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CRIME PREVENTION POLICY IN UKRAINE IN THE LIGHT OF CRIME STATISTICS FOR THE PERIOD OF EIGHT MONTHS OF 2022ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2822-2268>**Yagunov D. V., MSc in Criminal Justice, PhD in Public Administration, D.Sc. in Political Science, Professor at the Donetsk National University named after Vasyl Stus**

A new wave of military invasion of Russia to Ukraine in 2022 became the event that significantly changed the European political and legal landscape as well as impacted economic and cultural life in all European countries and the EU in general in context of perspectives of the EU – Ukraine relations. Therefore, an issue of the Ukrainian crime and corresponding crime prevention policy is to be included in the agenda of the EU – Ukraine relations both for the short and long-term perspective.

Consequently, this article is focused on further analysis of crime rates in Ukraine in the light of corresponding crime statistics for the period of January 2013 – August 2022 being based on official data from the Office of General Prosecutor.

The article is a continuation of the author's research focused on crime rates in Ukraine in wartime period and impacts of the 2022 period of the Russian aggression against Ukraine on the Ukrainian criminal justice system. Having summarized up presented above ideas, we have come to the following conclusions that reflect the state of things within the wartime Ukrainian criminal justice system.

Crime statistics for August 2022 proved our previous preliminary conclusions of the subject of crime trends in Ukraine. It was August 2022 that changed the general picture of the crime trends in Ukraine. Firstly, it concerns with crimes committed with the use of firearms and explosives. Our fears that "saturation" the Ukrainian society with firearms would lead to increasing criminality seem to have grounds. More grounded conclusions will be drawn later, at least based on crime statistics for the period of 9 months of 2022. Nevertheless, already demonstrated increase in crimes with the use of firearms and explosives put on the agenda an issue of safety and security.

Much more interesting issue is one of drug-related offences in Ukraine. It is surprising that the 2022 Russian invasion to Ukraine has not 'cut' crime trends in the area of illegal possession and use of drugs. In contrast, official data demonstrate that the wartime period is associated with increasing of drug-related crimes in Ukraine.

As far military crimes and war crimes are concerned, corresponding crime rates are expectedly rising in the light of the continuous aggression of Russia against Ukraine.

General conclusion on the crime trends in Ukraine is concerned with the fact that both criminality and law-enforcement bodies as well as citizen have become adapted to conditions and restriction of the wartime period.

Keywords: Crime rates, criminality, wartime Ukraine

Ягунов Д. В., Політика запобігання злочинності в Україні у світлі статистики злочинності за вісім місяців 2022 року

Нова хвиля військового вторгнення Росії в Україну у 2022 році стала подією, яка суттєво змінила європейський політичний та правовий ландшафт, а також вплинула на економічне та культурне життя в усіх країнах Європи та ЄС загалом у контексті перспектив відносин ЄС – Україна. Тому питання української злочинності та відповідної політики запобігання злочинності мають бути включені до порядку денного відносин ЄС – Україна як на короткострокову, так і на довгострокову перспективу. Відповідно ця стаття присвячена подальшому аналізу показників злочинності в Україні у світлі відповідної статистики злочинності за період січень 2013 року – серпень 2022 року на основі офіційних даних Офісу Генерального прокурора.

Стаття є продовженням авторського дослідження показників та тенденцій злочинності в Україні у воєнний період та впливу періоду війни 2022 року на систему кримінальної юстиції України.

Узагальнивши викладені вище ідеї, ми дійшли наступних висновків, які відображають стан речей у кримінальній юстиції України часів війни (періоду 2022 року).

Кримінальна статистика за серпень 2022 року значною мірою підтвердила наші попередні висновки

щодо питання тенденцій злочинності в Україні. Адже саме серпень 2022 року суттєво змінив загальну картину тенденцій злочинності в Україні.

По-перше, це стосується злочинів, вчинених із застосуванням вогнепальної зброї та вибухових речовин. Наші побоювання, що «насичення» українського суспільства вогнепальною зброєю призведе до зростання злочинності, здається, виправдалися. Більш обґрунтовані висновки будуть зроблені пізніше, принаймні на основі статистики злочинності за 9 місяців 2022 року. Проте вже продемонстроване зростання злочинів із застосуванням вогнепальної зброї та вибухових речовин ставить на порядок денний питання безпеки.

Набагато цікавішим питанням є кримінальні правопорушення, пов'язані з наркотиками в Україні. Дивно, що російське вторгнення в Україну у 2022 році не «зрізало» тенденції злочинності у сфері незаконного зберігання та вживання наркотиків. Натомість офіційні дані свідчать про те, що воєнний період пов'язаний із зростанням злочинності, пов'язаної з наркотиками.

Що стосується військових злочинів та військових злочинів, то відповідні показники злочинності очікувано зростають у світлі триваючої агресії Росії проти України, що доводиться відповідними статистичними даними.

Загальний висновок щодо тенденцій розвитку злочинності в Україні полягає в тому, що як злочинність, так і правоохоронні органи, а також громадяни адаптувалися до умов та обмежень воєнного часу.

Ключові слова: Показники злочинності, злочинність, Україна під час війни

Introduction

As we previously noted, a new wave of military invasion of Russia to Ukraine in 2022 became the event that significantly changed the European political and legal landscape as well as impacted economic and cultural life in all European countries and the EU in general in context of perspectives of the EU – Ukraine relations.

Therefore, an issue of the Ukrainian crime and corresponding crime prevention policy is to be included in the agenda of the EU – Ukraine relations both for the short and long-term perspective.

Consequently, this article is focused on further analysis of crime rates in Ukraine in the light of corresponding crime statistics for the period of January 2013 – August 2022 being based on official data from the Office of General Prosecutor.

The article is a continuation of the author's research focused on crime rates in Ukraine in wartime period and impacts of the 2022 period of the War on the criminal justice system of Ukraine.

General picture

According to official data from the Office of General Prosecutor, 244801 crimes have been committed in Ukraine for eight months of 2022 with corresponding opening criminal proceedings. At the same time, concrete suspects had been found in 80378 criminal proceedings.

The number of crimes committed for the period of eight months 2021 was approximately the same as with a period of eight months of 2022 – 247401 crimes. The only difference is that the number of criminal proceedings with concrete suspects in 2021 was much bigger – 114919 criminal proceedings (*Figure 1*).

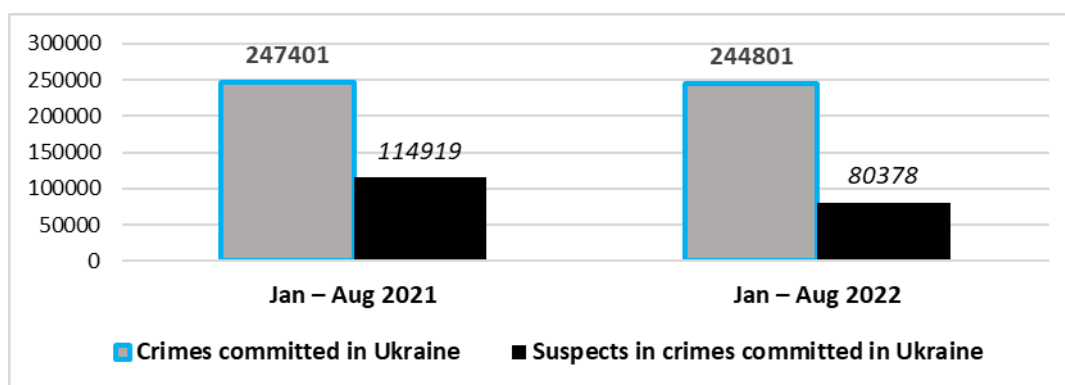


Figure 1. Crimes committed in Ukraine during eight months of 2021 and 2022

The number of crimes committed in August 2022 was the biggest as compared with the rest of months of 2022. What is important is that the number of crimes committed in July and August 2022 was even bigger than those committed in pre-war months (January – February 2022) (*Figure 2*).

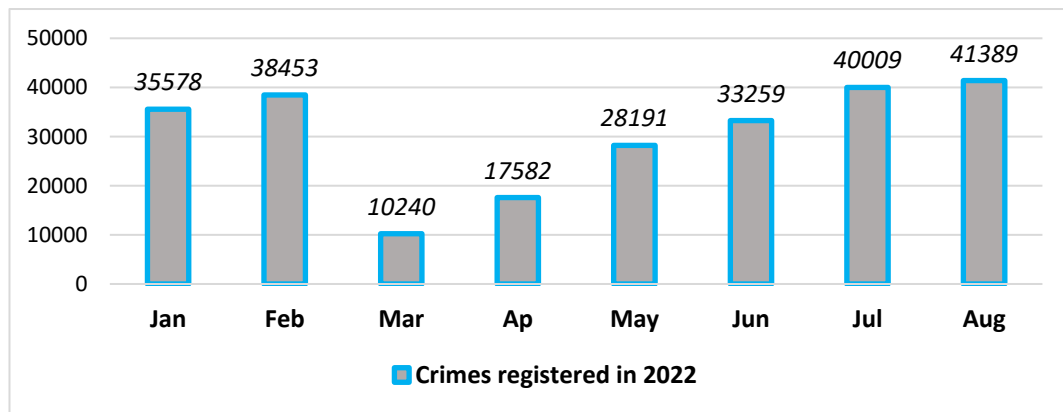


Figure 2. Crimes registered in Ukraine (2022, by month)

The total number of crimes committed in Ukraine for the period of eight months of 2022, which is presented in the Figure 3 below, demonstrates that total crime rate has increased after the 2022 Russian military aggression. As previously, three basis conclusions concerning the Ukrainian criminality for the last nine years could be drawn from presented data:

- 1) having more or less stable total crime rate during 2013 – 2016, there had been a stable and permanent decrease from 2016 until the 2022 Russian invasion started;
- 2) having stable total crime detection rate during 2013 – 2021, there had been a rapid decrease of total crime detection rate from the beginning of the 2022 Russian invasion;
- 3) from the middle of 2022, the crime rates started growing again that proves a thesis that criminality had adapted to the wartime conditions (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Crimes committed in Ukraine (January 2013 – August 2022)

A facultative conclusion that could be drawn is that a ratio between committed crimes and detected suspects has a stable trend towards decreasing until the 2022 Russian invasion (Figure 4).

The 2016 indicator (3,71), which was an exclusion from the general rule, could be partly explained with instability of political institutions after the 2014 Revolution and with a reform of the National Police Service of Ukraine where the new police force came into force in 2015.

General conclusion is that the 2022 Russian military invasion to Ukraine deeply influenced the Ukrainian criminal justice system and undermined its institutions.

Crimes against human life and health

For the period of eight months of 2022, 29603 crimes against human life and health were committed in Ukraine.

Again, we can observe how the 2022 Russian invasion to Ukraine “cut” the number of crimes against human life and health in March 2022 because of the mentioned above reasons.

Nevertheless, in July 2022, the number of crimes against human life and health, previously dropped in March 2022, has reached the level of January (Figure 5).

A special attention should be paid to the statistics on intentional homicides where, as it was stressed earlier, number of homicides committed by Russian soldiers and officers was partly incorporated into general number of all crimes of the same type.

