

The Conflict in Ukraine

What have you heard about the conflict so far?

Where is Ukraine?

Ukraine is in Eastern Europe and shares a border with Russia.

It used to be part of the Soviet Union but became an independent country in 1991.

Soviet Union, better known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)

A former communist country in eastern Europe and northern Asia; established in 1922; included Russia and 14 other soviet socialist republics (Ukraine and Byelorussia and others); officially dissolved 31 December 1991





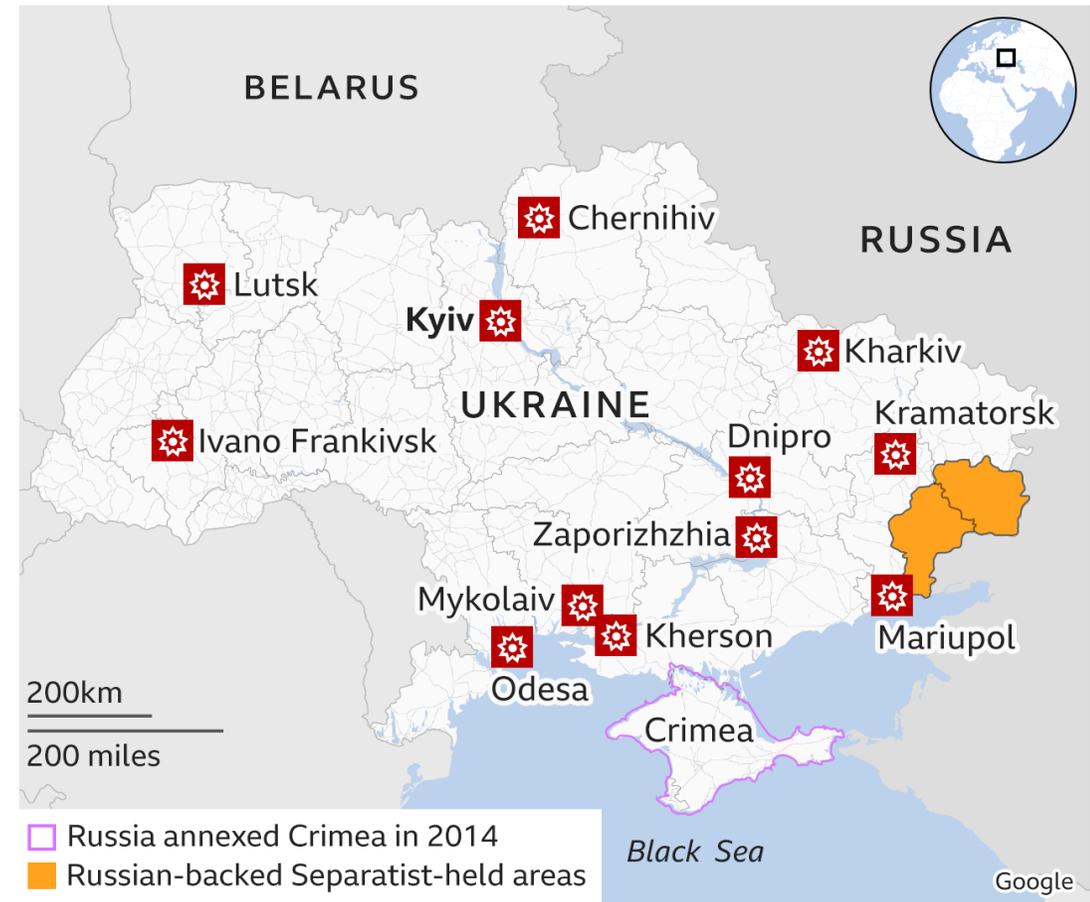
Ukraine is

- The second-largest country by area in Europe after Russia
It is also one of the poorest
- It is home to about 40 million people - the seventh most populous in Europe. About three million live in capital Kyiv
- About eight in 10 Ukrainian citizens consider their native language to be Ukrainian, while almost two in 10 consider it Russian

Why has Russia declared war on Ukraine?

- Russian President Vladimir Putin sees Ukraine as historically part of Russia.
- In 2014, Russia invaded Crimea, in the south of Ukraine, and continues to occupy it.
- Since 2014, Russian-backed separatists (people who want Ukraine to be a part of Russia) and Ukraine's armed forces have been fighting a war in the eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk in which more than 14,000 people have died.
- President Putin this month recognised the two regions held by the Russian-backed separatists as independent states and ordered Russian troops there, tearing up a peace deal.

Explosions reported near major Ukraine cities



How have the people of Ukraine been affected so far?

At least 64 civilians have been killed and more than 160,000 are on the move after Russian troops entered Ukraine this week, a United Nations relief agency said.

