

## Editorial

**War and pandemic: A negative synergism could amplify the catastrophe**Mauro Giovanni Carta,<sup>1</sup> Germano Orrù,<sup>2</sup> Luigi Barberini<sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup>Department of Medical Sciences and Public Health, University of Cagliari; <sup>2</sup>Department of Surgical Sciences, University of Cagliari, Italy

Fears of war seem to erase fears of the pandemic, in fact, media talk about Covid much less, as recently written it is understandable as a disaster “that is killing thousands and displacing millions is our most urgent challenge”.<sup>1</sup> But perhaps we do not think about the potential negative synergism of war and pandemics.

For a few months, data relating to mortality from Covid in Russia are the worst in the world on March 12, 2022. In Table 1, we report the results of deaths x Covid x 100,000 inhabitants in the 4 weeks before March 12, 2022, in the former G8 countries.<sup>2</sup> Russia has the worse death rate even than the US where there is a very high percentage of the population freely decided not to get vaccinated, the rate of Russia is 1/3 higher than Italy (which, however, has a much older population and is, therefore, more vulnerable to death from Covid), twice as many as Germany and France, nearly three times the deaths in the UK and Japan and four times the deaths in Canada.<sup>2</sup> We do not know how many people die every day in the war in Ukraine, perhaps 100, perhaps 200, but we do know that official estimates (which are always in defect) tell us that around 700 people die of Covid every day in Russia. The war in Ukraine will force many young militaries to lower social distance, it will also amass prisoners and refugees deprived of medicines when sick.<sup>3,4</sup> That is, it will build a terrible pabulum from which variants of the virus can be born and spread freely. In fact, there will be the possibility of having many immunosuppressed people without any care and potentially infected simultaneously with human and animal viruses (they are massed outdoors and outside destroyed hospitals), which will allow the birth of the most varied forms of recombination of viruses.<sup>5,6</sup> Once the variant most capable of infecting has been selected, it can run free with tens and thousands of defeated or injured people. In Russia, they use a Sputnik-V vaccine which, despite the initial triumphalist propaganda, had raised some doubts about efficacy according to literature data,<sup>7</sup> in Ukraine barely 40% of the population is vaccinated.

**Table 1. Death for 100.000 inhabit due Covid-19 in the 8 countries of ex G8 (4 weeks at March 12, 2022).**

Country	Death rate /100.000 inhabitants
Russia	14
US	12
Italy	10
France	8
Germany	7
Japan	5
UK	5
Canada	3.5

As all the other consequences of the war were not enough, the synergic effect of war and pandemics risks causing more deaths than a nuclear war.

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