to the Russian Federation or to the areas of eastern Ukraine under Russia's control, that it has documented. These are civilians from the formerly embattled city of Mariupol as well as from the Kharkiv region, who have also been subjected to a system of compulsory screening known as filtration (cf. BN of 29.08.22).

12 September 2022

Development of the war effort

Consistent media reports and official Ukrainian statements mention successful counter-offensives by the Ukrainian armed forces east and north of the city of Kharkiv in areas previously occupied by Russian forces. The war caused power failures in large parts of eastern Ukraine on 11.09.22. According to the Ukrainian President's Office, electricity and water supplies had been largely restored in the Kharkiv region on 12.09.22. Ukraine accused Russia of causing the outages by targeting critical infrastructure. The Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, occupied by Russian forces and directly affected by the war, was completely shut down on 11.09.22, according to the operator. Russian air strikes in the Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk regions on 11.09.22 killed several people, local authorities said; in the heavily contested Donetsk region, at least ten people were killed on 10.09.22, including at least four in the village of Pokrovsk, according to the regional administration.

Postponement or possible abolition of compulsory military registration for women

According to Ukrainian media reports, the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence issued a decree on 06.09.22 postponing the introduction of compulsory military registration for women belonging to certain occupational groups. Such registration had previously been planned for 01.10.22 and has now been delayed by one year to 01.10.23. Thus, women will not be affected by exit restrictions including after 01.10.22. In addition, a draft law is currently in preparation in the Ukrainian parliament that will provide for voluntary registration for women instead of compulsory military registration as originally envisaged. Men between the ages of 18 and 60 continue to be subject to a general ban on leaving the country.

19 September 2022

Development of the war, corpses found in Izyum

According to media reports, most of Kharkiv oblast has been recaptured by Ukrainian forces during the ongoing Ukrainian counter-offensive. Furthermore, the think tank Institute for the Study of War as of 17.09.22 reports territorial gains east of the strategically important Oskil River. Meanwhile, according to Ukrainian sources, several of the most recently recaptured towns are under massive Russian artillery fire, including Kupiansk, Chuhuiv and

Izyum, with several civilians killed and residential and commercial buildings destroyed. The British Ministry of Defence informed that Russian attacks on civilian targets have increased significantly across the country since 11.09.22. On 15.09.22, more than 440 graves were discovered in a wooded area near the town of Izyum. According to Ukrainian government sources, some of the mostly civilian victims died from artillery fire and air strikes; others had been shot or starved to death. In some cases, there were signs of the use of torture; the UN Human Rights Office announced that it would send an observation team to the region. Ukrainian authorities reported that during the recapture they found ten facilities where torture, including electrocution, had taken place, in addition to Izyum also in the towns of Vovchansk and Balakliya.

Criminal prosecution for collaboration

According to a report by the independent Russian news portal Meduza, since the beginning of the war, 1,325 criminal proceedings have been initiated by the Ukrainian authorities for collaboration with Russia or the respective Russian-appointed occupation administration, and in 75 cases there have been convictions so far. In most cases, bans on holding public office were imposed instead of prison sentences, on average for a period of ten years. Since the law was amended in March 2022, various forms of cooperation with a state classified as an aggressor are punishable, including economic exchange with the state in question, the voluntary assumption of a post in authorities created by the state in the occupied territory and the dissemination of propaganda favourable to the aggressor in educational institutions. The range of punishment often extends to prison sentences of several years.

26 September 2022

Development of warfare

In the areas of the Donbass controlled by pro-Russian separatists, i.e., "DNR" and the "LNR", as well as in the oblasts of Kherson and Zaporizhzhya, referendums on the accession of these areas to the Russian Federation have been taking place since 23.09.22 until probably 27.09.22 inclusive. The referendums are contrary to the Ukrainian legal order. The press spokesperson of the Russian president, Dmitrij Peskov, announced the regions' speedy integration after the expected positive result. In a prisoner exchange on 22.09.22, 55 members of the Armed Forces of Russia, the "DNR" and the "LNR", as well as the former head of the now banned pro-Russian party "Opposition Platform - for Life" Viktor Medvedčuk were exchanged for 215 members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. This is the largest exchange of prisoners since the beginning of hostilities on 24.02.22. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian counter-offensive continues. In Donetsk oblast, the action is mainly around Bakhmut, which continues to be attacked by Russian forces. Ukrainian forces are storming the town of Liman, which was captured by Russian troops in May. Further north, the offensive against the Russian defence line on the left bank of the Oskil continues. If the Ukrainian army captures Liman and gains a foothold on the left bank of the Oskil, this will clear the route for advances to Luhansk oblast. Against the background of the partial mobilisation currently taking place in Russia, Oleksij Arestowytsh, advisor to the head of the Ukrainian president's office, stated that further mobilisation measures in Ukraine are not ruled out, which would then particularly affect (male) students. Already since 14.09.22, students studying at foreign universities have been banned from leaving Ukraine.