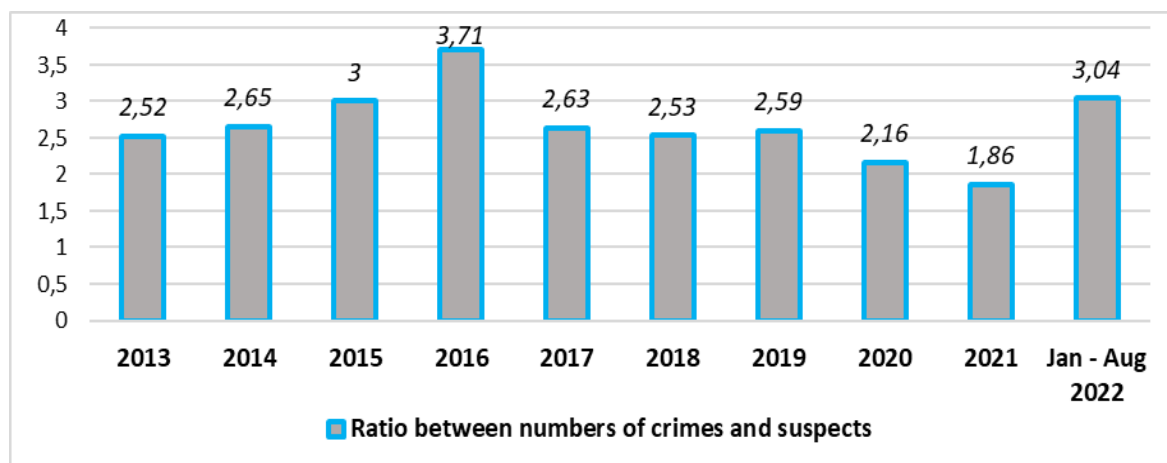


Figure 4. Ratio between crimes and suspects (January 2013 – August 2022)

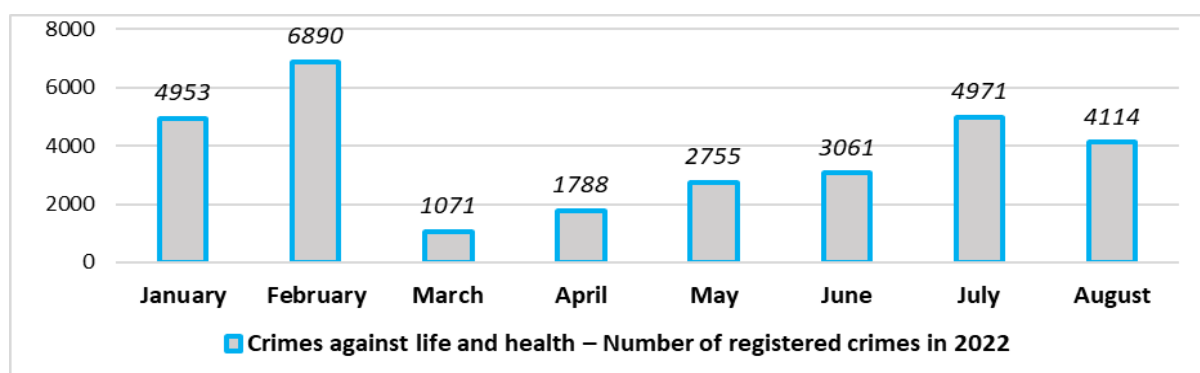


Figure 5. Crimes against human life and health (2022, by month)

At the same time, having approximately the same number of suspects for the 8 months of each year (2021 and 2022), we can point at the fact that every 4th criminal was detected having committed this grave crime for the period of eight months of 2021. In contrast, only every 17th criminal was detected for the period of 8 months 2022 what demonstrates the weakness of the national criminal justice system in the wartime (Figure 6).

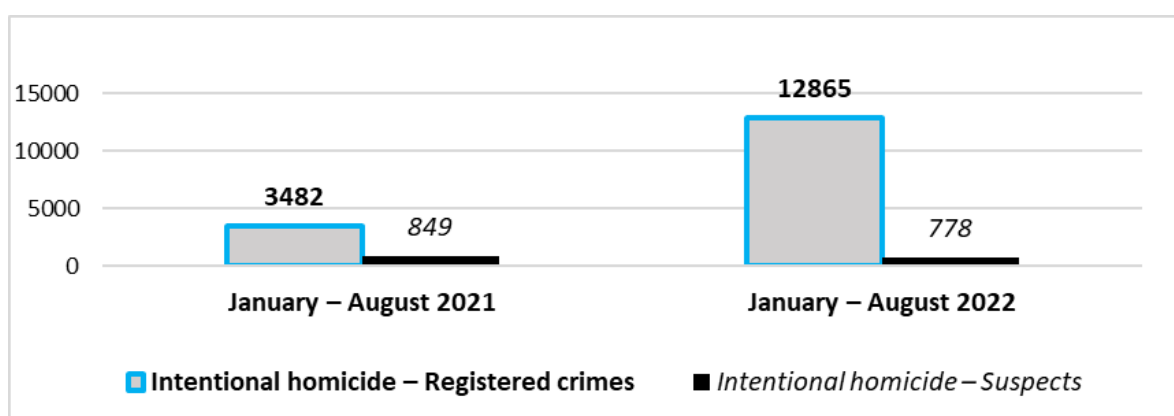


Figure 6. Intentional homicide (eight months of 2021 and 2022)

Minor crimes against human health

Here, we present crime statistics of all minor crimes against human health committed in 2013 – 2022 (statistics of 2020 – 2022 includes data on minor crimes and minor offences against health, according to Article 12 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (“Classification of criminal offences”)) (Figure 7).

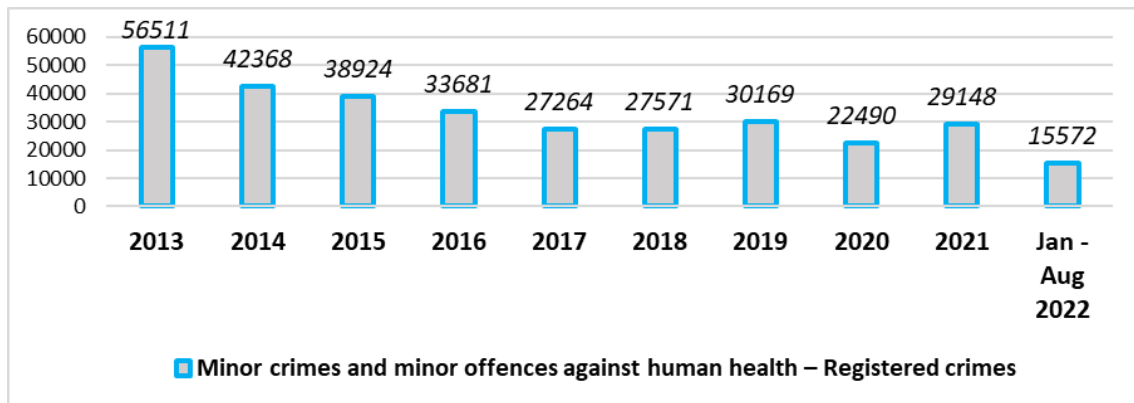


Figure 7. Minor crimes and offences against health (January 2012 – August 2022)

Comparison of the crime rates for eight months of 2021 and 2022 demonstrates that during the wartime the Ukrainian criminal justice system factually has been ignoring minor crimes and offences against human health in the light of more serious dangers for citizen and challenges for the State (*Figure 8*).

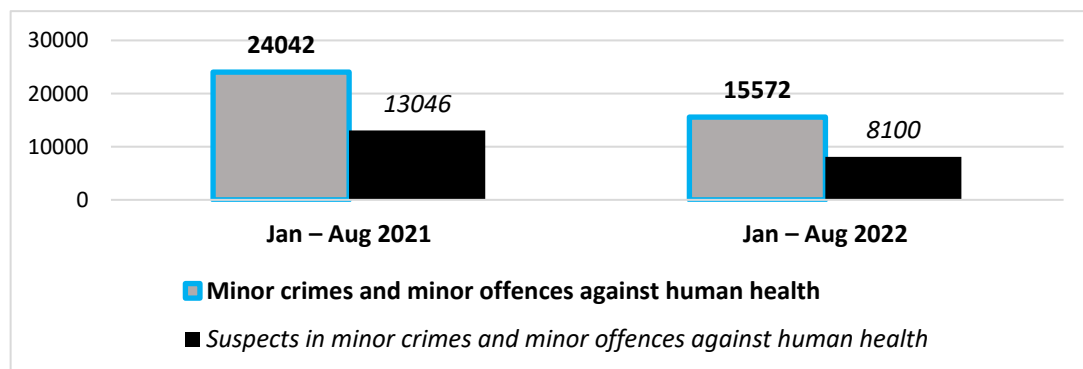


Figure 8. Minor crimes and offences against health (eight months of 2021 and 2022)

Zero registered minor crimes and minor offences against human health in March 2022 proves more than persuasively the priorities of the Ukrainian criminal justice system during the first months of the 2022 Russian invasion (*Figure 9*).

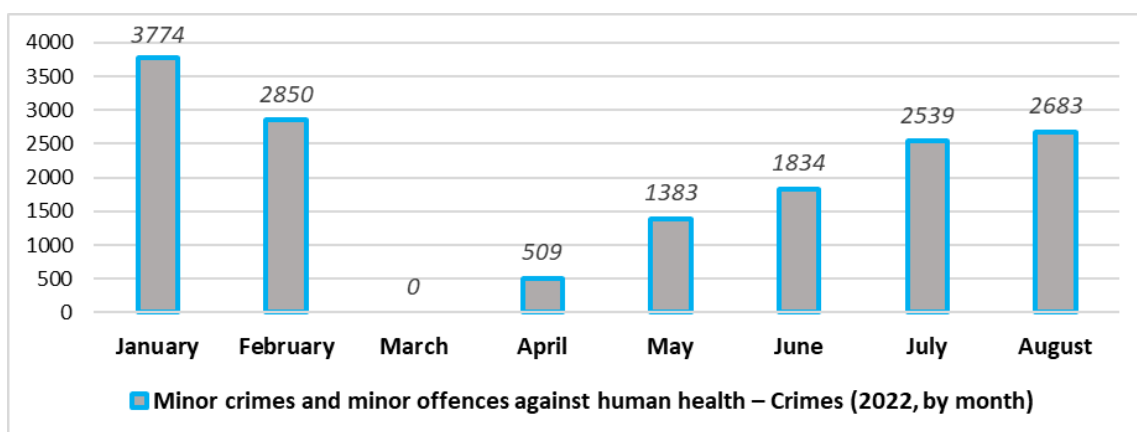


Figure 9. Minor crimes and offences against health (2022, by month)

Crimes of forcible disappearance

At the same time, the number of crimes against will, honor and dignity of a person has increased significantly.

The increase can be explained by a broader use of Article 146-1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (“Forcible disappearance”). In 2022 (first eight months), 1,112 offenses were recorded, compared to 56 crimes in 2021 (the whole year) and 69 crimes in 2020 (the whole year).

The crime statistics show that starting from April 2022, up to 400 crimes of forcible disappearance is registered in Ukraine every month (*Figure 10*).

