

Russian Invasion of Ukraine

by Anna Ungiadze

- Background:
 - Putin & “Greater Russia”
 - Zelenskyy & Ukraine’s identity
 - The Putin Strategy
 - Events of 2014
- 2022 invasion:
 - Timeline
 - Comparison with Russo-Georgian War
 - Costs of war
 - Reactions to war
 - Possible Scenarios

Vladimir Putin

- Former intelligence agent.
- In power since 1999. In 2021, signed law enabling him to stay in power until 2036.
- Authoritarian regime, corruption, the circle of oligarchs.
- Imperialist motives, establishment of the “Greater Russia”, USSR nostalgia.
- “I see the collapse of the Soviet Union as a great tragedy of the XX century.”
- Misinterpretations and manipulations of historic events.
- Claims that Ukraine is not a country.



Volodymyr Zelenskyy



- Former comedian.
- Jewish descendant.
- Starred in a tv-show called “Servant of the People”, playing Ukraine’s president.
 - In power since 2019.
 - Pro-EU, pro-NATO.
- Refused to leave Kyiv, even after being targeted directly.
 - Gained worldwide admiration and respect.
- Direct & regular speeches.

Post-Soviet States





Russian irredentism - "THE GREATER RUSSIA"
Annexing the parts of the so-called "near abroad"