10 October 2022

Explosion on the bridge over Kerch Strait

According to official information from Russia's National Anti-Terrorism Committee, a truck exploded on the bridge linking Crimea to the Russian mainland over the Kerch Strait in the early hours of 08.10.22, causing seven fuel tanks of a railway train to catch fire and explode. Media reports state that two spans of the bridge collapsed as a result. According to the Russian investigative authority, three people died. Traffic access to the bridge is currently restricted. No reliable information is available at present on the question as to whether the incident involved an accident or a targeted attack. Moscow is officially accusing the Ukrainian secret service of being responsible for the explosion. This has yet to be confirmed by the Ukrainian side. Mykhailo Podolyak, advisor to the head of the Ukrainian president's office, has welcomed the incident, stating that everything that is unlawful must be destroyed. Igor Smelyansky, head of the Ukrainian postal service, has announced the issue of a new stamp depicting the damaged bridge. On the peninsula itself the incident initially sparked great uncertainty about possible shortfalls in supplies. Representatives of Russian regional authorities initially confirmed that restrictions would be introduced

on the sale of certain goods, only to state shortly afterwards that no such restrictions would be imposed after all and that there were sufficient supplies of food and fuel on the peninsula.

17 October 2022

Rocket attacks on energy infrastructure throughout the country

According to media reports, Russian rocket attacks on numerous towns and cities, including the capital, Kiev, inflicted large-scale damage on the energy infrastructure on 10.10.22. Temporary blackouts and water supply failures were reported from various towns and cities, including Kiev, Kharkiv and Lviv. At least 19 people died, according to official figures. The Ukrainian general staff stated that more than 80 rockets were fired at various targets in Ukraine. On 11.10.22 the Ukrainian energy ministry announced that around 30 % of the country's energy infrastructure had been hit in the attacks. The government called on the public to save energy in order to avoid overloading the power grid. Numerous reports in the media regard the attacks as Russian retaliation for the explosion which took place on 08.10.22 on the bridge linking Crimea to mainland Russia which was built by Russia after it annexed Crimea in 2014 (cf. BN of 10.10.22). Rocket attacks on more than 40 towns and cities were again reported by Ukraine on 13.10.22. According to information from local authorities, drone attacks and detonations occurred on the morning of 17.10.22 in cities including the capital, Kiev, Dnipro and Mykolaiv, and air-raid alarms sounded in a number of regions of Ukraine.

Humanitarian situation

In a press announcement published on 14.10.22 the WHO warns of a further worsening of the humanitarian situation in Ukraine in view of the approaching winter. To date, the WHO has recorded 620 attacks on medical facilities since the beginning of the Russian invasion. As a result of the latest intensification of the war, involving the destruction of parts of the healthcare and energy infrastructure, the WHO warns that the situation could deteriorate to a dangerous extent, in particular for vulnerable people. According to information from the Ukrainian government, more than 800,000 homes have been damaged or destroyed, leaving large numbers of people without adequate protection in the cold season. It is additionally feared that the latest escalation in the war, combined with the approaching winter, may lead to a further increase in internally displaced people and also to renewed large-scale migration flows into Ukraine's neighbouring countries.

24 October 2022

Martial law declared in occupied territories, further attacks on energy infrastructure

Martial law was declared by decree of Russian president Vladimir Putin on 19.10.22 in the Ukrainian territories of Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk and Luhansk, which have been formally annexed by Russia and are under Russian control. Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy has called on men resident in these regions to flee to the territories controlled by Ukraine, in order to avoid possible conscription into the Russian armed forces. According to information from the Ukrainian government, 40 % of Ukraine's infrastructure is now damaged, in the wake of the recent Russian attacks throughout the country. On 20.10.22 temporary power cuts were reported all over the country and the population was called on to use as little electricity as possible between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. Following further attacks on the Ukrainian energy infrastructure on 22.10.22, according to official information 1.5 million people were temporarily cut off from the power supply, including in the cities of Lutsk and Khmelnytskyi in western Ukraine. On 22.10.22 the Ukrainian prime minister, Denys Shmyhal, warned of possible new migration flows in the face of the current energy supply situation. On the evening of 23.10.22 president Zelenskyy announced that the power supply had been restored in the regions affected by the attacks on 22.10.22.