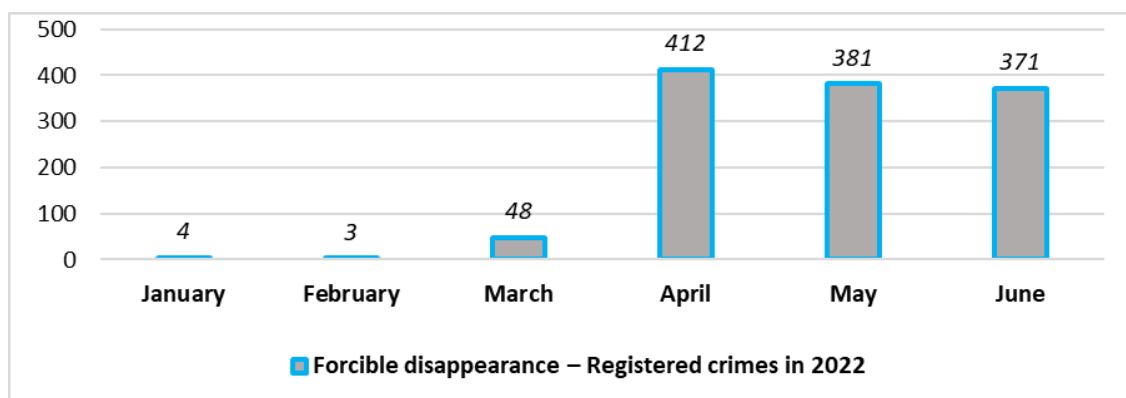


Figure 10. Crimes of forcible disappearance in Ukraine (2022, by month)

Drug-related crimes

Situation with drug-related crimes partly has refuted shaped before thesis that the 2022 Russian military invasion to Ukraine “cut” crime statistics.

Such a situation is explained quiet easily: drugs are another matter and a big business for policemen (*Figure 11*).

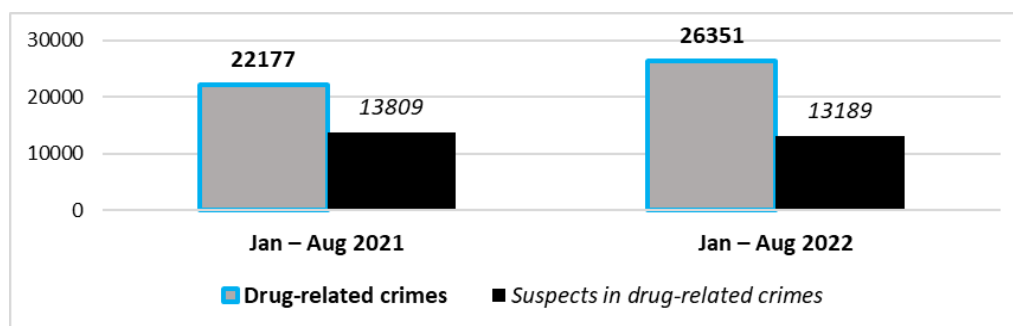


Figure 11. Drug-related crimes (eight months of 2021 and 2022)

Moreover, the 2022 crime statistics show that the number of drug-related crimes for the period of wartime eight months of 2022 appears even bigger than the number of the same crimes for the whole *relatively* ‘peacetime’ 2015 or 2016.

Moreover, we can expect that the number of drug-related crimes in 2022 could be bigger for the period of the last 10 years (*Figure 12*).

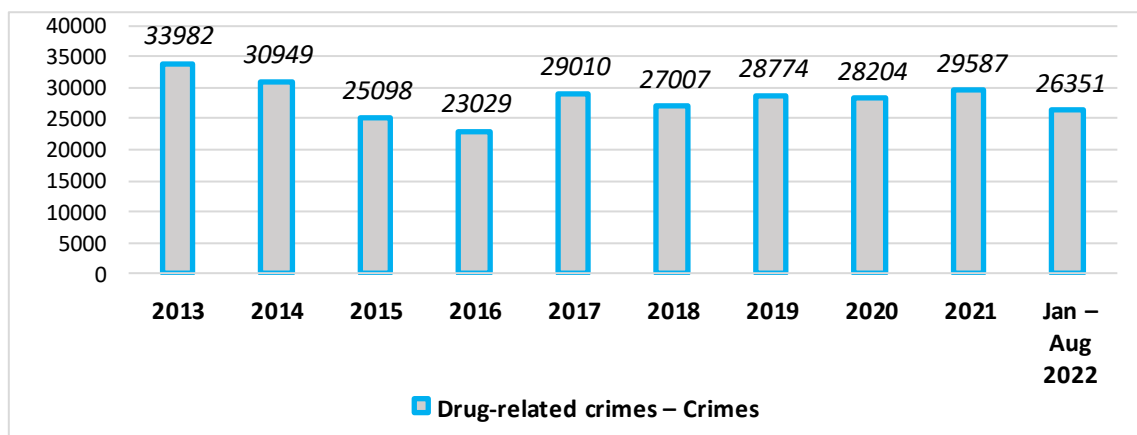


Figure 12. Drug-related crimes (January 2021 – August 2022)

Additionally, it should be noted that the wartime period shows stable increase in numbers of drug-related crimes (Figure 13).

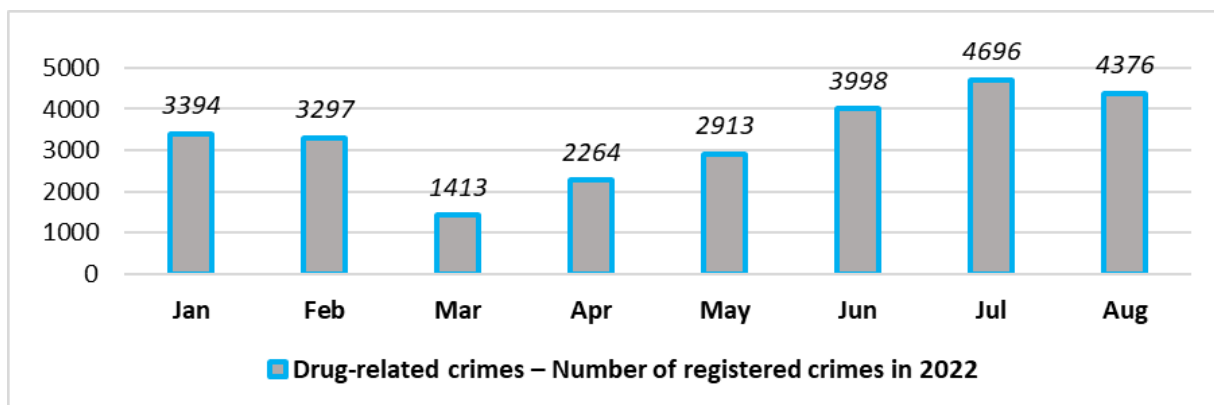


Figure 13. Drug-related crimes (2022, by month)

Offenses against of military service (Military crimes)

Expectedly, the number of *crimes against of military service (military crimes)* also increased significantly. The increase was due to purely wartime Articles of the Criminal Code of Ukraine – Article 407 (“Abandoning a military unit or place of service”), Article 408 (“Desertion”) and Article 402 of the Criminal Code (“Disobedience”).

For example, for the period of eight months of 2022, 6998 military crimes had been registered in the Office of General Prosecutor.

The Figure 14 shows that increasing of the personnel of the Military Forces of Ukraine expectedly led to increasing of crimes committed by Ukrainian military officers and soldiers (Figure 14).

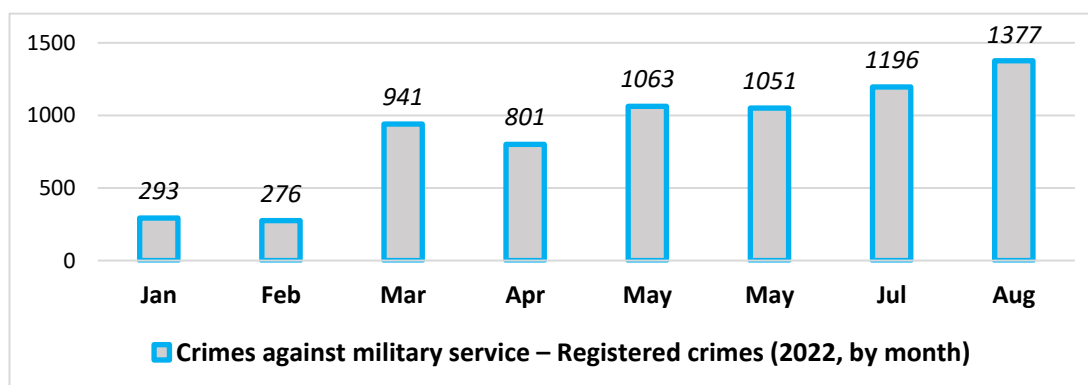


Figure 14. Crimes against military service (2022, by month)

A special stress is paid to number of crimes of *absence without leave from a military unit or place of service* (Article 407 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine). The main conclusion is that the number of registered crimes has increased (although not significantly, see the data, for example, of 2015) parallel to the decrease of identified suspects (Figure 15).

Partly the same could be said about more gravity crime – *desertion* (Article 408 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine) where the number of mention crimes has increased.

On the other hand, the period of eight months of 2022 shows a very interesting trend concerned with a low level of giving of notes of suspicion to concrete suspects. For example, in 2014, a ratio between registered crimes and suspects was 1,4. In 2015, the same ration was 1,1. As far as the first eight month of 2022 is concerned, the same ratio was 11,6 (Figure 16).

No fewer interesting conclusions could be drawn from the use of Article 426-1 (*Excess of power or official authority by a military official*). While in 2016, 65 crimes had been registered with 17 suspects, in 2022 we can observe increasing distance between number of crimes (Figure 17).

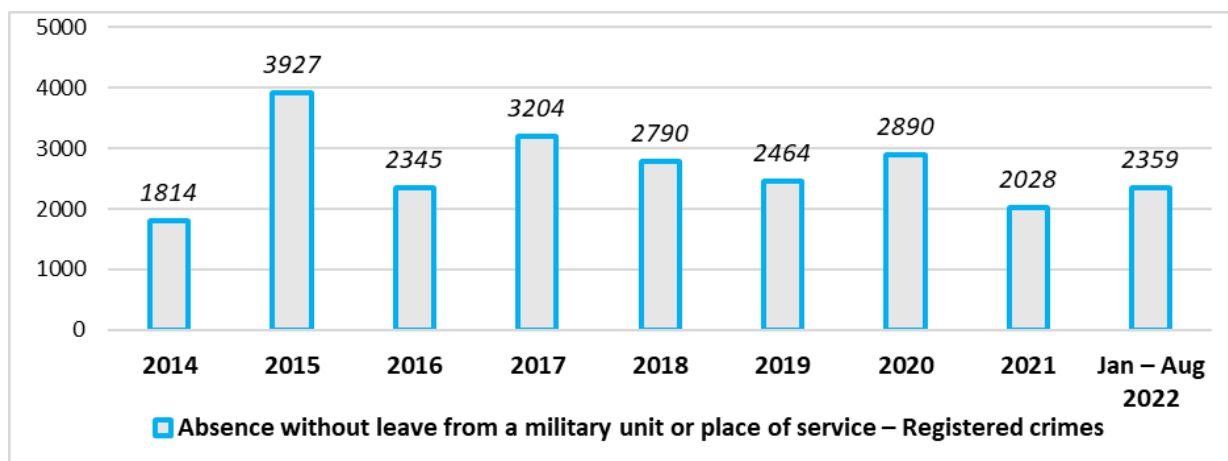


Figure 15. Absence without leave from a military unit or place of service (January 2014 – August 2022)

