

Ukraine

Attacks on education in Ukraine continued to increase. In 2024 and 2025, more than 900 attacks on schools were reported, with the east and south of Ukraine particularly affected. Most of the attacks involve explosive weapons, including missile and drone strikes and shelling.

Context

In 2024 and 2025, more than two years after Russian armed forces launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, fighting between Ukrainian and Russian forces continued.¹ Between 2024 and 2025, fighting was primarily confined to the eastern and southeastern regions, but Russia continued to launch long-range missile and drone attacks on northern, central and western Ukraine. Despite the front lines of war remaining relatively consistent with prior reporting periods, 2024 and 2025 was marked by a significant escalation in aerial attacks, with intensified use of shelling, missiles, drones, and guided bombs against cities and critical infrastructure.²

The UN estimated at the end of 2025, that there were an estimated 3.8 million people internally displaced³; with over 100,000 people displaced in August and September 2024 alone.⁴ According to the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, July 2025 saw one of the highest monthly casualties among the Ukrainian civilian population in more than three years, with over 286 deaths and more than 1,388 injuries.⁵ UN reported that 2025 accounted for the highest number of civilian deaths since the start of the full scale invasion; with over 2,500 civilians killed and over 12,000 injured.⁶ Persons with disabilities and older persons continued to face heightened danger due to their inability to leave high-risk areas, or access safety shelters.⁷

Education continued to be disrupted as a result of the war.⁸ According to the UN, by the end of 2025, 1,611 schools had been damaged or destroyed since the start of the full-scale invasion, including at least 339 that had been completely destroyed.⁹ As a result, 741,000 children studied in a hybrid format, combining in-person and remote learning because their schools lack bomb shelters, while another 443,000 were learning entirely online in areas under active hostilities.¹⁰ Over the last five years, nearly 1.2 million children missed out on full-time, in-person learning, leaving them one to two years behind in core subjects, as reported by the UN.¹¹ The Ukrainian government and partner organizations repaired over 700 schools; however, many children still could not attend schools as only 82 percent of preschools and 73 percent of schools had access to shelters as of December 2024. As in the previous report, frequent attacks on energy infrastructure have continued to cause electricity cuts and heating system damage, further disrupting both in-person and online education.¹²

Attacks on schools

GCPEA identified more than 900 attacks on schools in 2024 and 2025; the majority of these attacks involved explosive weapons, including long-range missile strikes, drones, and shelling. This represented an increase in attacks on schools compared to the previous reporting period, when GCPEA collected reports of around 700 such attacks in 2022 and 2023.¹³ While most of these attacks continued to occur in the eastern regions, including Dnipro, Donetsk, and Sumy, and southern regions including Kherson and Odesa, attacks also occurred in other regions, including Kyiv and Lviv. Between February 2022 and September 2024, 201 educational institutions across Sumy's region alone were damaged, with 17 of those completely destroyed, according to local media sources.¹⁴

In 2024, Save the Children reported that 576 education facilities in Ukraine – including schools, kindergartens, and universities – were damaged or destroyed, nearly double that of the previous year.¹⁵ This number was not included in the total number of attacks on schools to avoid double-counting, since it also includes attacks on universities. The UN documented 559 attacks on schools and kindergartens in Ukraine.¹⁶ According to the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), between the start of the full scale invasion and the end of 2024, more than 3,350 educational institutions were damaged or destroyed.¹⁷ Separately, GCPEA identified individual reports of more than 310 attacks on schools in 2024.¹⁸ Attacks spiked in March, August, September, and November. In August alone, thirteen schools were destroyed and 38 damaged across Ukraine, according to the UN.¹⁹ Additional incidents include:

- On January 19, 2024, at least five secondary education institutions, School Numbers 10, 15, 18, 23, 25, were reportedly evacuated to investigate reports of unexploded ordinances near the schools in Lutsk city, Volyn region, according to local media outlets.²⁰
- On March 1, 2024, two kindergartens were allegedly damaged during a missile strike on Kostiantynivka city, Donetsk region, as reported by ACLED and local media.²¹
- On March 12, 2024, a missile strike allegedly damaged two kindergartens and five schools, in Kryvyi Rih city, Dnipro region, as reported by local media and the UN.²²
- The UN reported that on June 9, 2024, missile strikes reportedly damaged three education institutions during missile strikes in Vilniansk town, Zaporizhzhia region.²³
- On August 30, 2024, an airstrike reportedly damaged two schools in Kharkiv city and region, according to the UN.²⁴
- On September 4, 2024, drone and missile strikes reportedly damaged three schools in Lviv city and region and four educational institutions in Kryvyi Rih city, Dnipropetrovsk region, according to local officials cited in local media reports and UN security council reports.²⁵
- On October 15, 2024, shelling allegedly damaged eight educational institutions across the Mykolaiv region, as reported by ACLED and local media.²⁶

- On November 14, 2024, drone strikes reportedly damaged two schools and three kindergartens in Odesa city and region; according to the local administration's education department, windows were shattered and window frames were broken at the schools.²⁷
- On December 25, 2024, airstrikes reportedly damaged six schools and seven kindergartens in Dnipro, according to local media.²⁸

In 2025, GCPEA identified more than 335 attacks on schools.²⁹ In March alone, the UN reported that 50 educational facilities had been damaged by Russian armed forces across Ukraine, with an additional six being completely destroyed.³⁰ Attacks on educational facilities spiked in June, July and September, with GCPEA documenting over 70 attacks on schools in June, over 55 attacks in July, and 69 attacks in September. For example, on June 24, missile strikes on Dnipro damaged 19 schools and ten kindergartens, as well as a vocational school and a music school, according to local media reports.³¹ Additional incidents include:

- On January 21, 2025, local media reported that a drone strike damaged an educational institution in Zvenyhoroda city, Cherkasy region.³²
- During an increase in hostilities between February 25 and 26, 2025, two educational facilities were allegedly damaged in Donetsk, as reported by the UN.³³
- On March 5, 2025, two schools and two kindergartens were allegedly damaged during an airstrike in Kryvyi Rih city, Dnipro region, as reported by Human Rights Watch.³⁴
- On May 26, 2025, local media reported that a school was damaged during a drone and airstrike on Novhorod-Siverskyi city, Chernihiv region.³⁵
- On June 23, 2025, an airstrike allegedly damaged Lyceum Number 1, a specialized secondary school, in Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyi city, Odesa region, killing three staff and injuring 14 others, including two students, according to local media.³⁶
- On August 23, 2025, guided aerial bombs allegedly damaged three educational institutions in Kostiantynivka town, Donetsk region, as reported by local media.³⁷
- Between August 30 and September 2, 2025, shelling reportedly damaged 18 educational facilities in Kharkiv city and region, according to the city's mayor, as cited in local media.³⁸
- On September 20, 2025, airstrikes and drone strikes damaged several schools and kindergartens in Dnipro city, Dnipropetrovsk region, as reported by the UN and local media.³⁹
- On October 22, 2025, a drone strike reportedly damaged a kindergarten in Kharkiv city and region. According to Plan International, nearly 50 students were sheltering in the school's basement during the attack; one adult was killed and several others injured.⁴⁰

Military use of schools and universities

GCPEA identified at least one incident of military use in 2024 and 2025. On July 13, 2025, Ukrainian forces reportedly damaged a school that was being used by Russian military forces in Kamianske village, Vasylivka city, Zaporizhzhia region.⁴¹ In comparison, GCPEA identified seven cases of military use in 2023 and at least 60 in 2022.⁴² Although the number of reported attacks appears to be declining, schools still faced threats and dangers in the current reporting period, and the lower numbers may also be attributed, in part, to the high number of schools that were damaged or destroyed because of the conflict.

Attacks on higher education

GCPEA identified at least 40 attacks on higher education in Ukraine in 2024 and 2025, all of which were attacks on higher education facilities. These incidents took place primarily in Kharkiv, Donetsk, Kherson, and Sumy regions. This a slight increase, compared with the previous report. In 2023, GCPEA identified five attacks on higher education, all of which were attacks on facilities, and in 2022, GCPEA identified at least 34 reported incidents of attacks on higher education, which included two attacks on higher education students and personnel.⁴³

In 2024, GCPEA identified at least 12 reported incidents of attacks on higher education.⁴⁴ For example:

- On February 28, 2024, shelling reportedly damaged the Donetsk National Technical University, according to media sources.⁴⁵
- On March 12, 2024, an airstrike damaged two vocational training institutions in Kryvyi Rih city, Dnipro region, along with two kindergartens and five schools, which are listed in the relevant paragraph above, as reported by local media.⁴⁶
- On April 10, 2024, an airstrike reportedly damaged a higher education institution dormitory in Malaya Danylivka village, Kharkiv region, according to ACLED and local media.⁴⁷
- On April 22, 2024, according to the rector of Kherson State University, an airstrike allegedly damaged several buildings on the campus, including a dormitory, as reported by local media.⁴⁸ This is not the first time the university had been damaged by an attack: GCPEA found that on October 12, 2023, shelling in Kherson city and region damaged a building at the university.⁴⁹
- On August 9, 2024, local media reported that airstrikes damaged a university in Kyivsky district, Kharkiv city and region. A fire broke out in the university, and a security guard was injured.⁵⁰
- On September 3, 2024, an airstrike on Sumy city and region allegedly damaged a building at Sumy State University, which served about 12,000 students, as reported by local media. One person was reportedly injured on the campus.⁵¹

In 2025, GCPEA identified at least 29 reported incidents of attacks on higher education, more than half of which involved drone strikes.⁵² For example:

- On January 6, 2025, a drone strike allegedly targeted Kherson State University, damaging classrooms and shattering the windows, according to local media.⁵³
- On February 8, 2025, the Faculty of Physical education and Sports at Kherson State University, in Kherson city and region, was damaged during an airstrike, according to local media.⁵⁴ Photos of the university show shattered windows and a damaged roof.
- On April 13, 2024, a missile strike allegedly damaged a building at Sumy State University, in Sumy city and region, as reported by local media.⁵⁵ The university had been damaged in an airstrike previously.⁵⁶
- On June 6, 2025, an airstrike reportedly damaged several buildings at Ivan Puluj Ternopil National Technical University, as reported by Scholars at Risk.⁵⁷
- On July 12, 2025, a drone strike caused significant damage to the Lviv Polytechnic National University, in Lviv city and region, as reported by Scholars at Risk.⁵⁸ No injuries were reported.
- On August 17, 2025, a missile strike reportedly damaged a building at Sumy State University, in Sumy city and region, according to local media.⁵⁹ The following day, a separate drone strike reportedly destroyed a building at the university.
- On September 30, 2025, a higher education institution was reportedly damaged during drone strikes on Dnipro city and region, according to local media sources.⁶⁰