General military and humanitarian situation

According to reports in the media, Ukrainian military advances are concentrated in the direction of the city of Kherson. The Ukrainian general staff reported on 21.10.22 that 2,000 Russian conscripts had arrived in the Kherson region as reinforcements. The regional administration installed by Russia announced its withdrawal from the city and called on the population to leave the city at once, stating that 25,000 people had already been evacuated on 22.10.22. Sustained Russian attacks were reported in the Donetsk region, the targets including the towns of Bachmut and Soledar. According to Ukrainian sources, 22 torture chambers have been discovered in the recaptured

parts of the Kharkiv region, while in the city of Lyman in the Donetsk region the exhumation of a mass grave has been completed in which the bodies of 111 killed civilians were found.

31 October 2022

Attacks on energy infrastructure continue

On the morning of 31.10.22 the authorities in various parts of the country reported renewed attacks on energy supply facilities, including in the cities of Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Kryvyi Rih, Svitlovodsk and in the Cherkasy and Poltava regions. The local authorities in the capital, Kiev, reported a partial failure of the water and electricity supply as a result of a number of detonations. The Ukrainian president's office announced that further emergency power cuts are to be imposed, following the shelling of critical infrastructure. Power failures, in some cases on a large scale, have been prevalent in recent weeks as a result of war-related events (cf. BN of 24.10.22). President Zelenskyy stated on 29.10.22 that around four million people throughout Ukraine were affected by power restrictions, in particular in the cities of Kiev and Kharkiv and the surrounding areas.

General military and humanitarian situation

On 29.10.22 the Russian Federation announced its decision to suspend the agreement with Ukraine to enable Ukrainian grain exports, which was brokered by the UN and Türkiye in July 2022. The measure was justified as a response to alleged Ukrainian attacks on Russia's Black Sea fleet. According to information from the Ukrainian authorities, five civilians were killed on 29.10.22 against the backdrop of continuing fighting along the front line in the Donetsk region, in addition to which five dead bodies have been discovered. In all, the authorities report that at least 1,125 people have been killed and 2,499 injured since the beginning of the Russian attack in the Donetsk region. Information released by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on 24.10.22 puts the death toll throughout Ukraine since 24.02.22 at 6,374 at least and the number of civilians injured at 9,776.

07 November 2022

Humanitarian situation; war events and migration flows

According to reports in the media, the power supply situation, which has been highly strained for many weeks as a result of the war, remains critical. The mayor of the capital, Kiev, has stated that a complete collapse of the power, heating and water supply in the city cannot be ruled out, calling on Kiev's civilian population to stock up accordingly or to leave the city temporarily, should such an emergency occur. He added that plans to set up around 1,000 heat rooms in Kiev are in progress. According to president Zelenskyy, more than 4.5 million households were cut off from the power grid on the evening of 06.11.22, for the most part in the city of Kiev and the surrounding area. It has been reported in the media that warnings of possible interruptions in the supply of medicines due to power cuts have been displayed in pharmacies. According to information from the administrative authorities installed by Russia, the power and water supply was also down in the embattled Kherson region, including the regional capital of the same name, on 06.11.22. On 04.11.22 the Russian defence ministry announced that some 5,000 people had left their homes in the Kherson region in the preceding days, following the resumption of evacuation measures. Current UNHCR information puts the number of people who have fled the country because of the war at over 14 million and the number of internally displaced people in the Ukraine at around 6.24 million. Ongoing hostilities and rocket attacks continued to be reported from numerous towns and villages on 06.11. and 07.11.22, particularly along the front line. According to information from the Ukrainian general staff, around 30 towns and villages were attacked in the areas of Mykolaiv, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, Luhansk and Sumy.