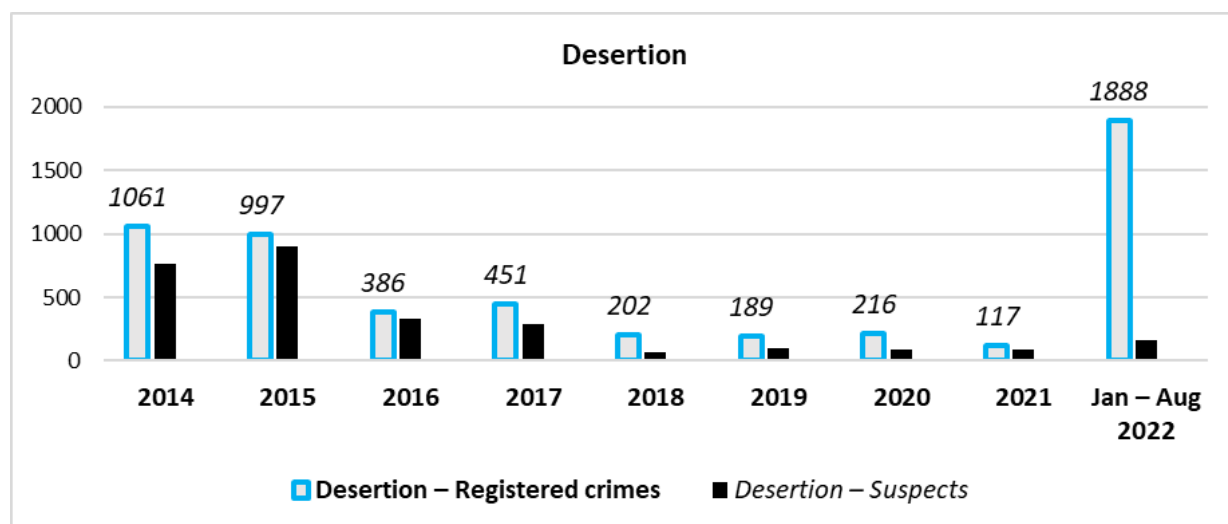


Figure 16. Desertion (January 2016 – August 2022)

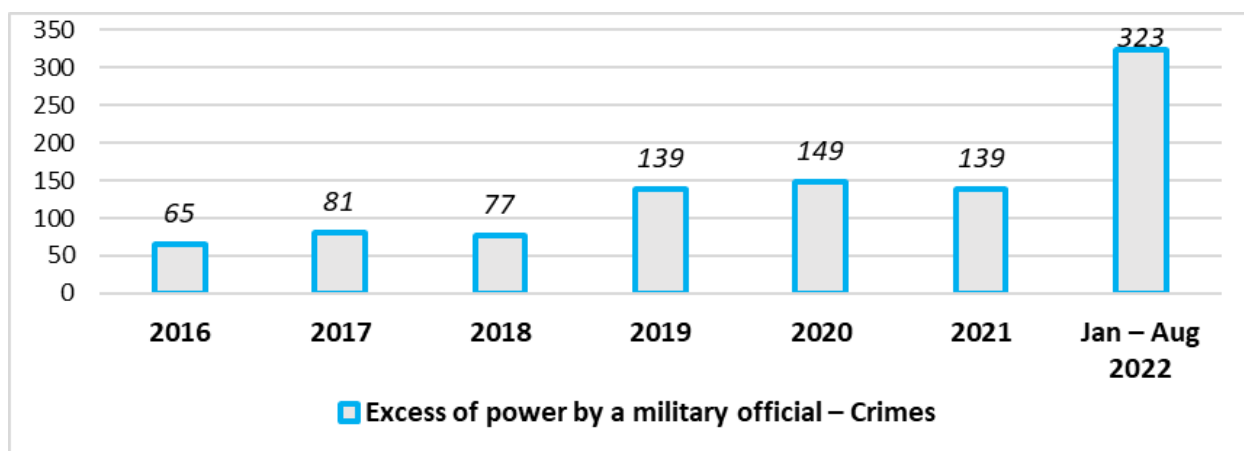


Figure 17. Excess of power or official authority by a military official (January 2016 – August 2022)

Property Crimes

For the period of eight months of 2022, 77970 *property crimes* had been registered in Ukraine. The table below presents the number of *property crimes* registered every month in 2022 (Figure 18).

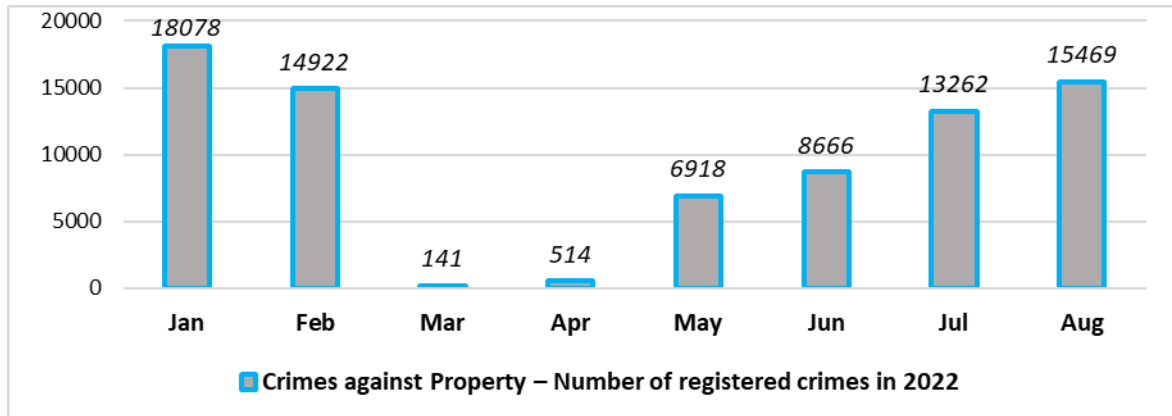


Figure 18. Property crimes (2022, by month)

The table below presents the number of *thefts* registered in the first eight months of 2022 (Figure 19).

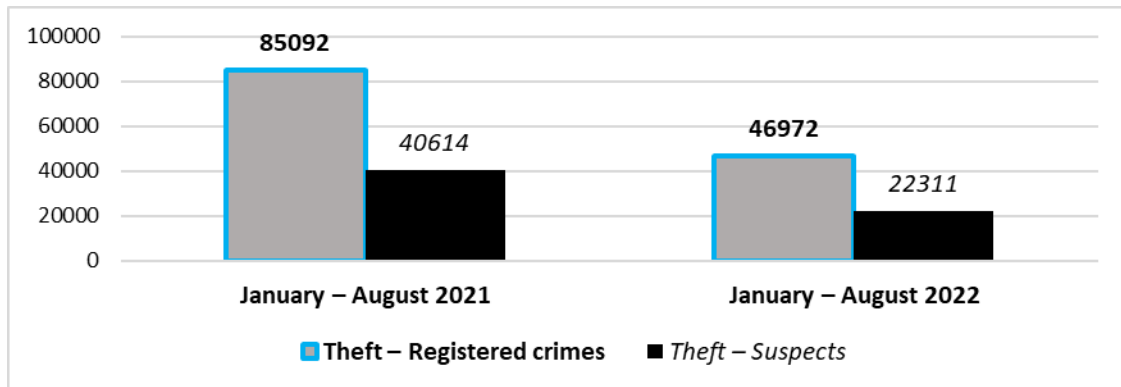


Figure 19. Theft (eight months of 2021 and 2022)

The table below presents the number of *aggravated robberies* registered in the first eight months of 2022 (Figure 20).

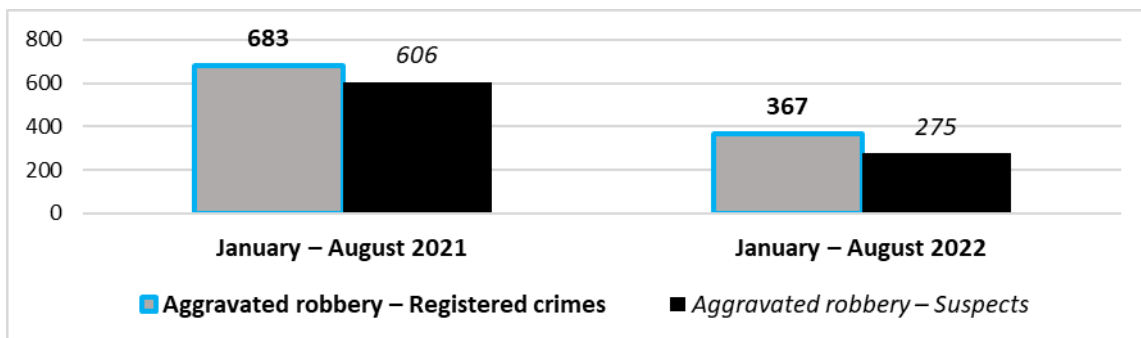


Figure 20. Aggravated robbery (eight months of 2021 and 2022)

Crimes Committed with Firearms

While analyzing *crimes committed with the use of firearms*, it could be expected that crime rates resulted from illegal use of firearms would extremely be rising after February 2022.

Nevertheless, the official crime statistics from the Office of General Prosecutor partly refutes such a presumption.

Yes, it is obvious that the number of crimes committed with weapons has seriously risen for the eight months of 2022 comparing even with the whole year of 2021 (Figure 21).

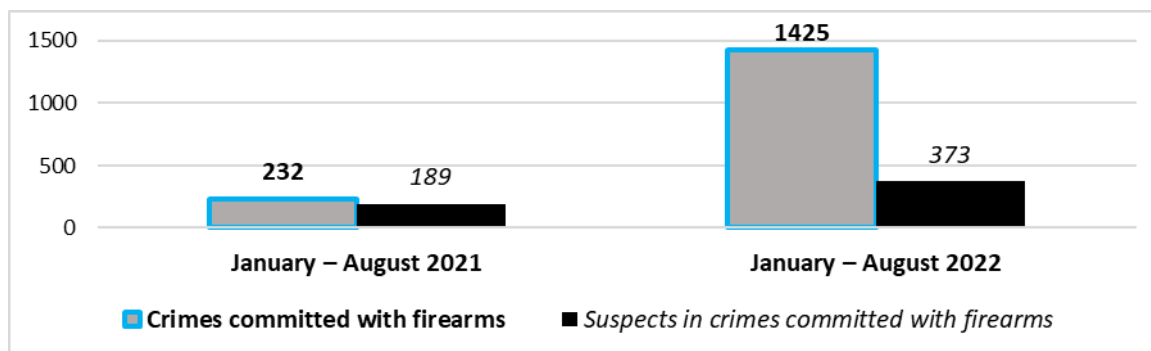


Figure 21. Crimes committed with firearms (eight months of 2021 and 2022)

On the other hand, the Ukrainian history knows examples when number of crimes with weapons was higher even in peacetime (2014, 2015) (Figure 22).

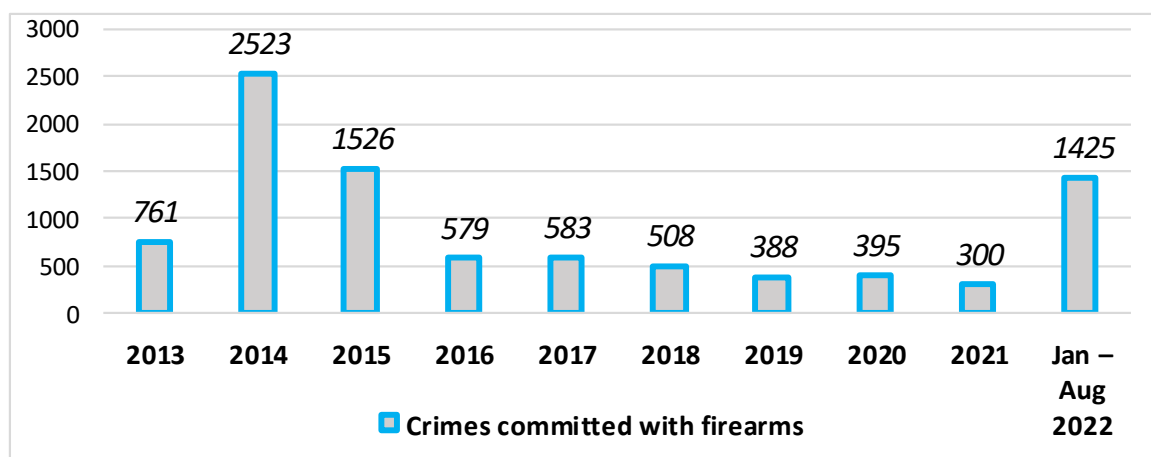


Figure 22. Crimes committed with firearms (January 2013 – August 2022)

Official crime statistics from the Office of General Prosecutor had not proved the hypothesis that ‘saturation’ of the Ukrainian society with firearms during the first days of the 2022 Russian invasion would lead to increase of number of crimes concerned with illegal use of firearms until August 2022.