NATO member states



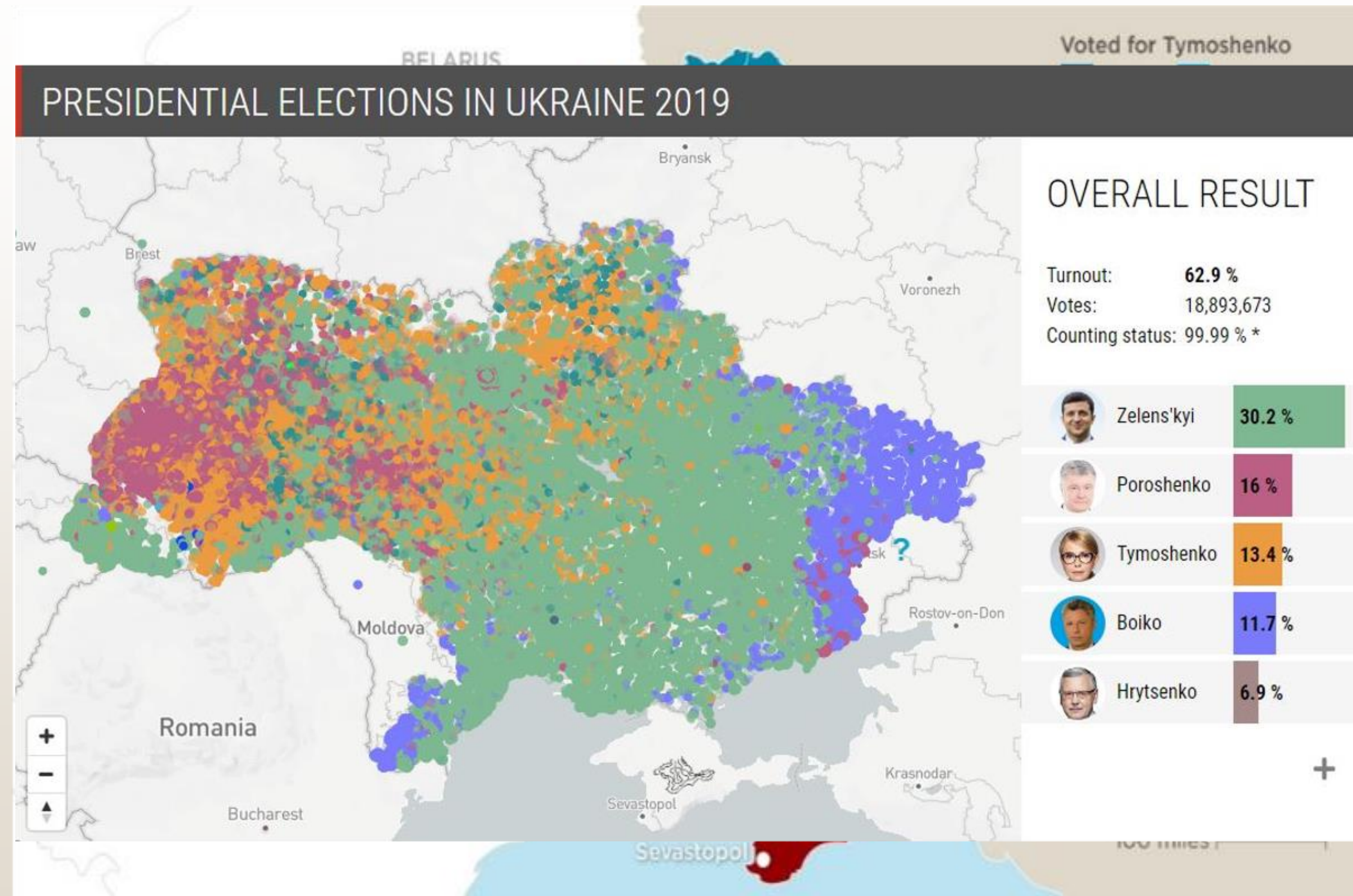
Ukraine's origins

- Kyivan Rus (9th – 11th centuries)
- Grand Duchy of Lithuania (ca. 1320-1569)
- Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1569–1795)
- Ukraine in the Russian Empire (18thc – 1917)
- Ukrainian People's Republic (1917-1921)
- USSR (1921-1991)
- Ukraine (1991-)



Ukraine — regional differences

- While they exist, they are not insurmountable and do not easily split on east/west, Ukrainian/Russian axis.
- Galicia (western) and Donbass (eastern) regions at opposite extremes.



The Putin Strategy

- Find a group of people (e.g. ethnic minorities) that can be used as a leverage.
- Spread the idea of separation, provoke and manipulate the minority groups.
- Create tension between the government and the minorities.
- Attack the targeted region/community and blame their government instead.
- Cyberattacks - first used against Georgia in 2008, used against Ukraine later; Russia targets the country's government websites, starting cyber-warfare before using hard power.