15 November 2022

Russian withdrawal from Kherson, planned extension of martial law

Following the withdrawal of Russian troops from parts of the embattled territory of Kherson, Ukrainian forces have advanced to the west bank of the Dnipro river and retaken the regional capital of Kherson. The Russian defence ministry stated on 11.11.22 that it had completed the withdrawal of its forces to the east bank of the Dnipro, which it had announced on 09.11.22. According to Ukrainian sources, numerous items of civilian infrastructure were destroyed in the course of the Russian withdrawal and the power supply is largely inoperative, in addition to which

ammunition and mines which have been left behind by the Russians pose a danger to the civilian population. Some 2,000 mines were reportedly defused in the first few days after the Russian troops' withdrawal. President Zelenskyy has stated that around 170,000 square kilometres of Ukraine territory are currently mined as a result of the war and that it could take decades to clear all the mines. The planned renewed extension of martial law, which currently applies until 21.11.22, and a further extension of the general mobilisation by 90 days until 19.02.23 were announced on president Zelenskyy's initiative on 08.11.22. The corresponding bills can enter into force at short notice following parliamentary approval. According to a statement from the Ukrainian defence ministry on 09.11.22, no additional mobilisation measures are planned at present, as adequate reserves are available. Martial law and the general mobilisation were last extended in August 2022 (cf. BN of 22.08.22). According to the Ukrainian general staff, the main focus of the war currently continues to be the embattled eastern Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk. According to information from local authorities, six civilians were killed in a Russian rocket strike on a residential building in the city of Mykolaiv in southern Ukraine on 11.11.22.

21 November 2022

Renewed attacks on energy infrastructure throughout the country

Large-scale damage to the country's energy infrastructure was reported on 15.11.22 in the wake of Russian rocket attacks on numerous targets in Ukraine. According to information from the Ukrainian authorities, 17 regions were attacked with around 100 rockets, as a result of which some ten million households were affected by blackouts as at 17.11.22. The energy supply situation is reportedly particularly strained in the regions of Odessa, Kiev, Vinnytsia and Sumy. Numerous reports in the media speak of one of the heaviest rocket attacks since the beginning of the Russian invasion in February 2022. The Ukrainian authorities have stated that a Russian rocket attack on the town of Vilniansk, near to the city of Zaporizhzhia, resulted in a civilian death toll of at least nine, as per 19.11.22. On 20.11.22 the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reported on explosions which had taken place on the site of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, which is occupied by Russian forces. The IAEA called on the warring parties to de-escalate the situation immediately. President Zelenskyy has stated that heavy fighting continues on the front line in the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk. Controlled power cuts were carried out on the evening of 20.11.22 in 15 Ukrainian regions and in the capital, Kiev, on account of the critical energy supply situation. In a statement released on 20.11.22, the Ukrainian defence ministry rejected the possibility of a ceasefire in view of the approaching winter. According to reports in the media, residents of the recently recaptured parts of the Mykolaiv and Kherson regions have been offered the option of voluntary evacuation. Accommodation is available for this purpose in the city of Kryvyi Rih in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast or in western regions of Ukraine, according to information from the Ukrainian government.

28 November 2022

Rocket attacks cause largest blackout since beginning of conflict; the course of hostilities

Large-scale rocket attacks by the Russian military on Ukraine's energy infrastructure on 23.11.22 caused the most extensive blackout since the beginning of the conflict. Eleven oblasts in the country were affected. According to official information, these were left entirely without electric power. Heating and water supplies were down in many towns and cities. The capital, Kiev, was hit particularly severely by blackouts and water supply failures. Long queues formed at filling stations and cash dispensers and in supermarkets. Measures to restore supplies have still not been fully completed. According to official information from the Ukrainian military intelligence service, a further rocket attack on a similarly large scale is expected between the middle and end of the current week at the earliest. In the Donbas, Russian attacks are taking place in Donetsk oblast in the direction of Bachmut, Avdiivka and Marinka. Meanwhile, the main focus of the Ukrainian counter-offensive is in Luhansk oblast, in the area between the cities of Kreminna and Svatove, where the intensity of fighting has recently decreased on account of the prevailing weather. Trench warfare is taking place in the south of the country, with a focus on the use of artillery. In particular, the city of Kherson is subject to shelling by the Russian forces.

06 December 2022

Renewed rocket attacks; the course of hostilities

Air-raid alarms sounded in Ukraine on 05.12.22 as the Russian forces launched large-scale rocket attacks once again. There has been official confirmation from the Ukrainian side of attacks on Kyiv, Odessa and Vinnytsia oblasts. Once again, the attacks were aimed primarily at the Ukrainian infrastructure. Blackouts occurred in various parts of the country and water supplies also failed in some areas. According to official Ukrainian information, most of the missiles were destroyed by its air defence systems. Meanwhile, the most intensive fighting is taking place near to the city of Bakhmut (Donetsk oblast). Having failed to capture Bakhmut via a frontal assault, the Russian forces are now attempting to encircle the city. Rockets are reported to have hit the city centre of Donetsk, which is controlled by Russian forces.

