

**HIGHLIGHTS**

# RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR CHRONICLES

№102, 13–17 July, 2022

## UKRAINE SAYS 98% OF RUSSIAN STRIKES HIT CIVILIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Russian forces continue to shell Donbas, the border of Mykolaiv and Kherson regions, and the southern regions of Ukraine. Daily shelling of Mykolaiv continues. On July 15, two of the city's largest universities were [damaged](#), and on the night of July 17, [10 explosions](#) ripped through the city, causing [fires](#) at industrial enterprises. First Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Yevgeny Yenin [provided](#) comparative statistics: Since the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russia has already struck 1,714 civilian targets and only about 300 military ones.

As of July 15, the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) [notes](#) that Russian occupation forces are probably coming out of an "operational pause," but the 10-day pause is not enough to fully renew Russian forces for large-scale offensive operations. The Russian military is supposedly under constant pressure to rebuild and continue the offensive. A public [order](#) from Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu also [confirms](#) this. That said, a new large-scale wave of ground attacks on several fronts at once is [unlikely](#) according to analysts. The command of the Ukrainian Air Force [reported](#) that the Ukrainian Air Force has already conducted 1,700 group air strikes against positions, depots, equipment and manpower of the Russian occupation troops since the start of the full-scale war.

## ONLY 6 OUT OF 27 EU COUNTRIES ACTIVELY BLOCK RUSSIAN ASSETS

On July 15, the European Commission [supported](#) the introduction of a new seventh package of sanctions against Russia, including a ban on imports of Russian gold, increased export controls on dual-use goods and advanced technology, as well as increased harmonization of EU sanctions with those of the G7 countries. Czech

Prime Minister Petr Fiala [noted](#) that the package will not include restrictions on gas imports, as many EU member states do not have time to adapt to such changes. At the same time, there is still no unanimity on the scope and impact of sanctions among EU countries. Some of them [pass laws](#) imposing a ban on natural gas supplies from Russia. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban [believes](#) that the EU is "killing" its economy this way: Ukraine needs help, but European leaders should reconsider their strategy. Earlier, the country's prime minister [said](#) that Hungary would not discuss any sanctions on gas supplies. The Insider [prepared](#) an analytical article about Hungary's attempts to balance between Western countries and Russia. Ukrainian Foreign Ministry spokesman Oleg Nikolenko [stressed](#) that sanctions are effective: they help hold the aggressor state accountable for its crimes and weaken its ability to continue waging war.

Only six out of 27 EU countries are actively involved in blocking Russian assets in Europe, [said](#) European Commissioner for Justice Didier Reynders. Germany, France, Ireland, Austria, Belgium and Luxembourg account for about 12.7 billion euros of the total of nearly 14 billion euros of frozen Russian assets in the European Union. In Ukraine, since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion, the court [has seized](#) corporate rights of companies related to Russia for 10.5 billion hryvnias. Ukrainian presidential economic adviser Oleh Ustenko has written letters to the heads of some of the world's largest banks, urging them to sever ties with Russian oil trading groups, the Financial Times [reported](#). He also warned that these banks will not be allowed to participate in the post-war renewal of Ukraine.

The European Commission [issued](#) a clarification on the transit of goods to Kaliningrad, which is separated from the other part of Russia by the territory of the Baltic states. Transport of a number of subsanctioned goods is prohibited by road, but some of them can be brought in by rail. Transportation of military and dual-use technologies is prohibited in any case, regardless of the mode of transport. Also, member states should check whether there are no unusual flows or trade schemes that could lead to circumvention of sanctions. The Lithuanian government agreed to the recommendations, but [stressed](#) in a statement that previous EU rules, which included a complete ban on the transit of sanctioned goods, were more acceptable. A number of new sanctions have been imposed by [Canada](#).

## U.S. DEFENSE BUDGET FOR 2023 PROVIDES \$1 BILLION FOR UKRAINE

The US House of Representatives has [approved](#) the 2023 defense budget bill. It provides, among other things, \$1 billion for Ukraine as defense assistance. That's \$700 million more than in 2022. In addition, this amount does not include the allocation of other military aid and the lend-lease program.

The document also [provides](#) for the training of Ukrainian pilots on U.S. fighter jets and tasks the U.S. Department of Defense to stop using Russian energy sources in full. To take effect, the law must be passed by the U.S. Senate and signed by the U.S. president.

Since the start of the full-scale Russian invasion, Ukraine has already received about \$13 billion in financial aid from international partners, this was [reported](#) by the National Bank of Ukraine.

The Ukrainian military [began training](#) to operate Gepard self-propelled anti-aircraft guns at German training grounds. Ukraine also [received](#) the first MLRS M270 rocket systems supplied by the United States.

Ongoing military assistance to Ukraine allows the AFU to achieve Ukrainian defense goals faster. Thus, the speaker of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine Oleksandr Motuzyanik [said](#) that thanks to the US HIMARS missile systems the Ukrainian armed forces destroyed more than 30 military logistic facilities of the Russian army in two weeks. The Institute for the Study of War (ISW) [notes](#) that HIMARS strikes by the AFU on ammunition depots, command and control led to a decrease in shelling by Russian artillery. In this regard, Western arms deliveries to Ukraine have provoked opposition from Russia. In particular, Russian propaganda is trying to spin the narrative of Ukraine selling arms to it. EU foreign and security policy spokesman Peter Stano [noted](#) that the EU has established a mechanism for monitoring and controlling the use of European equipment for declared purposes, and the EU has "no reason not to trust the Ukrainian government. At the same time, the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ukrainian Defence Ministry [noted](#) that the Russian special services had been tasked with monitoring the routes through which weapons were delivered to Ukraine.