"As of 5:00 p.m. on 26 February, (U.N. human rights office) OHCHR reports at least 240 civilian casualties, including at least 64 dead," the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said in a status report,

It added the actual figures were likely to be "considerably higher".

Damage to civilian infrastructure has left hundreds of thousands of people without electricity or water. Hundreds of homes had been damaged or destroyed, while bridges and roads hit by shelling had left some communities cut off from markets, it said.

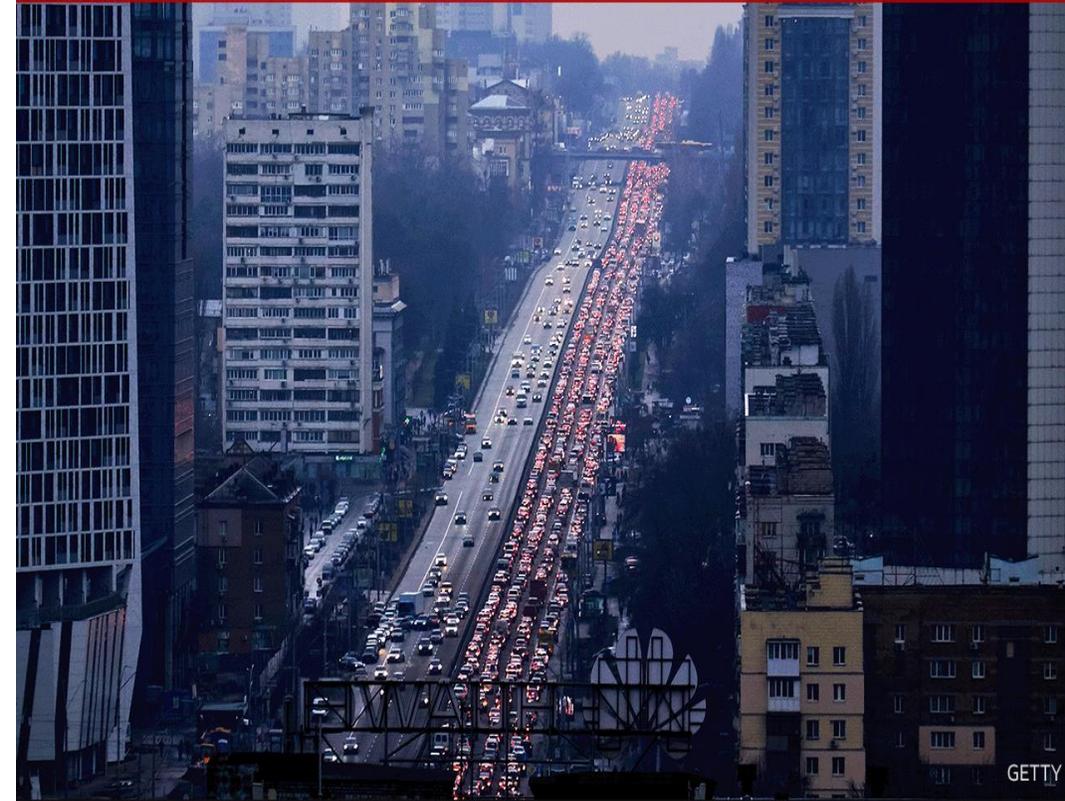
It cited the U.N. refugee agency as saying more than 160,000 people had been internally displaced and more than 116,000 forced to flee into neighbouring countries.

Information correct as of 27/02/2022

What does the conflict mean for the UK?

- UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said the UK **"cannot and will not just look away"** at Russia's "hideous and barbaric" attack on Ukraine.
- He said the UK and its allies will launch a "massive package" of sanctions - commercial and financial penalties - to "hobble" Russia's economy.
- He also tried to reassure the British public by promising to do "everything to keep our country safe" and work with allies "for however long it takes" to restore Ukraine's independence.
- As a result of the conflict, oil prices have surged past \$100 (£75) a barrel to hit their highest level for more than seven years, which will impact already-rising petrol prices in the UK.

Thousands are fleeing Kyiv, home to three million people



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We're afraid of bombardments. Tell them, 'You can't do this'. This is so scary.

Oxana, stuck in a traffic jam with her three-year-old daughter

How you can help:

- Support charities that are helping the civilians. For example, The British Red Cross has launched an urgent appeal to help.
- Support local journalism. English-language news outlets based in the country, such as [Kyiv Independent](#) and the [New Voice of Ukraine](#), are covering developments on the ground as the conflict unfolds, using local journalists. The Kyiv Independent says it was created by journalists in order to defend editorial independence.
- Contact your local MP. This can be a way to lobby the British government to place further sanctions on the Russian government and its associates. You can get in touch with your local MP via email or post to their constituency address. Instructions on how to get in touch can be found on [parliament.uk](#).

One of the most important things you can do is to keep talking about the conflict. As long as it is talked about, the soldiers and civilians involved are not forgotten.