- Invade the targeted country, claiming that they are protecting the marginalised minority/fighting nazism/delivering humanitarian aid/peacekeeping.

2014

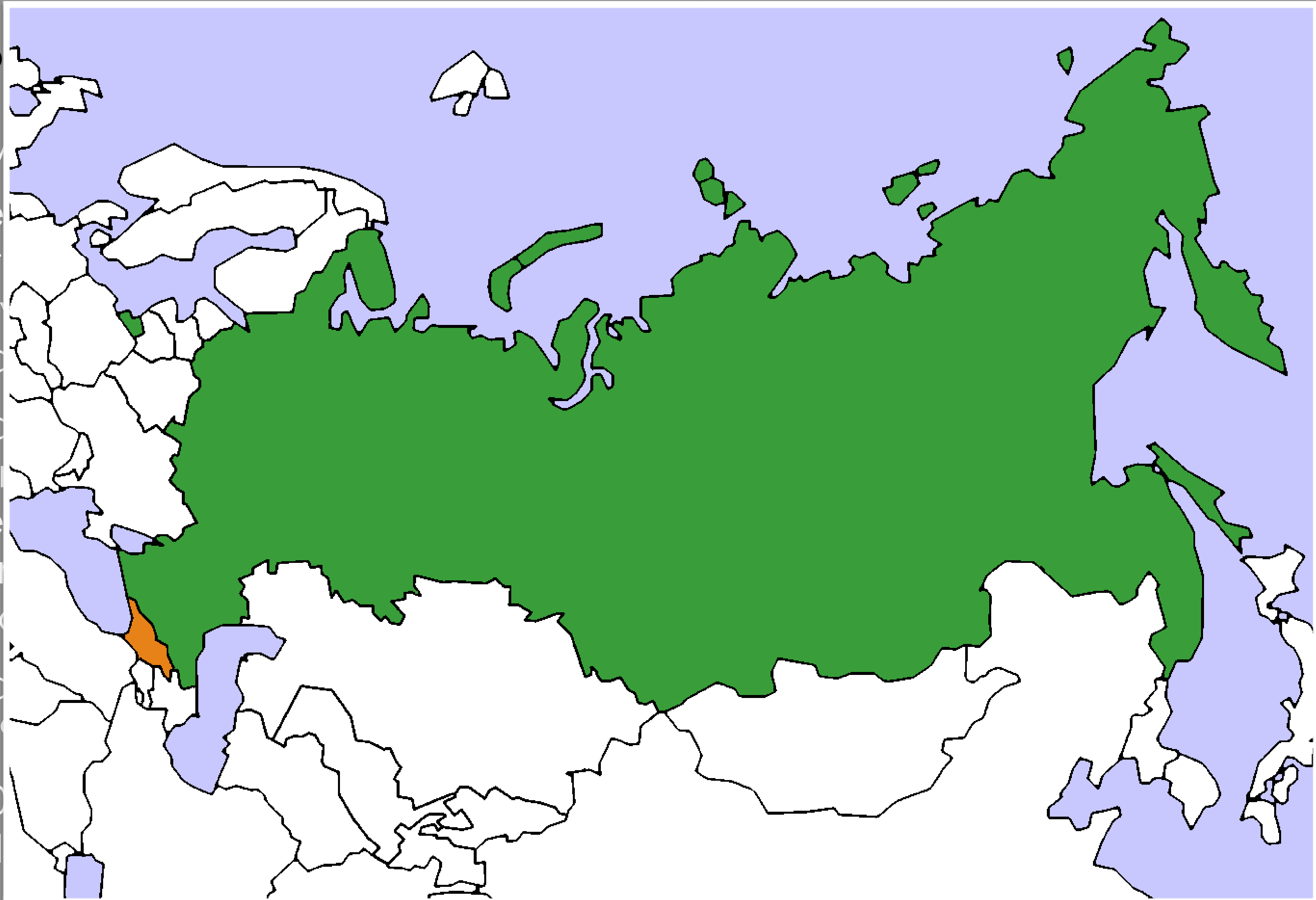
- > 2004 - **pro-Russian Yanukovych** won elections, however, international monitors doubted the elections.
- > Orange Revolution. Results deemed invalid, **pro-European Yushchenko** wins new elections.
- > 2010 - **Yanukovych** wins elections.
- > 2013 - Yanukovych stopped trade talks with the EU, instead pursuing a similar agreement with Russia, crowds gathered in Kyiv's **Maidan** or Independent square.
- > As 2014 began, authorities grew more violent. The opposition and government reached a truce and Yanukovych fled to Russia.
- > Mysterious, unidentified soldiers appear in **Crimea**. The Crimean parliament voted to secede from Ukraine and join Russia. **Russia annexes Crimea.**
- > The events in Crimea had inspired pro Russian separatists in two other regions Donetsk and Luhansk, collectively known as the **Donbass**.