12 December 2022

Searches within the Ukrainian Orthodox Church

Ukraine's national intelligence service, SBU, stepped up searches within the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Ukrainian: Ukraïns'ka pravoslavna cerkva; UPC) last week. The searches targeted church institutions in the oblasts of Kyiv, Kherson, Cherkasy, Zhytomyr, Volyn and Kharkiv. According to official information, evidence seized in the searches indicated sympathy for and collaboration with Russian state structures and the Russian forces by UPC dignitaries. In some instances, criminal proceedings have been instituted against clerics on charges of treason. The UPC is coming under increasing pressure in Ukraine. On 02.12.22 Ukraine's president Volodymyr Zelenskyy signed a decree which brought into force a resolution by the national security and defence council specifically prohibiting the activities of religious organisations with links to Russia. In addition, a bill on the prohibition of the Russian Orthodox Church and all institutions and religious organisations which belong to or recognise subordination to the latter or has been introduced in the Ukrainian parliament. There are two orthodox churches in Ukraine. The Orthodox Church of Ukraine (Ukrainian: Pravoslavna cerkva Ukraïni; not to be confused with the UPC) was recognised as an independent church by the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 2018 and subsequently also by three of the 14 generally recognised orthodox churches. The UPC is recognised as canonical by ten churches, but as part of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. In May, the UPC declared its complete "autonomy and independence" of the Moscow Patriarchate and condemned Russia's military actions in Ukraine, but without becoming autocephalous under canon law.

The course of hostilities

According to official information, the Russian army stepped up the pressure along the contact line last week, in particular at the front in Donetsk. Russian troops have carried out repeated attacks near Kupiansk in Kharkiv oblast in recent days. Fighting also continues near Bakhmut (Donetsk oblast). The oblast and the city of Kherson are being subjected to Russian shelling on a daily basis. According to information from the Ukrainian president, the recent heavy rocket bombardments have destroyed around 50 % of Ukraine's energy infrastructure.

19 December 2022

Humanitarian and military situation

On 16.12.22 the Ukrainian military reported 76 Russian rocket attacks on various targets, including in the Ukrainian regions of Kiev, Kherson, Dnipropetrovsk, Zhytomyr, Zaporizhzhia, Kharkiv and Odessa. Cities including Kiev, Kharkiv and Odessa reported partial or complete temporary failures of power, heating and water supplies. The affected population was referred to emergency accommodation and public heat rooms. According to information from the local authorities, the heat supply in the capital, Kiev, was fully restored on 18.12.22, while power blackouts continued. According to media sources, drone attacks and damage to civilian infrastructure were reported in Kiev in the early hours of 19.12.22. At least two people were injured. Ukrainian energy utility Ukrenergo has reported that the Ukrainian power grid was set to emergency mode on 16.12.22, adding that there are power cuts throughout Ukraine due to the ongoing destruction of the energy infrastructure. The commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian armed forces, Valerii Zaluzhnyi, and the Ukrainian foreign minister, Dmytro Kuleba, have stated that a major new Russian offensive is expected in the winter or spring of 2023, adding that a renewed attack on the capital, Kiev, is

also possible. A situation report released by the US think tank Institute for the Study of War on 15.12.22 concludes that, while such a scenario cannot be ruled out, the prospects of success are unlikely. Both parties to the conflict reject a ceasefire between New Year's Day and the orthodox Christmas period at the beginning of January. Reports in the media identify the cities of Kreminna in the Luhansk region and Bakhmut and Avdiivka in the Donetsk region as key focuses of the military confrontation on the front line. According to information from the regional Ukrainian military administration, the Ukraine-controlled part of the Kherson region is subject to sustained heavy shelling by Russian artillery and the situation regarding food and basic supplies and services in the city of Kherson remains precarious in the wake of the city's recapture by Ukrainian forces in the middle of November (cf. BN of 15.11.22 and 12.12.22). According to information from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, the number of people in Ukraine who are currently dependent on humanitarian support is estimated at over 18 million and the number of internally displaced people at around 6.5 million. Türk points out that the continual attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure are exposing millions of civilians, and vulnerable people in particular, to extreme hardship in the prevailing winter conditions, in addition to which the humanitarian situation could deteriorate still further and internal migration could increase as a result of strikes, for example.

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