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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Over 11K Foreign Fighters Killed in Ukraine – Rosstat Leaks

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Russian military personnel pass by damaged vehicles in the Russian-controlled Ukrainian town of Oleshky. **Russian Defense Ministry / Reuters**

More than 11,000 foreign nationals fighting for Russia have been killed in the four and a half years of war in Ukraine, according to leaked records from the state statistics agency Rosstat reviewed by Bloomberg.

The data is part of last month's cyberattack by Belarusian and Ukrainian hacker groups on Rosstat, which revealed that more than 450,000 Russians have been killed since the 2022 invasion.

The foreign deaths were recorded between Feb. 24, 2022, and late August 2026, according to Bloomberg.

Of the 11,335 foreign fatalities, just over 6,000 of those killed were born outside Russia but had obtained Russian citizenship prior to their deaths. Moscow offers fast-track naturalization in exchange for military service.

Around 3,700 of the dead were Ukrainian citizens or were born in post-Soviet Ukraine, with most of them living in Russian-occupied eastern and southern Ukraine.

Around 80% of the remaining fatalities came from other former Soviet states, particularly in Central Asia.

Outside those countries, Rosstat data offers a glimpse into Russia's recruitment efforts in developing nations over the years. Nepal accounted for a high concentration of deaths between 2023 and 2024, Sri Lanka and China in 2024-25 and then Colombia, Kenya and Nigeria from late 2025.

The overall yearly foreign death toll increased more than eightfold from 630 in 2022 to more than 5,500 in 2025.

Nearly 99% of the recorded foreign military deaths were men. Of the 159 women killed, 154 were residents of Russian-occupied parts of Ukraine.

The true number of foreign casualties is believed to be higher than 11,335, but Rosstat's leaked database excludes incomplete records for 2026 due to delays in registering combat deaths. Additionally, it does not include missing soldiers or North Korean troops who were deployed to assist Russian forces.

Ukrainian officials estimate Russia has recruited between 28,000 and 46,000 foreign fighters from at least 59 countries.

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