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Ukraine Civilian Deaths in 2025 Highest Since 2022, UN Says

By AFP

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The aftermath of a Russian missile attack on Kyiv on the night of Nov. 25, 2025. **State Emergency Service of Ukraine**

United Nations monitors recorded more civilian deaths in Ukraine in 2025 than in any other year except 2022, as hostilities flared along the front line and Russia expanded its use of long-range weapons, the UN's top rights body said Monday.

The data comes as U.S.-led diplomatic attempts to end the war have stalled, with Russia last week rejecting a draft plan that would see European countries deploy soldiers in Ukraine once the war ends.

"The total civilian casualties in Ukraine in 2025 reached at least 2,514 killed and 12,142 injured, which is a 31% increase compared to 2024," the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) said in a report published Monday.

"Our monitoring shows that this rise was driven not only by intensified hostilities along the frontline, but also by the expanded use of long-range weapons, which exposed civilians across the country to heightened risk," the head of the OHCHR's monitoring mission in Ukraine, Danielle Bell, said in a press release attached to the report.

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There is no reliable figure as to the total number of civilians killed in Ukraine since Russia invaded in February 2022.

The UN has verified almost 15,000 civilian deaths, it said in the report, but added that the "actual extent of civilian harm ... is likely considerably higher" since it is impossible to verify many cases and there is no access to areas that have come under Russian occupation.

Those places include the port city of Mariupol, where thousands are estimated to have been killed during a weeks-long siege by Russian forces at the start of the war.

Russia's battlefield gains in Ukraine last year were also higher than in any other year except 2022, according to an AFP analysis of data from the U.S.-based Institute for the Study of War, as Moscow pressed its advantage against outgunned and overstretched Ukrainian troops.

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