Russian invasion in Ukraine, 2022

- February 22 - In a televised address, Putin says he recognises the “independence” of Donetsk and Luhansk and sends Russian troops to act as “peacekeepers” there.
- February 24 - In a recorded message, Putin announces a “special military operation” in Ukraine and the first round of missiles aimed at targets in Ukrainian cities is launched.
- February 25 - Zelenskyy announces martial law and bans military-age men, those between the ages of 18 and 60, from leaving the country.
- February 27 - In another escalation, Putin announces that he has placed Russia's nuclear deterrent force on alert in response to Nato's “aggressive” statements.
- February 28 - Peace talks on the Belarusian border yield no results. Zelenskyy calls for fast-track membership of the EU “via a new special procedure”.

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Comparison: Russo-Georgian War, 2008

- After months of tensions, on August 7, 2008, the Russian army invaded Georgia and started a full-scale war.
- Russia refrained from capturing Tbilisi and agreed to a ceasefire on August 12 under a six-point agreement mediated by Nicolas Sarkozy.
- On August 26, Russia invaded Abkhazia and South Ossetia / Tskhinvali. "Independence" was recognized.
- 20% of Georgian territory is still occupied by Russia.
- At least 230.000 people displaced, around a 1000 of official casualties.

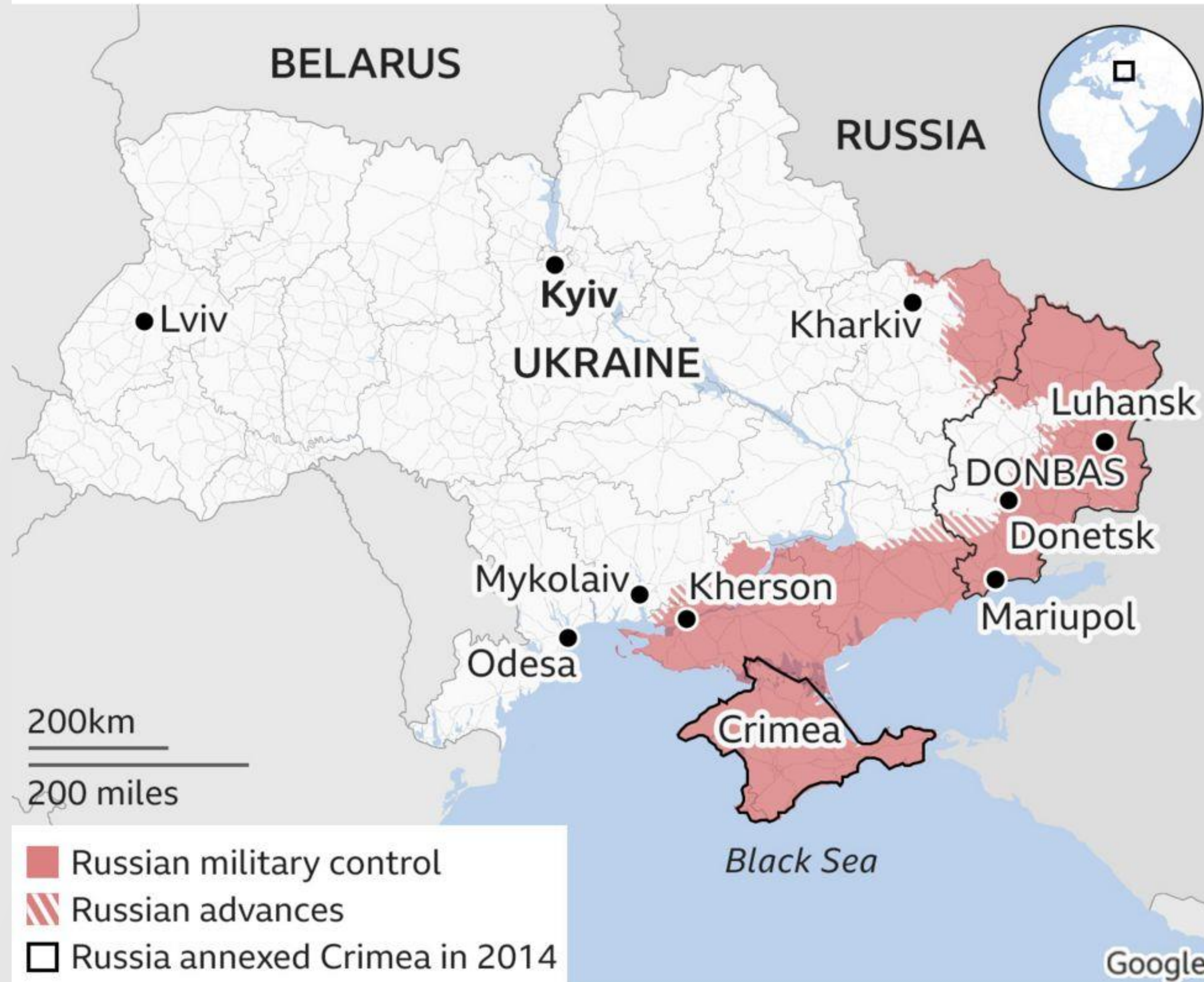


Ukrainians attempting to push back Russians

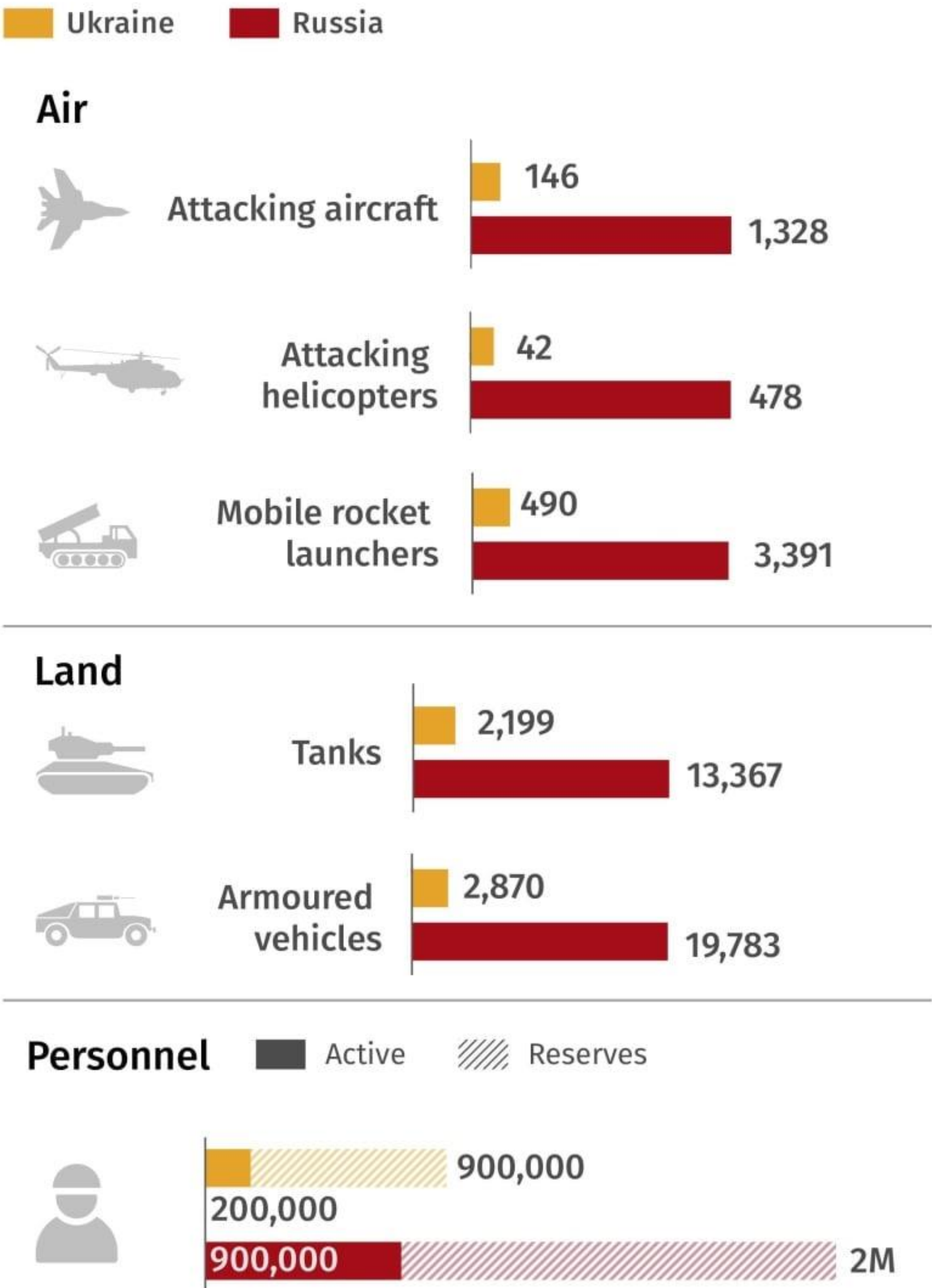


Source: Institute for the Study of War (21:00 GMT, 30 March)

Areas of Russian military control in Ukraine



How Ukraine's Military Compares to Russia's



Costs so far

- Civilians: UN report - 2600; Ukraine's government – 25,000.
- UAF, NGU, Volunteers: 2000-4000 (US officials).
- Russian Forces: RU government - 1351; US officials –10,000-15,000.
- 200+ children killed.
- 6.5 million Ukrainians left their homes.
- Chernobyl held by Russians.
- Attack on the biggest nuclear power plant in Europe (Zaporizhzhia).