In contrast, crime statistics for August 2022 have demonstrated a rapid increase of crimes committed with the use of firearms (Figure 23, Figure 24, Figure 25, Figure 26, Figure 27, Figure 28, Figure 29, Figure 30).

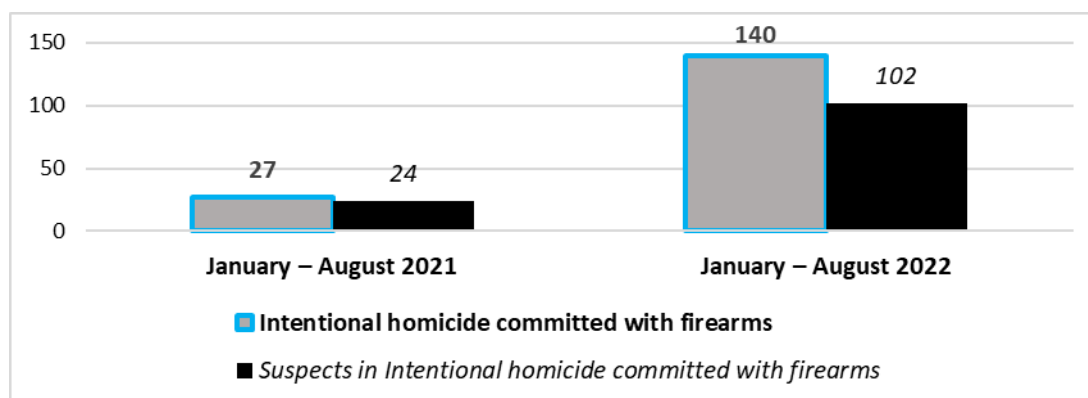


Figure 23. Intentional homicide (eight months of 2021 and 2022)

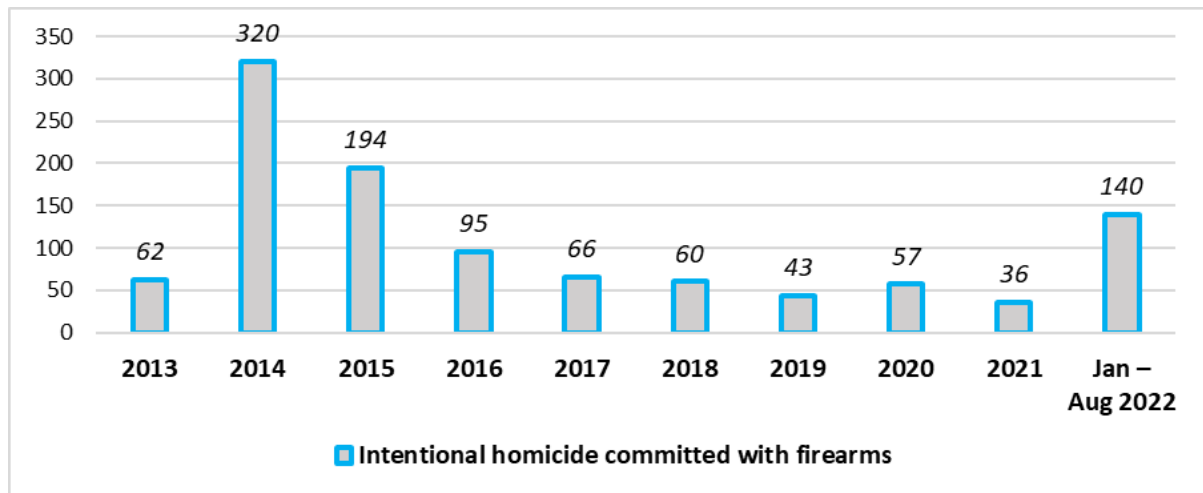


Figure 24. Intentional homicide (January 2013 – August 2022)

The same could be said about *intentional serious bodily harm committed with firearms*.

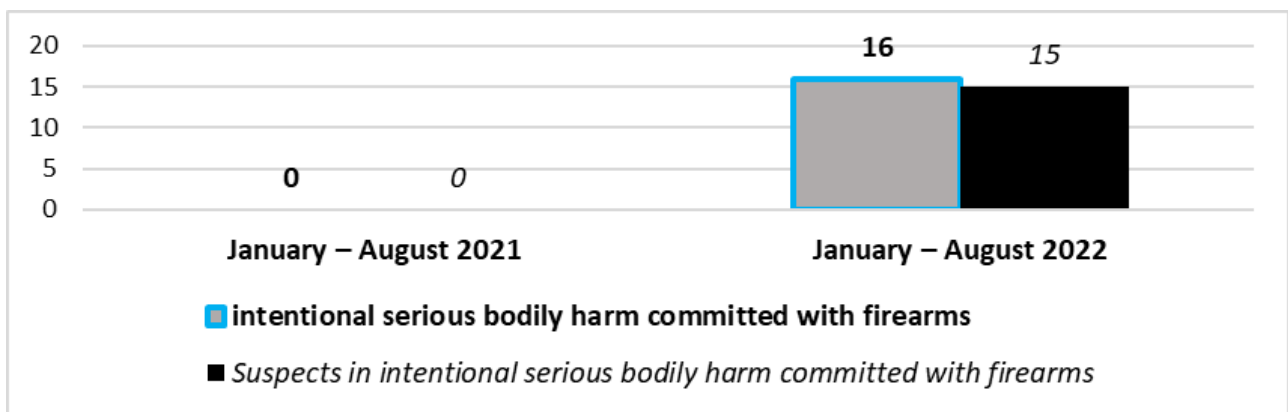


Figure 25. Intentional serious bodily harm committed with firearms (eight months of 2021 and 2022)

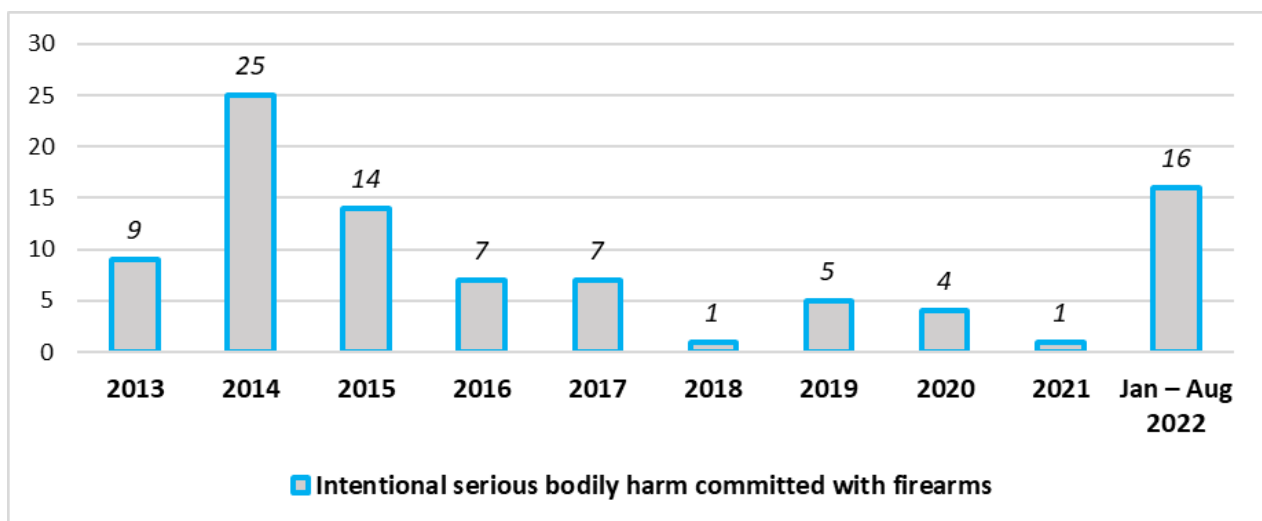


Figure 26. Intentional serious bodily harm committed with firearms (January 2013 – August 2022)

The table below contains data on number of *aggravated robberies committed with the use of firearms* and numbers of suspects in corresponding criminal proceedings (Table 27).

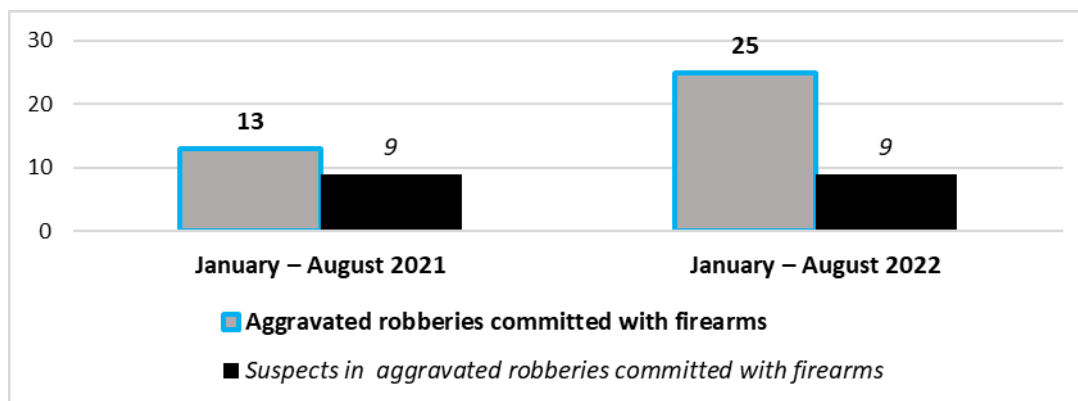


Figure 27. Aggravated robberies (eight months of 2021 and 2022)

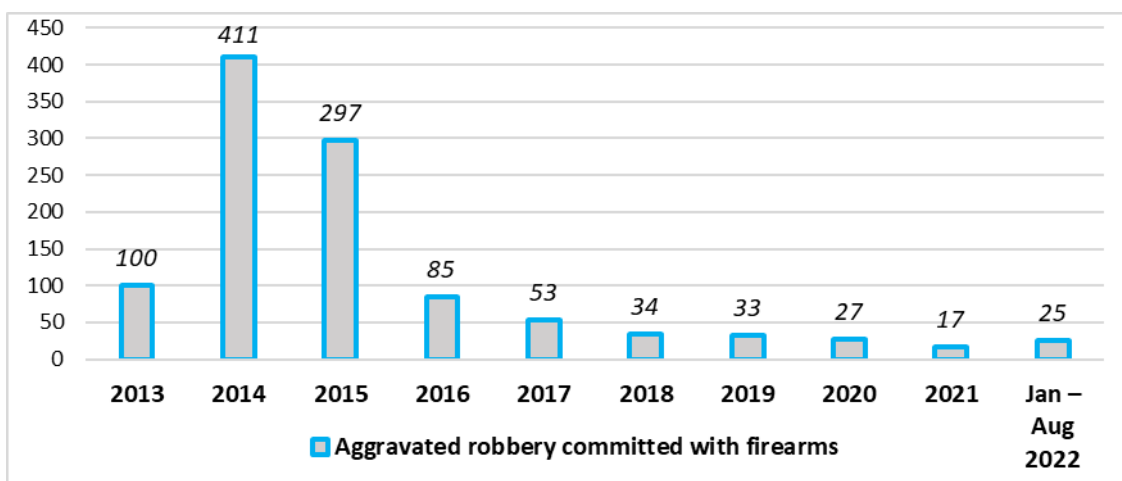


Figure 28. Aggravated robberies with firearms (January 2021 – August 2022)

The table below contains data on number of *crimes committed with the use of explosives* and numbers of suspects in corresponding criminal proceedings (Table 29).

