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## **Life on the outskirts of Kyiv in the first months of the full-scale russian invasion of 2022**

My name is Maruna Galushko. This is my personal story. I live on the outskirts of Kyiv, 15 km from Bucha and Irpin, which you may have heard of. You can view several photos of peaceful Bucha before russian invasion of Ukraine.



[https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Бучанський\\_міський\\_парк#/media/Файл:Бучанський\\_міський\\_парк\\_01.jpg](https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Бучанський_міський_парк#/media/Файл:Бучанський_міський_парк_01.jpg)

(Revised: 10.07.2024)

City park in Bucha. The photos were created in 2021.



[https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Бучанський\\_міський\\_парк#/media/Файл:Вхід\\_до\\_Бучанського\\_міського\\_парку.jpg](https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Бучанський_міський_парк#/media/Файл:Вхід_до_Бучанського_міського_парку.jpg) (Revised: 10.07.2024)



Mosaic on Yaroslav the Wise Street. Bucha. The photo was created in 2021. Photo: Rasal Hague.

[https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Файл:Мозаїка\\_Буча\\_\(20210510\).jpg](https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Файл:Мозаїка_Буча_(20210510).jpg) (Revised: 10.07.2024)



Church of the Holy Apostle Andrew the First-Called (Orthodox Church of Ukraine). Bucha. The photo was created in 2017. Photo: Rasal Hague.

[https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Церква\\_Святого\\_Апостола\\_Андрія\\_Первозваного\\_\(Буча\)#/media/Файл:Андріївський\\_храм\\_\(Буча\)\\_20170630.jpg](https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Церква_Святого_Апостола_Андрія_Первозваного_(Буча)#/media/Файл:Андріївський_храм_(Буча)_20170630.jpg) (Revised: 10.07.2024)

The battle of Bucha was part of the Kyiv offensive in the Russian invasion of Ukraine for control of the town of Bucha. The combatants in the battle of Bucha were parts of the Armed Forces of Russian Federation and the Ground Forces of Ukraine. The battle lasted from 27 February to 31 March 2022 and ended with the withdrawal of Russian troops. The battle was part of a broader Russian invasion tactic to encircle Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine.



Vokzalna Street of Bucha where a russian military column was destroyed on 27 February 2022. The photo was created on April 4, 2022. Author: Ukrinform TV / Ukrainian Armed Forces  
[https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Файл:Bucha\\_main\\_street,\\_2022-04-06\\_\(0804\).jpg](https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Файл:Bucha_main_street,_2022-04-06_(0804).jpg) (Revised: 10.07.2024)

The Armed Forces of Ukraine resisted the russian offensive in the western suburbs of Kyiv – Irpin, Bucha, and Hostomel, which were the most dangerous places in the Kyiv region.

After russian troops withdrew from Bucha and Ukrainian forces regained control of the town, reports of revealed atrocities by the russian military shocked international attention.

During the russian invasion of Ukraine in February – March 2022, russian troops carried out a mass killing of civilians in Bucha, known as the Buchan Massacre.

The Buchan massacre, or Buchan genocide, was the mass murder of Ukrainian civilians and prisoners of war by the russian Armed Forces in Bucha, which was accompanied by abductions, torture, rape, including children, and looting.

The crimes were committed by the armed forces and other formations of the russian federation, despite repeated statements that russia only attacked military targets. Photo and video evidence of the massacre emerged on 1 April 2022 after russian troops withdrew from the town.

On March 24, 2022, Bucha was awarded the honorary title "Hero City of Ukraine" by the Decree of the President of Ukraine to commemorate the feat, mass heroism, and resilience of citizens, shown in the defense of their cities during the repulsion of the armed aggression of the russian federation against Ukraine.



“Synergia-3” housing estate a few days before the russian invasion. Irpin. The photo was created on February 19, 2022. Photo: Rasal Hague. [https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ірпін#/media/Файл:Синергія\\_3\\_\(20220219\).jpg](https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ірпін#/media/Файл:Синергія_3_(20220219).jpg) (Revised: 10.07.2024)

Irpin is a Ukrainian town in the suburbs of Kyiv, located on the Irpin River, in the Buchansky district of Kyiv region.

The battle of Irpin was part of the Kyiv offensive operation during the 2022 russian invasion of Ukraine to control Irpin. The combatants were units of the russian Armed Forces and Ground Forces of Ukraine.

The battle lasted from 27 February 2022 to 28 March 2022 and ended with Ukrainian troops recapturing the city. The battle was marked by fierce fights in the town.