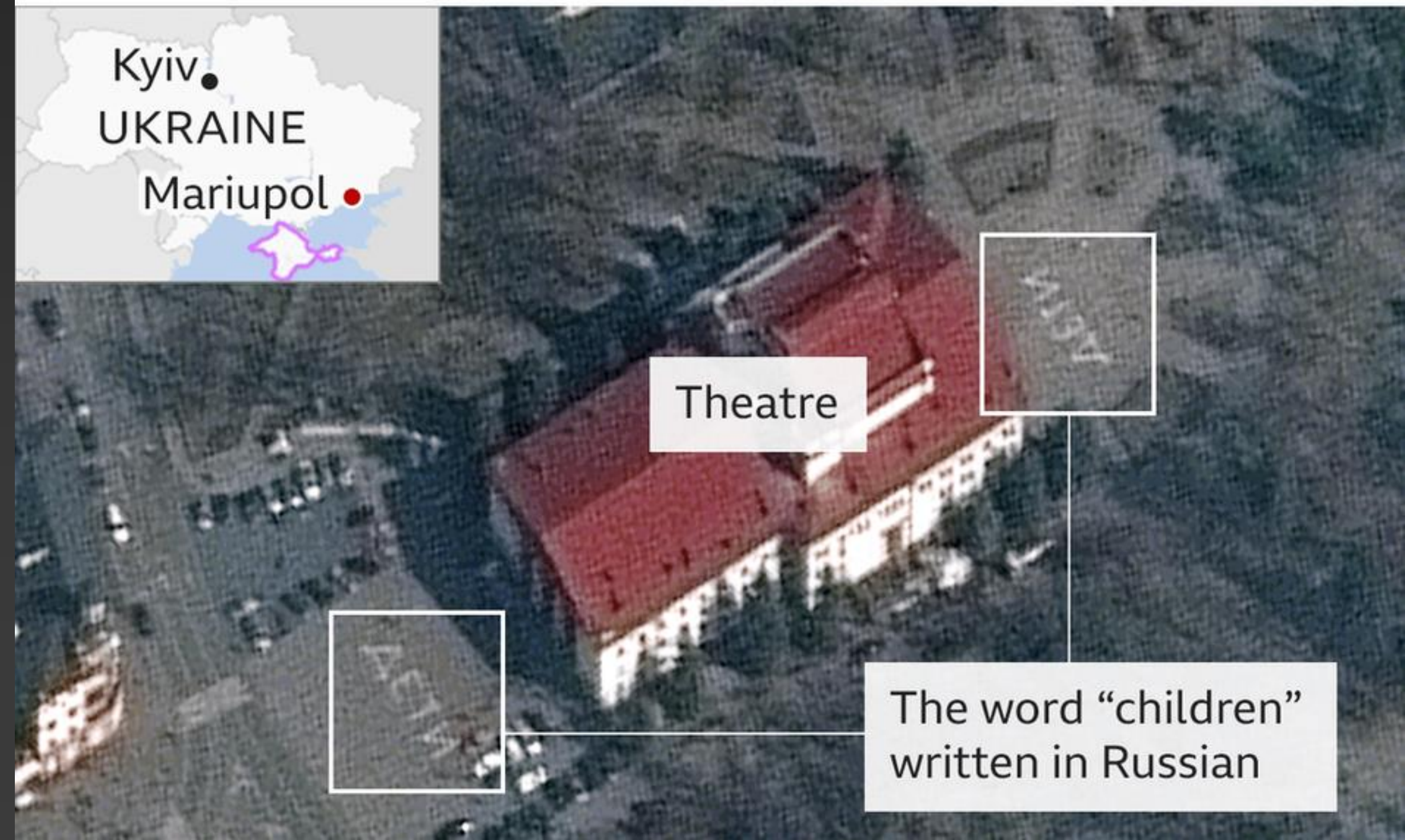


Hell in Mariupol

- The city of Mariupol has been battered by Russian airstrikes in recent weeks. Among the buildings hit have been a maternity hospital, a theater and an arts school. It is estimated that at least 20,000 civilians have died and some 80% of homes have been destroyed
- The Ukrainian army's resistance there has been a fuel for the Ukrainian people.
- As a port city, Mariupol is important economically. The city is in a strategic place militarily.



Satellite image of Mariupol theatre, 14 March





Berlin, Germany



Worldwide Reactions

- Massive demonstrations of support
- Charity organisations, donations
- Condemnation of Russia's politics
- Volunteers going to Ukraine

Tbilisi, Georgia



Paris, France



The reaction of the West

- Harsh sanctions.
- Isolating not only Russian government, but Russia as a country — sports, education, shops, entertainment.
- Financial and military aid to Ukraine.
- Stopping Nord Stream 2.
- Kicking Russia out of SWIFT.
- Boris Johnson (UK) actively supporting Ukraine and suggesting ways to “fail Putin”.
- Olaf Scholz (GER) changing Germany’s FP concerning Kremlin drastically.
- Typically neutral states (e.g. Switzerland, Sweden) imposing sanctions and no-fly zones against Russia.
- Zelenskyy demands NATO to announce a no-fly zone over Ukraine.