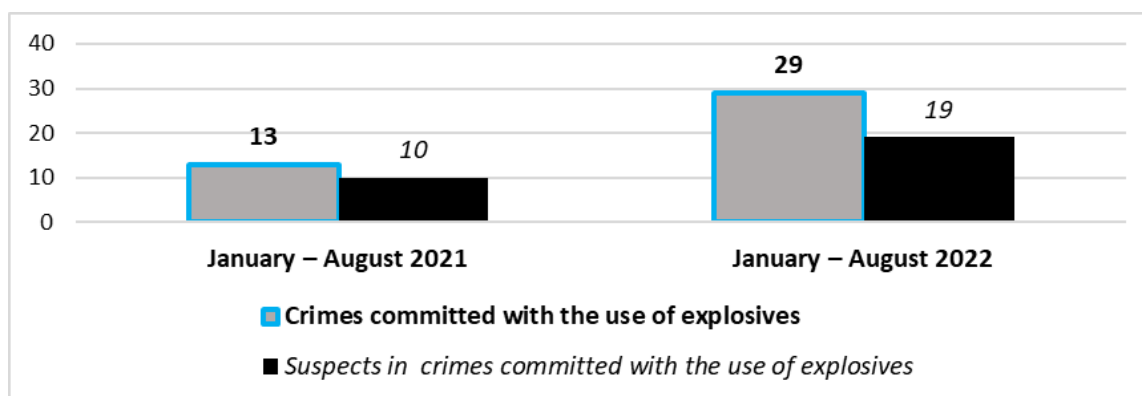


Figure 29. Crimes with the use of explosives (eight months of 2021 and 2022)

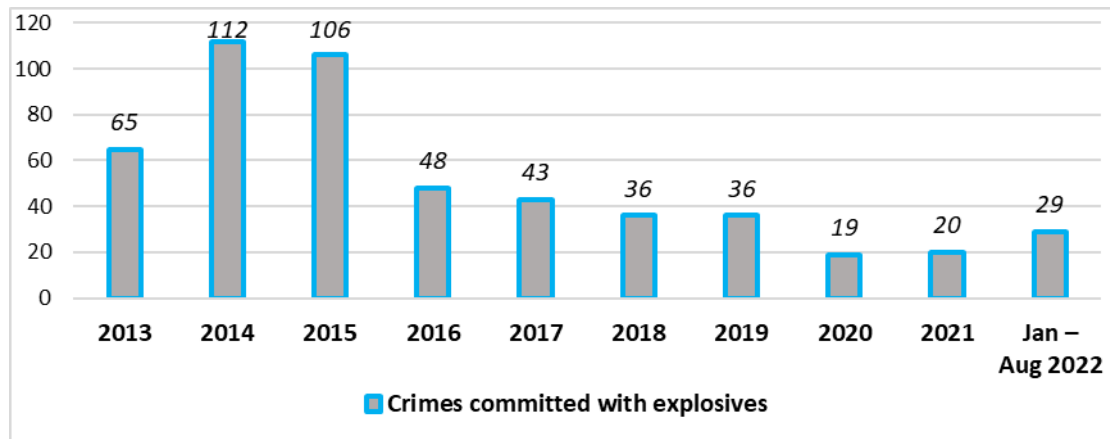


Figure 30. Crimes with the use of explosives (January 2021 – August 2022)

Crimes against Peace, Security of Mankind and International Legal order (War Crimes)

According to official data of the Office of General Prosecutor, as of the end of August 2022, the Ukrainian authorities are investigating 31307 cases of suspected war crimes committed after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

That means that after the 2022 Russian full-scale invasion more than 5000 war crimes are registered in Ukraine every month (Figure 31).

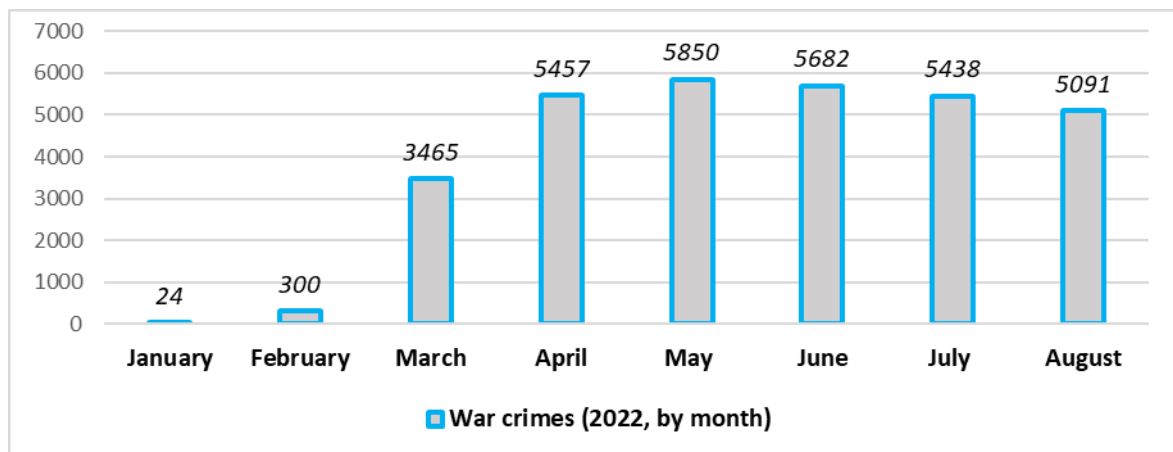


Figure 31. War crimes (2022, by month)

Sex Crimes

As crime statistics show, the wartime has impacted the crime rates concerned with *sex crimes* in Ukraine.

Yes, it is obvious that data for the period of eight months 2022 show a decrease in sex crimes (Figure 32, Figure 33, Figure 34).

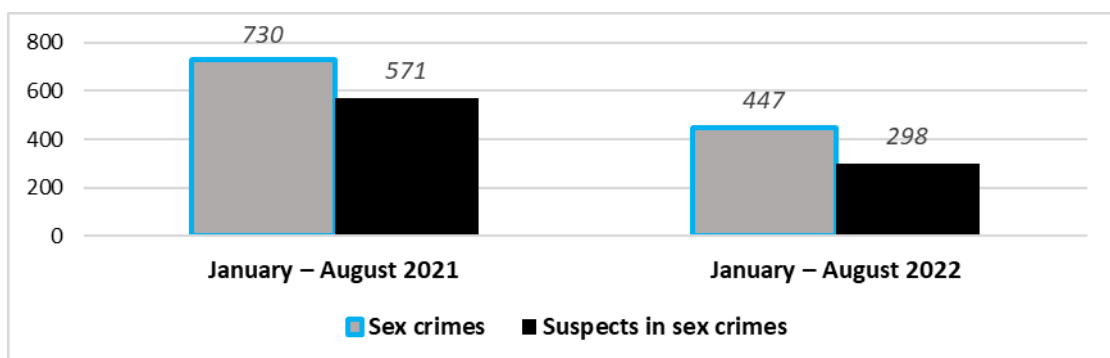


Figure 32. Sex crimes (eight months 2021 and 2022)

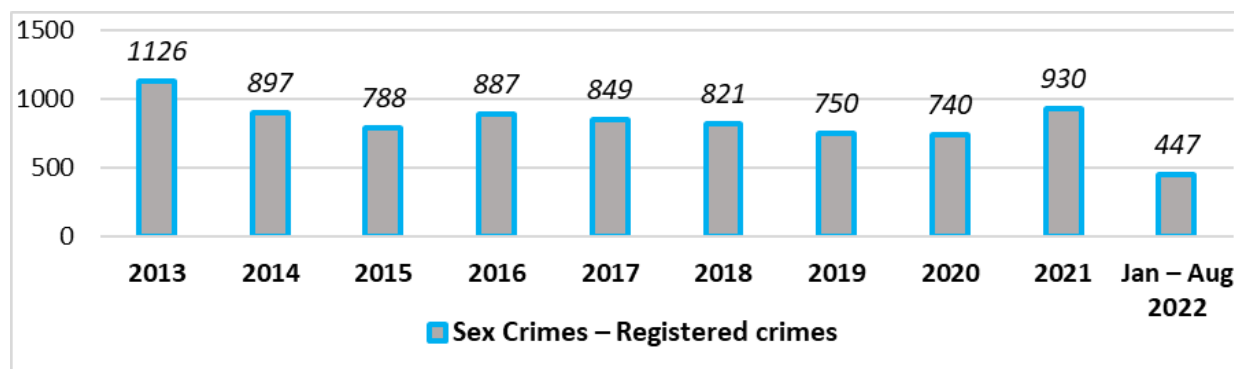


Figure 33. Sex crimes (January 2013 – August 2022)

Nevertheless, we cannot say that broadly implemented wartime restrictions led to serious decreasing of *sex crimes* in Ukraine.

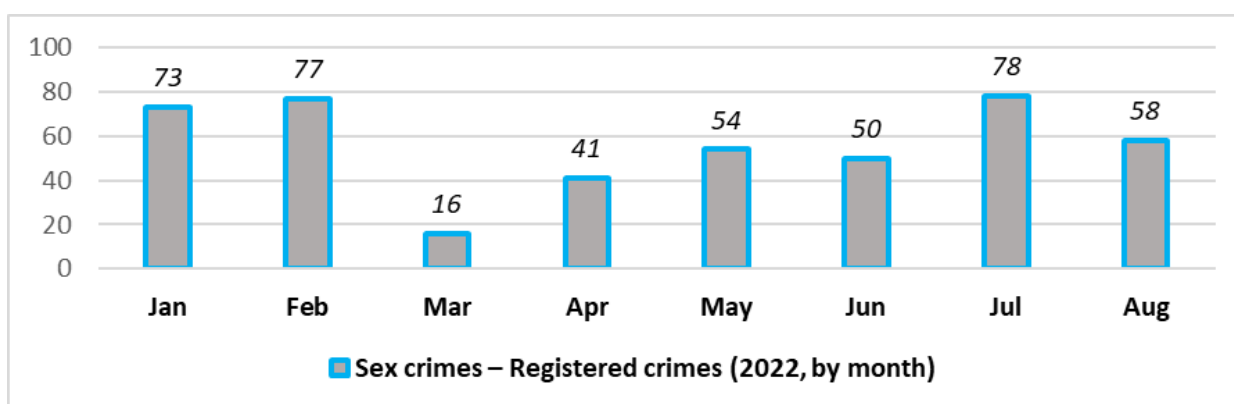


Figure 34. Sex crimes (2022, by month)

The same could be said relating to *rapes* where crime statistics show only a particular decrease (Figure 35).