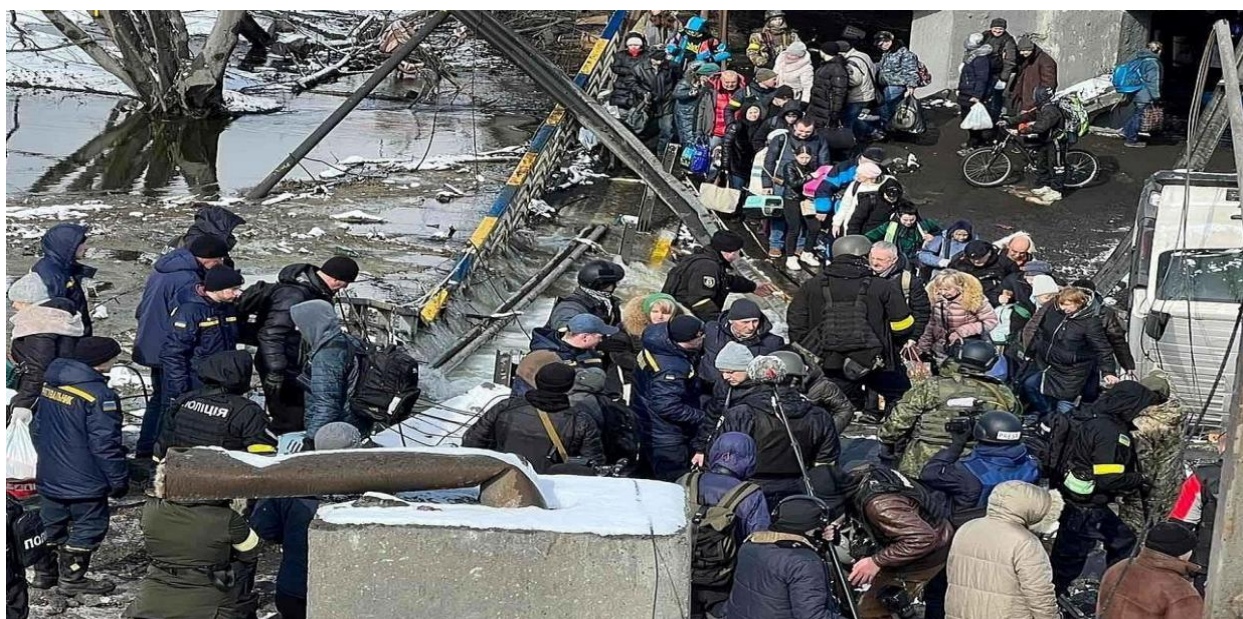
Almost 70% of Irpin was heavily damaged or destroyed as a result.

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**A destroyed residential building in Irpin during the Russian invasion. Residential complex "Irpinski Lyvky". The photo was created on June 16, 2022. Photo: Rasal Hague.**

[https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Файл:A\\_damaged\\_building\\_Irpin\\_Lyvky.jpg](https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Файл:A_damaged_building_Irpin_Lyvky.jpg) (Revised: 10.07.2024)



**Transfer of civilians from Irpin to Kyiv due to Russian attacks. The photo was created on March 8, 2022. Author: Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine.**

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=326165696205753&set=pcb.326165992872390> (Revised: 10.07.2024)



The building was destroyed by the russians. Irpin. The photo was created on March 2, 2022. Author: Serhii Nuzhnenko (RFE/RL Graphics) <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-irpin-pidryv-kolii/31737420.html> (Revised: 10.07.2024)

February 24 remained in my memory for the rest of my life only as a huge horror that was brought to my Ukrainian land by terrorist russia.

The first thing I did. I called all my friends, and acquaintances, woke up those who were sleeping, asked them to prepare documents, and then waited.

The first hours of a full-scale invasion, the first air alarms, the first explosions, the screams and tears of people who did not understand what to do next, chaos. My parents and I decided to live in the basement of our house, as the russian soldiers were too close.

On the very first day of the full-scale invasion, the Ukrainian territorial defense stopped tanks and armored personnel carriers on our street, which captured russian inhumans and tried to break through further into the city.

Then the news from Bucha, Irpin, and Mariupol, made the blood freeze in the veins and some ignorance of what is happening now.

The understanding came that this is not a movie, not a post-apocalypse, but the reality of every Ukrainian in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Over the next month, shells exploded twice within a radius of 500 meters from me. The blast wave from them almost broke the windows in our house.

Two months later, the air alarm began, which sounded louder than usual. We ran outside, where rockets were flying over our heads. I have never felt such fear. Then our friends who moved to Belgium four years ago called. They clearly and calmly said only one phrase: “You must leave”. We took it as a sign and the next day left for Belgium, where another story began. A story that lasted me almost a year and a half.

I do not know what will happen next, how long the war will last and how many friends will have to be buried, how many tears will be shed for all the foreigners who give their lives for our peaceful existence.

The only thing I am sure of is that Ukraine will win. However, the only thing we will not be able to fix is the lost lives of people whose names will forever be engraved in the history of my Motherland Ukraine.