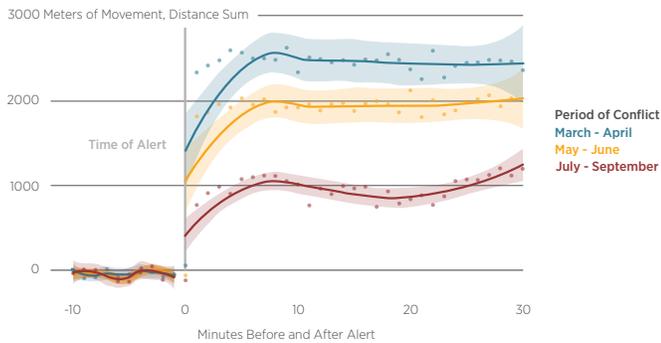


Figure 2 • Strong Public Response to Alerts Declines as War Progresses



Note: Figure shows pooled estimates of air alert event studies between March and September 2022. Figure shows changes in distance traveled (sum) across time (minutes relative to treatment) for the 61 minute window centered around the minute of the air alert notification. The vertical line separates the pre-period trends from the post- treatment effects. Periods are indicated by various colors.

credible estimates of costly, real-world responses to alerts during conflict. Relying on estimates from more than 3,000 local, device-by-minute event studies, the authors document five core findings:

- Civilians, on average, respond sharply to alerts, rapidly increasing their movement patterns as they flee imminent harm.
- These rapid post-alert changes in civilian movement attenuate substantially as the war progresses.
- Post-alert changes in vertical movement suggest widespread use of underground shelters, which attenuates with time.

- Public responsiveness attenuates even when civilians are exposed to higher quality information.
- Post-alert movement patterns more rapidly attenuate when the local population has been living under an extended “state of alarm” (high duration of recent bombardment alerts). Taken together, these results are consistent with the presence of an alert fatigue effect.
- Finally, to quantify the consequences of diminished public responsiveness to government messages, the authors conduct a series of exercises to suggest that between 8-15% of civilian casualties could have been avoided if post-alert responsiveness had remained the same over time.

Bottom line: For policymakers hoping to minimize harm during a military conflict, this work reveals that government messaging is a powerful tool, with one important caveat—public engagement is essential.

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Civil Response to Government Alerts Declines During Russian Invasion of Ukraine

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