## UKRAINE, RUSSIA, UNITED NATIONS AND TURKEY CREATE COORDINATION CENTER FOR UKRAINIAN GRAIN EXPORTS, KEY ELEMENT OF UKRAINE'S POSITION – SECURITY

The delegations of Ukraine, Russia, the United Nations and Turkey [have agreed](#) to set up a [coordination center](#) in Istanbul during a meeting on Ukrainian grain exports on July 13.

The Wall Street Journal reported, quoting Turkish and UN representatives, who took part in the talks, that they had managed to reach a preliminary agreement to blockade three Ukrainian ports. A cease-fire must be guaranteed for the transportation of grain. Also, part of the route should be demined. [According to Forbes](#), we are talking about the Odesa, Black Sea and Southern ports. The UN must create a command and control center in Istanbul to monitor the level of threat to ships. The sides also agreed on joint control at the points of exit and arrival from the port, as well as ensuring the safety of navigation on the routes of transfer. During next week's meeting, the delegations plan to revisit the details and sign an agreement.

[As of the evening of July 12](#), 16 trade ships had already passed through the Bystroe estuary channel.

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry earlier [noted](#) that Ukraine considers security to be a key element of its position.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres [called](#) the negotiations a big step forward to ensure the export of Ukrainian grain through the Black Sea.

## RUSSIA ADAPTING TO WAR

Although martial law has not been introduced in Russia, there is a hidden [mobilization](#).

Russian President Vladimir Putin [has signed](#) a law criminalizing calls for action "against Russia's security" and military action against it. The bill provides fines of up to 500,000 rubles or 2 to 4 years in prison for "public calls for activities against the security of the state," while participation in "military actions against the interests of Russia abroad" is punishable by up to 20 years in prison with a fine of up to 500,000 rubles. In addition, for "confidential cooperation with foreign intelligence services, international or foreign organizations" a person can be punished by up to 8 years in prison.

Also, Vladimir Putin [signed a law](#) on the introduction of special measures in the economy, allowing to force the business to work for the Russian army.

The Russian General Prosecutor's Office [recognized](#) Bellingcat and The Insider, as well as the Czech Central and Eastern European Legal Initiative Institute (CEELI Institute) as "undesirable organizations". As a result of amendments to the criminal article on participation in the activities of "undesirable organizations", responsibility is envisaged for participation in the work of an "undesirable organization" abroad, among other things.

According to a closed VCIOM poll, [reported](#) by Meduza, 30% of Russians think that the war in Ukraine should be stopped immediately, but 57% insist that it should continue. [According to the Levada Center](#), the percentage who support the government is even higher - in the neighborhood of 75%. As part of the expert project Re: Russia, Lev Gudkov, sociologist and head of the Levada Center, [said](#) that since February 24, Russian society has gone through several phases of accepting the war, but the process of understanding the consequences and causes of what is happening has not yet begun.

## DEBUNKING FAKES

### RUSSIA TRIES TO PASS OFF THE ATTACK ON VINNITSA AS "DESTRUCTION OF THE UKRAINIAN AIR FORCE COMMAND MEETING"

On July 14, a cruise missile attack from the Black Sea in the center of Vinnitsa [hit](#) the Consumer services center, the Medical Diagnostic Center, the Officers' House, and nearby residential buildings. As a [result](#) of the attack 23 people were killed, including three children, and 202 people were injured. Click [here](#) for the chronology of the attack by Conflict Intelligence Team investigators.

Russian propaganda is actively inventing excuses for the shelling. For example, at first, a number of Russian telegram channels spread information that the missiles allegedly "hit a military unit" in the town of Gaisin in the Vinnitsa region. However, a video circulated by, among others, propagandist Vladimir [Solovyov's](#) channel clearly shows a monument in Vinnitsa in honor of the Ukrainian Air Force, located near the Officers' House.

The news of the strikes on Vinnitsa made the front pages of many global media outlets, while the vast majority of Russian media [made no mention](#) of them. Only a day later, the Russian Defense Ministry confirmed that during the strike on Vinnitsa, the Russian Armed Forces [targeted](#) the House of Officers, stating that in this way they destroyed participants of "a meeting of the Ukrainian Air Force command with representatives of foreign arms suppliers" and that the strike was carried out with "high-precision missiles." This idea had been [actively promoted](#) earlier by Russian propaganda.

In fact, the Officers' House is a civilian facility that functions as [a concert hall](#). On the day of the explosion, a charity concert by the singer ROXOLANA was to be held there.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky called the attack on civilian targets an open act of terrorism and [called](#) for Russia to be officially recognized as a terrorist state. U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Brigitte Brink [reacted](#) to the missile attack on Vinnitsa, assuring that her state would stand with Ukraine until victory in the war against the aggressor. EU diplomacy chief Josep Borrell and EU Crisis Management Commissioner Janez Lenarčič also [stressed](#) that those responsible for all war crimes in Ukraine will be punished.

Photos of the aftermath of the attack are [here](#). A story about the people who died in Vinnitsa – [here](#). The story of a four-year-old girl who died as a result of the explosion is [here](#).

How Russian propaganda glosses over the tragedies and failures of Russian forces in Ukraine on the example of Vinnitsa, Bucha, and the strike on the air defense base in Luhansk was [told](#) by "Agentstvo".