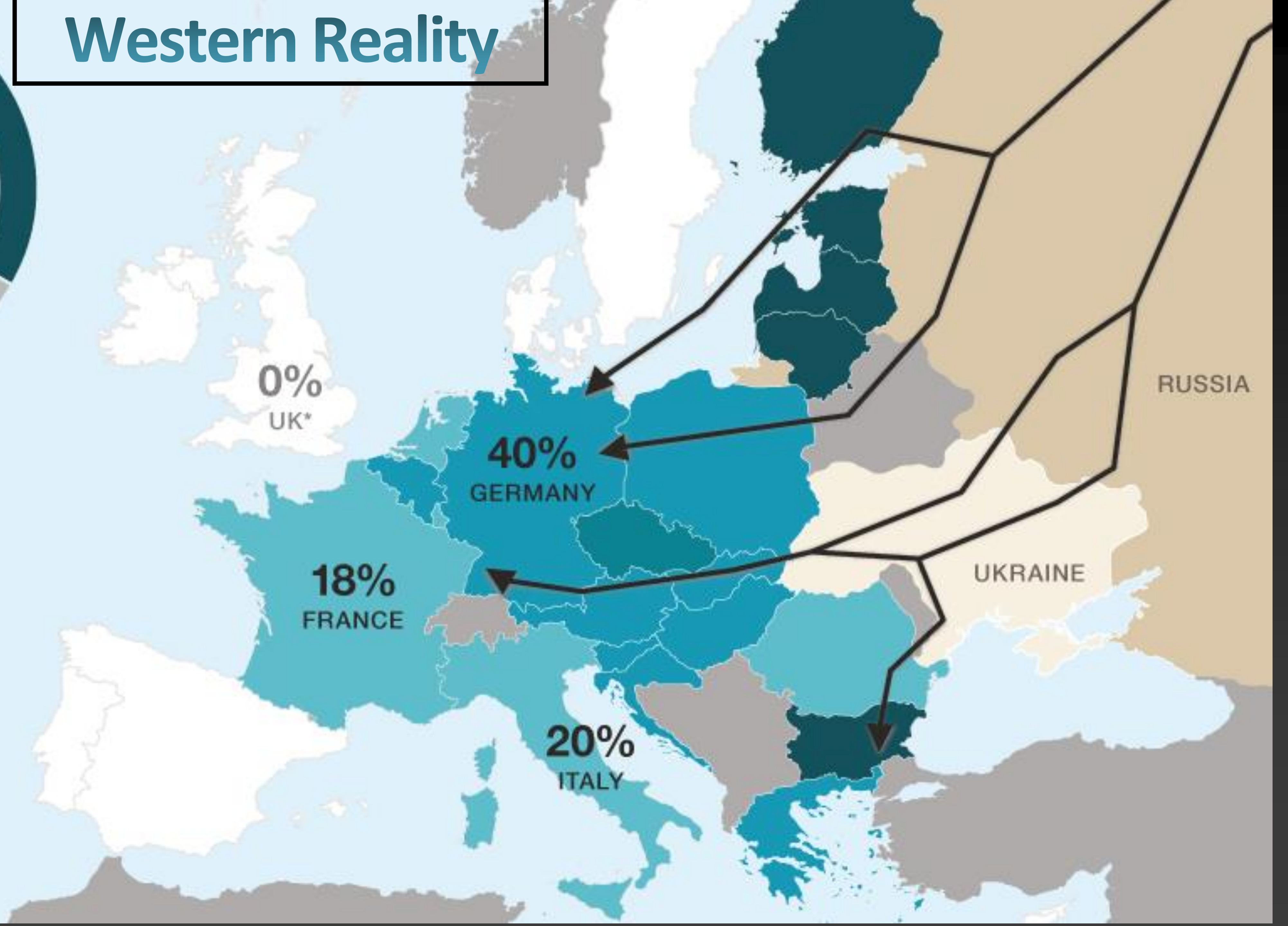
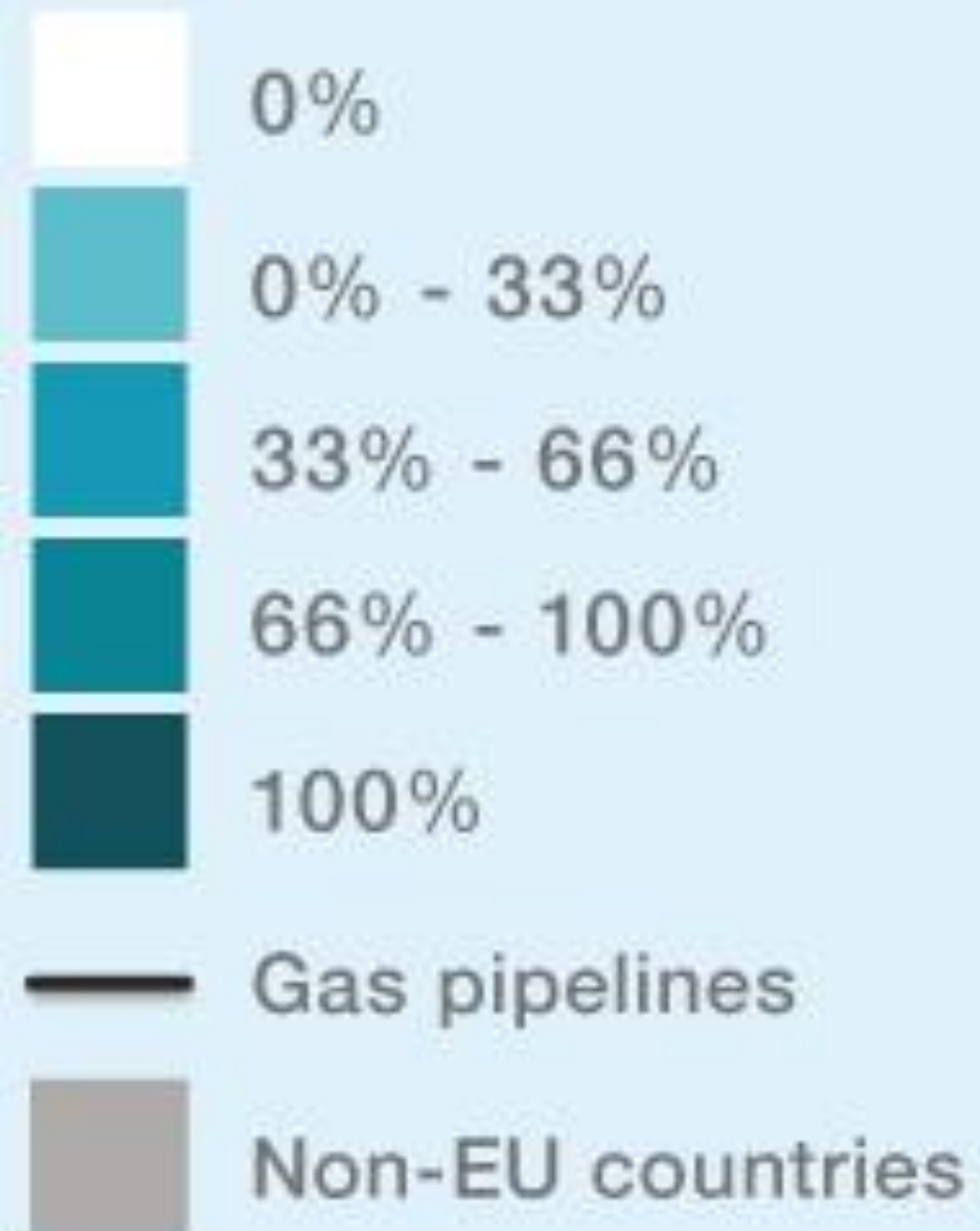
Western Reality



30%

OF THE EU'S GAS
COMES FROM RUSSIA

% OF GAS WHICH IS
SUPPLIED BY RUSSIA



Reactions in Russia

- Anti-war protests in Saint-Petersburg, Moscow, other big cities.
- So far, more than 15000 people detained at anti-war protests.



Russian Reality

- Propaganda, disinformation, ignorance of war.
- Most of TV is owned by the government; the only opposition channel — Dojd — was closed in the beginning of the war.
- New law with jail terms of up to 15 years for spreading "fake news" & fines for anyone calling for sanctions against Russia following the invasion of Ukraine.
- Putin's approval ratings have always been high (60-70%). The ratings don't seem to change.



Possible scenarios

- Ukraine wins, the long-awaited regime change in Russia.
- Russia occupies the whole of Ukraine, overthrows (potentially eliminates) Zelenskyy and establishes a pro-Kremlin government in Kyiv (Yanukovych is rumoured to be in Belarus).
- Russia splits Ukraine into two parts - pro-European Western and pro-Russian Eastern Ukraine.
- Regime change inside of Russia — Russian people/Putin's circle overthrow Putin.
- Reaching of a consensus as a result of peace talks.

Thank you for your attention!
Slava Ukraini!