



COI QUERY

Country of Origin	UKRAINE
Title	Methods in the conduct of war by Ukrainian armed forces within Ukraine and in Russia, including targets and treatment of prisoners of war
Reference period	1 April 2025 to 23 April 2026
Topic(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Use of anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions, or other prohibited or restricted weaponsAttacks against civilian infrastructure and other protected objectsTreatment of prisoners of war (POWs)
Date of completion	23 April 2026
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Contributing EU+ COI units (if applicable)	N/A



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COI QUERY RESPONSE – Ukraine

Methods in the conduct of war by Ukrainian armed forces within Ukraine and in Russia, including targets and treatment of prisoners of war

Verifying alleged violations in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine was often difficult and, in many cases, delayed due to several practical obstacles, according to Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The Russian Federation did not grant OHCHR access to carry out independent monitoring, despite repeated requests. Travel from occupied areas to territory controlled by the Ukrainian government was also challenging, given the absence of crossing points, the presence of numerous checkpoints, and the need to take long routes through the Russian Federation. Many people were also unwilling to share their experiences via phone or messaging applications because they feared their communications could be overheard or intercepted.¹

1. Use of anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions, or other prohibited or restricted weapons

Information on use of prohibited means and methods of warfare was scarce among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints.

In July 2025, Ukraine informed the United Nations (UN) that it was suspending its obligations under the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, a convention prohibiting the use of anti-personnel mines.² However, the treaty contains no provision permitting suspension during an armed conflict, and Ukraine's justification relied on an article of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties that does not apply to such action.³

Both the Russian Federation and Ukraine reportedly continued employing cluster munitions between 2024 and 2025. However, due to limited available evidence and lack of access to areas experiencing active hostilities, it has not been possible to verify or attribute all instances of their continued use.⁴

The Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor⁵ reported that publicly available material in 2025 pointed to the continued production and use of improvised antipersonnel mines by Ukrainian forces. It cited a video dated 11 May 2025 in which a Ukrainian soldier described the 'K2', an improvised device delivered by drone and fitted with four tripwires. The Monitor also referred to an 18 April 2025 media report on a Ukrainian unit operating on the Zaporizhzhia front that

¹ OHCHR, Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine; 1 December 2024 to 31 May 2025, 30 June 2025, [url](#), para. 8

² UN, Reference: C.N.385.2025.TREATIES-XXVI.5 (Depositary Notification), 21 July 2025, [url](#)

³ HRW, World Report 2026; Ukraine, 4 February 2026, [url](#)

⁴ Cluster Munition Coalition, Cluster Munition Monitor 2025, September 2025, [url](#), p. 1, 16

⁵ Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, who are we, n.d., [url](#)



manufactured mines for drone deployment. In that report, personnel described homemade antipersonnel devices referred to as ‘ginger cookies’, while an official from the Humanitarian Demining Center⁶ reportedly defended the continued use of mines despite Ukraine’s obligations under the Ottawa Convention.⁷

As of July 2025, evidence indicated that at least 15 different types of cluster munitions, along with three distinct types of individual submunitions, had been used in Ukraine by both Russian and Ukrainian armed forces since February 2022.⁸

2. Attacks against civilian infrastructure and other protected objects

According to the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU), Russian authorities stated that attacks carried out by Ukrainian armed forces during 2025 caused 253 civilian deaths and left 1 872 others injured within the Russian Federation. The same source reported that 99 civilians were killed and 648 injured in attacks carried out by the Ukrainian armed forces across 11 regions of the Russian Federation between December 2024 and May 2025.⁹ However, numbers were not verified, ‘due to lack of access to the Russian Federation and limited publicly available information’.¹⁰

Between June and November 2025, OHCHR recorded a rise in attacks by Ukrainian armed forces targeting energy infrastructure near the active frontline in Donetsk Oblast and Zaporizhzhia Oblast. For instance, on 19 August 2025, a drone strike on an energy facility in the Russian-occupied part of Zaporizhzhia Oblast temporarily cut electricity to several settlements. Furthermore, on 18 November 2025, two energy facilities in Russian-controlled areas of Donetsk Oblast were hit, resulting in power outages and interruptions to water and heating services in some communities.¹¹

Additional information on attacks against civilian infrastructure can be found in the EUAA Query [Security situation in Belgorod City and Belgorod Oblast](#), published on 4 November 2025.

3. Treatment of prisoners of war (POWs)

According to the latest OHCHR report on key findings published in February 2026, ‘Ukrainian authorities subjected Russian POWs to torture and ill-treatment, and conflict-related detainees

⁶ “The Humanitarian Demining Center (Center) is a budgetary institution that falls under the jurisdiction of the Economic and Financial Department of the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.” See Center for Humanitarian Demining, About the Center, n.d., [url](#)

⁷ Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, Ukraine, 21 December 2025, [url](#)

⁸ Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, Cluster Munition Monitor 2025, n.d., [url](#)

⁹ OHCHR, Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine; 1 December 2024 to 31 May 2025, 30 June 2025, [url](#), para. 11

¹⁰ OHCHR, 2025 deadliest year for civilians in Ukraine since 2022, UN human rights monitors find, 12 January 2026, [url](#); OHCHR, Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine; 1 December 2024 to 31 May 2025, 30 June 2025, [url](#), para. 11

¹¹ OHCHR, Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine; 1 June 2025 to 30 November 2025, 9 December 2025, [url](#), para 29



reported mistreatment'.¹² As of February 2026, the same source indicated that 389 of the 717 Russian prisoners of war (POWs) interviewed were allegedly tortured or faced other forms of mistreatment. Most of these reported abuses were said to have taken place during the initial period of capture, prior to transfer to officially recognized detention facilities. The source further recorded that at least 30 male Russian servicemen held as POWs had been executed, with the majority of incidents occurring in 2022 and the first part of 2023. It also noted that at least two male Russian POWs had died while detained.¹³ Similarly, Russian prisoners of war detained by Ukraine and visited by Amnesty International representatives in April and September 2025 at two separate detention camps reported instances of mistreatment occurring during their capture.¹⁴

In a report published on 17 June 2025, the United Nations Committee against Torture (CAT) expressed concern over multiple allegations involving abuses by Ukrainian authorities and security forces. It referred to claims that Russian prisoners of war had been subjected to threats, humiliation, unlawful killings, and deaths in custody, reportedly at the hands of members of the Ukrainian armed forces and military police, particularly in unofficial or transit detention facilities prior to their transfer to formal internment sites. The Committee also highlighted insufficient information on safeguards for captured prisoners of war and poor documentation of visible injuries. Moreover, it noted that Ukrainian authorities denied the existence of such unofficial sites and had opened 20 investigations into alleged war crimes by their own forces.¹⁵

¹² OHCHR, Four years since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine; Key facts and findings, February 2026, [url](#), p. 2

¹³ OHCHR, Four years since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine; Key facts and findings, February 2026, [url](#), p. 3

¹⁴ Amnesty International, The State of the World's Human Rights; Ukraine 2025, 21 April 2026, [url](#)

¹⁵ CAT, Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Ukraine, 17 June 2025, [url](#), Para. 17



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