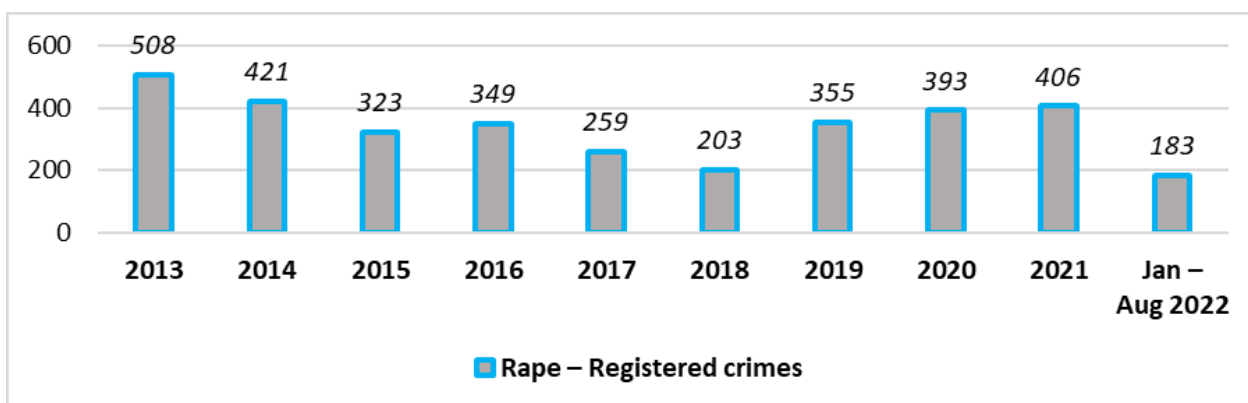


Figure 35. Rape (January 2013 – August 2022)

As official crime statistics show, monthly number of *rapes* committed in 2022 was not affected with wartime restrictions (Figure 36).

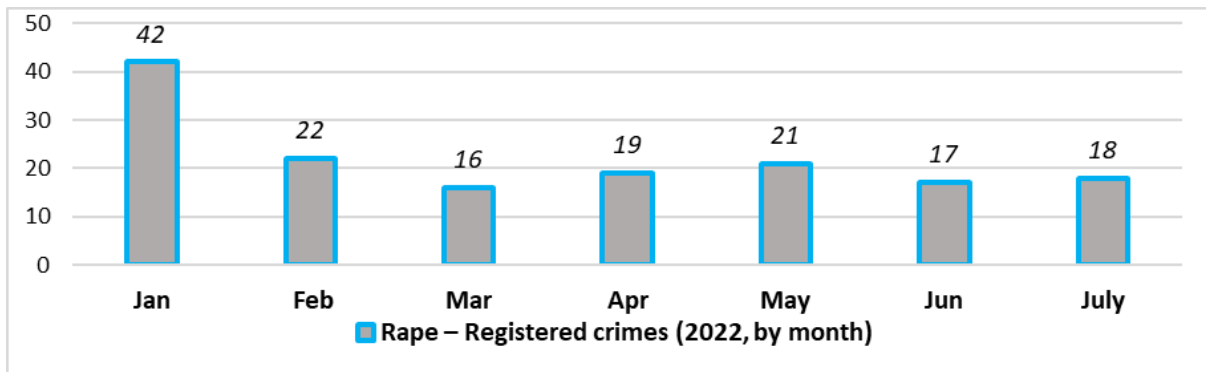


Figure 36. Rape (2022, by month)

Family violence crime

The same could be said concerning *family violence crimes* which decreased significantly (Figure 37, Figure 38, Figure 39).

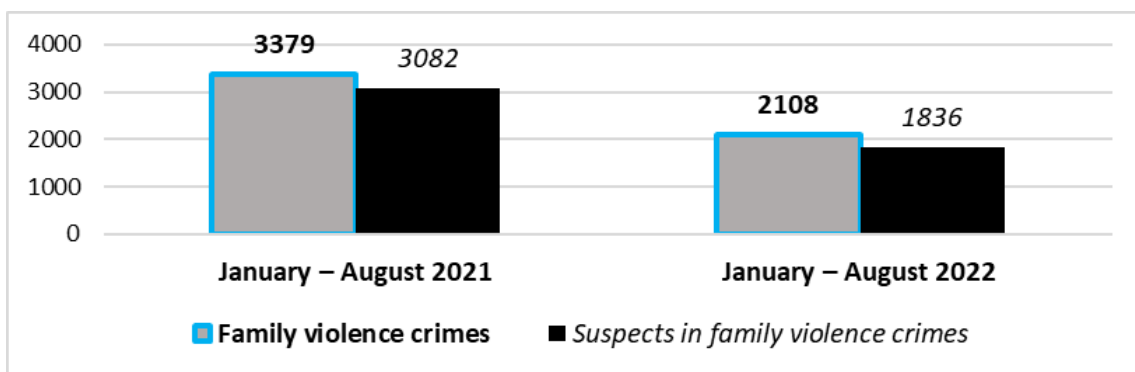


Figure 37. Family violence crimes (eight months of 2021 and 2022)

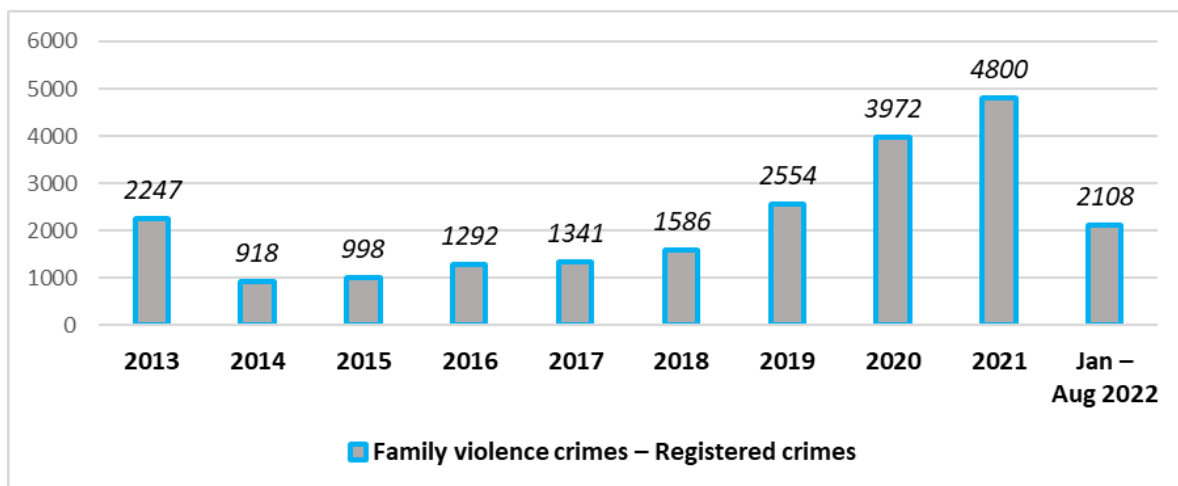


Figure 38. Family violence crimes (January 2013 – August 2022)

Nevertheless, every month from the beginning of the 2022 Russian invasion to Ukraine demonstrates an increase in *family violence crimes* (Figure 39).

Hooliganism

No less interesting for the aims of the analysis of the criminological situation in Ukraine is the crime of *hooliganism* (according to Article 296 Criminal Code of Ukraine – a serious disturbance of the public order based on motives of explicit disrespect to community in a most outrageous or exceptionally cynical manner) which can be used as an example of impacts of harsh wartime restrictions with curfews, military and the police patrols as well as roadblocks on normal social life.

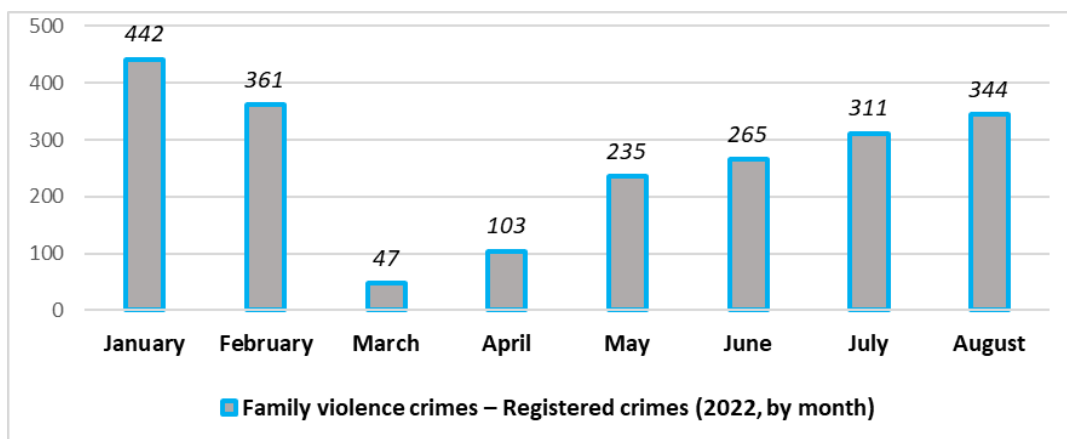


Figure 39. Family violence crimes (2022, by month)

Generally concluding, crimes of *hooliganism* had had a permanent trend to decreasing for the last nine years where the 2021 restrictions resulted from the COVID pandemic should be also noted.

In 2022, a particular decrease of acts of *hooliganism* should be considered as a result of the next Russian military invasion. If in 2021 crimes of *hooliganism* were widely prevented by closing public spaces (shopping centres, cinemas, public transport etc.), the COVID pandemic was almost ‘forgotten’ by general population in the beginning of 2022. Accordingly, the end of February 2022 has led to harsher physical restrictions of possible actions aimed at violation of public order (Figure 40).

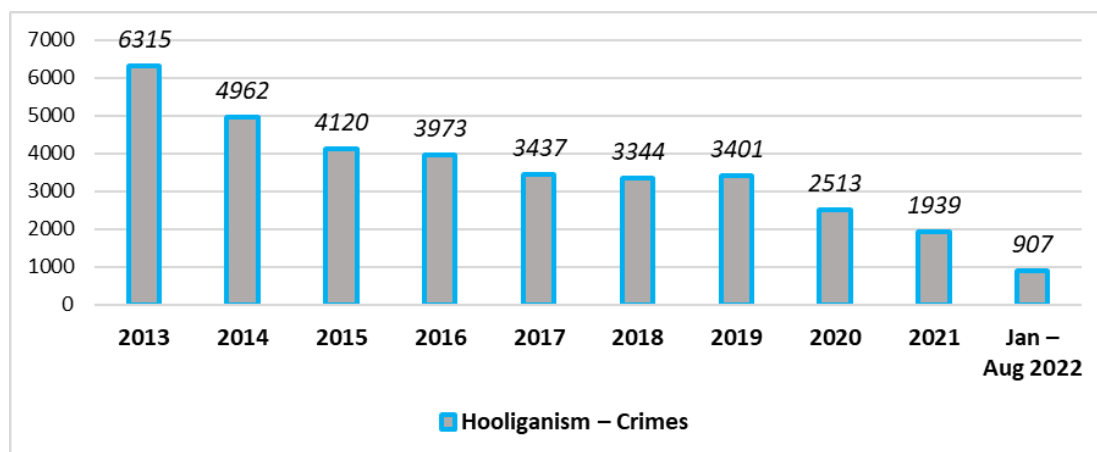


Figure 40. Hooliganism (January 2013 – August 2022)

On the other hand, number of crimes of *hooliganism* almost disappeared from social life in February – March 2022, appeared again in April 2022 with a trend to increasing. Correspondingly, such a trend should be considered an indicator of conditional stabilization of social life in Ukraine mostly in areas far from the frontline (Figure 41).

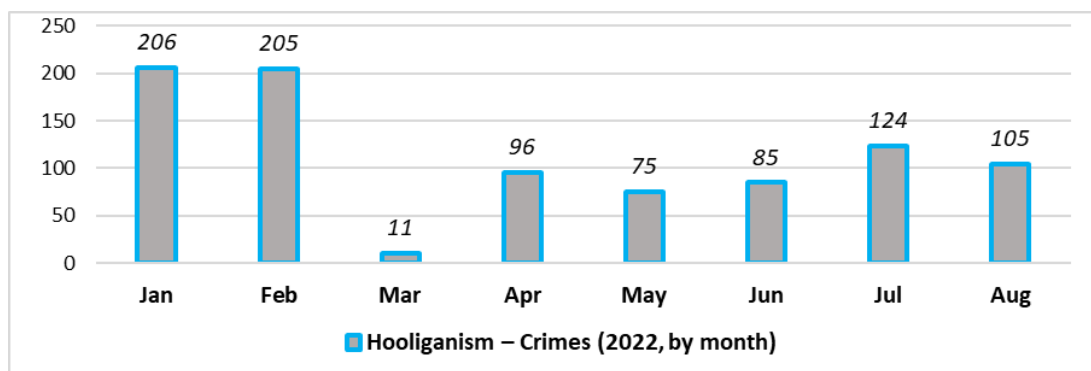


Figure 41. Hooliganism (2022, by month)

The Prison System and Probation

The Ukrainian prison system appeared not ready to Russian invasion; prison administrations affected by the war were not ready to face military aggression. Thus, the evacuation of prisoners had led to violations of the prison regime, torture, inhuman treatment and violation of private and family life due to tensions between staff and prisoners.

Nevertheless, the Ukrainian prison system did not face the increased number of prison riots and other forms of illegal actions aimed at disorganization of corrections in 2022: one crime of mentioned type was registered in February 2022 and one crime was registered in July 2022 where no suspects were found in both cases.

A comparative analysis of numbers of this type of crime committed in previous years can prove that enough restrictive measures implemented by prison administration during the wartime led to decrease of any similar illegal actions (Figure 42).

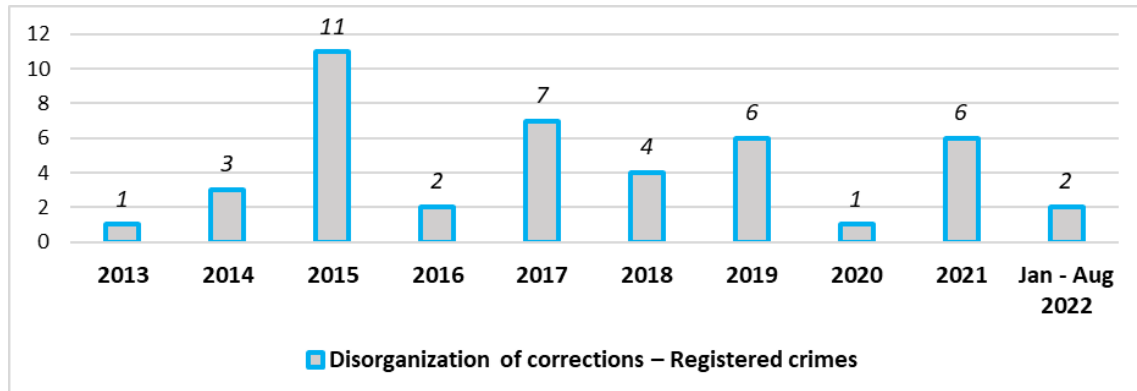


Figure 42. Disorganization of corrections (January 2013 – August 2022)

Obviously, the chaos of the first days of the Russian invasion affected the prison system to a large extent what caused the bigger number of *escapes of prisoners* from different types of prison establishments (Figure 43).

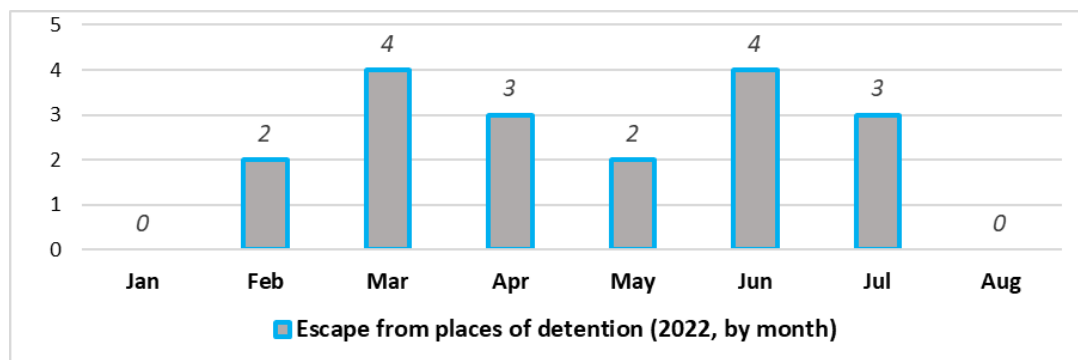


Figure 43. Escape from places of detention (2022, by month)

The number of escaped prisoners for the eight months of 2022 is bigger than in previous years but not yet so sufficient as compared with 2013 – 2019 (Figure 44).

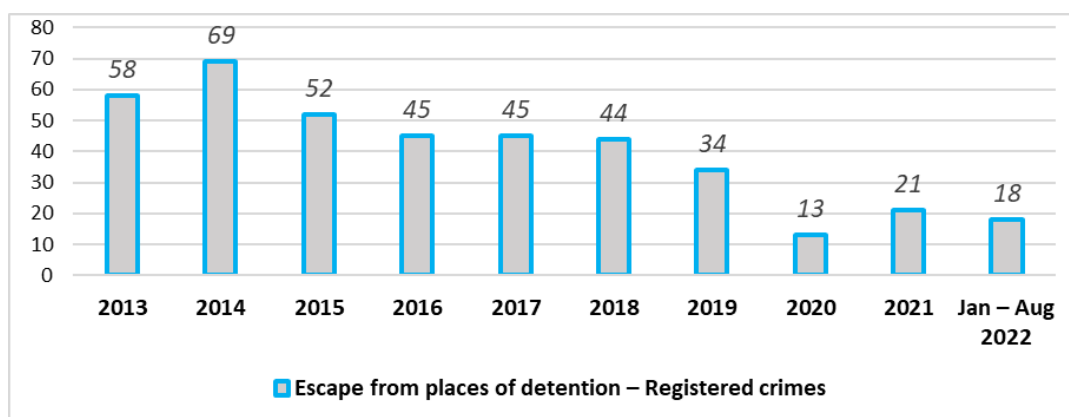


Figure 44. Escape from places of detention (January 2013 – August 2022)

Probation service

The table below presents the number of *avoidances of community punishment* registered every month (January – August) in 2022 (Figure 45).

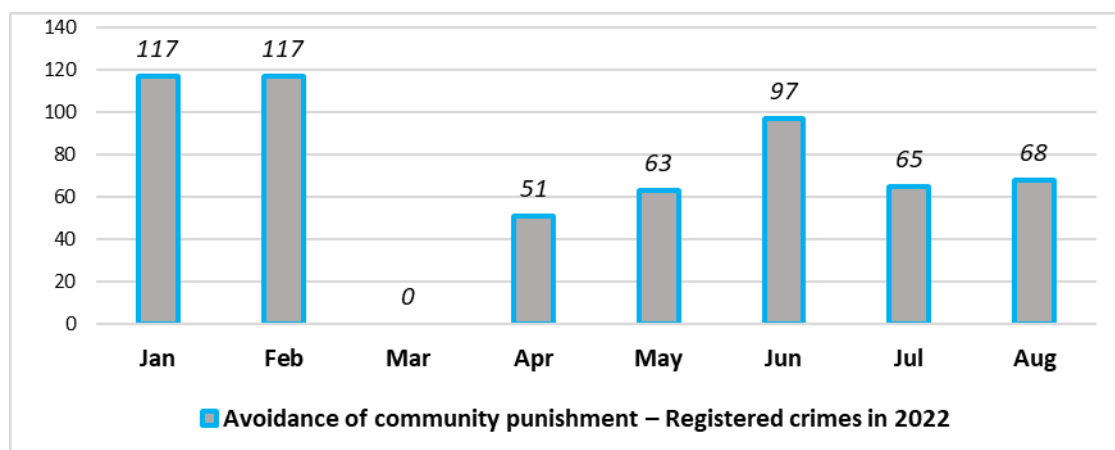


Figure 45. Avoidance of community punishment (2022, by month)

The table below presents the number of *avoidances of community punishment* registered in 2013 – 2022 (Figure 46).

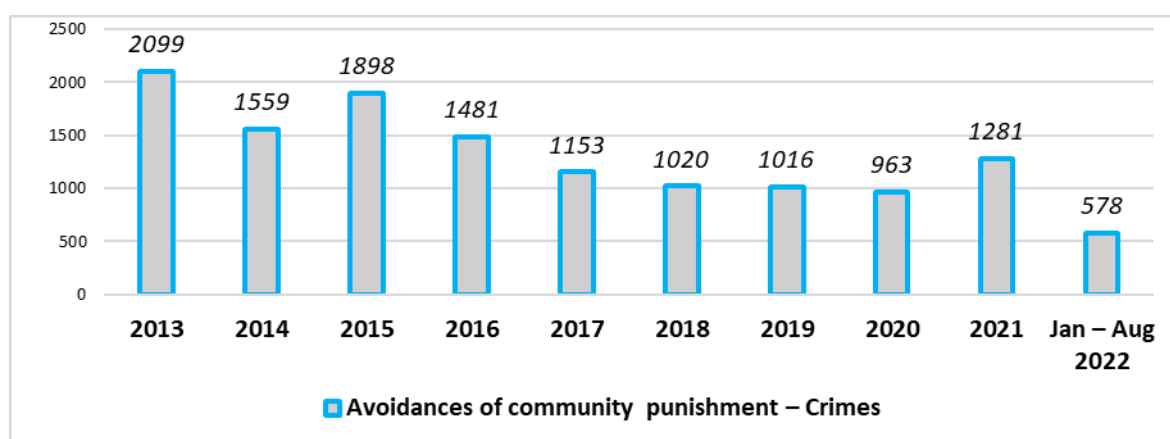


Figure 46. Avoidance of community punishment (January 2013 – August 2022)

Conclusions

Having summarized up presented above ideas, we have come to the following conclusions that reflect the state of things within the wartime Ukrainian criminal justice system.

Crime statistics for August 2022 supported to a large extent our previous preliminary conclusions of the subject of crime trends in Ukraine.

It was August 2022 that changed the general picture of the crime trends in Ukraine.

Firstly, it concerns with crimes committed with the use of firearms and explosives. Our preliminary fears that “saturation” the Ukrainian society with *firearms and explosives* would lead to increasing criminality seem to have grounds. More grounded conclusions will be drawn later, at least based on crime statistics for the period of 9 months of 2022. Nevertheless, already demonstrated increase in crimes with the use of firearms and explosives put on the agenda an issue of safety and security in the Ukrainian society.

Much more interesting issue is one of *drug-related offences* in Ukraine. It is surprising that the 2022 Russian invasion to Ukraine has not ‘cut’ crime trends in the area of illegal possession and use of drugs. In contrast, official data demonstrate that the wartime period is associated with increasing of drug-related crimes.

As far military crimes and war crimes are concerned, corresponding crime rates are expectedly rising in the light of the continuous aggression of Russia against Ukraine.

General conclusion on the crime trends in Ukraine is concerned with the fact that both criminality and law-enforcement bodies as well as citizen have become *adapted* to conditions and restriction of the wartime period.