

Council Sanctions against Russia and Belarus

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News

This news item provides an overview of the recent EU actions with regard to sanctioning Russia's war in Ukraine.

On 21 July 2022, the EU adopted a “[maintenance and alignment](#)” package that aims to tighten existing economic sanctions targeting Russia and to perfect their implementation in response to Russia’s continuing war of aggression against Ukraine.

This “maintenance and alignment” package complements the restrictive measures and sanctions already in place since March 2014, [that have been imposed progressively by the EU on Russia](#) in response to:

- The illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014;
- The decision to recognize the non-government-controlled areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts as independent entities on 21 February 2022;
- The unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine on 24 February 2022.

The EU imposed different types of sanctions, such as targeted restrictive measures against individuals, economic sanctions, diplomatic measures, restrictions on media etc.

- With regard to targeted restrictive measures, 1212 individuals and 108 entities are subject to asset freeze and travels bans because their actions have undermined Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence. The [list of sanctioned persons and entities](#) is constantly reviewed and renewed.
- The [economic sanctions](#), which mainly concern import and export restrictions on Russia, target the financial, trade, energy, transport, technology and defense sectors. They have first been imposed in July and September 2014 targeting exchanges with Russia in specific economic sectors. On 13 January 2022, the Council decided to prolong the restrictive measures targeting specific economic sectors until 31 July 2022. On 26 July 2022, the [prolongation](#) was extended until 31 January 2023.
- The restrictions on economic relations with Crimea and Sevastopol, which were first imposed in June 2014 by the EU in response to the illegal annexation of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, have been renewed on [20 June 2022](#) until 23 June 2023.
- In 2022, the EU has suspended the broadcasting activities of five Russian state-owned outlets (Sputnik, Russia Today, Rossiya RTR/RTR Planeta, Rossiya 24/Russia 24, TV Centre International) that have been used by the Russian government as instruments to manipulate information and promote disinformation about the invasion of Ukraine.

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In response to the recognition of the non-government-controlled areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and Russia's unprecedented and unprovoked military attack on Ukraine the EU has adopted six packages of sanctions:

- [First package](#) (adopted on 23 February 2022);
- [Second package](#) (adopted on 25 February 2022);
- [Third package](#) (adopted on 28 February and 2 March 2022);
- [Fourth package](#) (adopted on 15 March 2022);
- [Fifth package](#) (adopted on 8 April 2022).
- [Sixth package](#) (adopted on 3 June 2022)

On 3 June 2022, the Council adopted the [sixth package of economic and individual sanctions against Russia and Belarus](#). It comes in response to the continuing Russia's war in Ukraine, its support by Belarus, and the reported atrocities committed by Russian armed forces in Ukraine. The sixth package includes measures concerning the following areas:

- *Oil*: Prohibition to purchase, import or transfer crude oil and certain petroleum products from Russia into the EU. A temporary exception is made for imports of crude oil by pipeline into those EU Member States that suffer from specific dependence on Russian supplies and have no viable other options due to their geographic situation;
- *SWIFT*: Extension of existing prohibition on the provision of specialized financial messaging services (SWIFT) to three additional Russian credit institutions - Sberbank, Credit Bank of Moscow, and Russian Agricultural Bank - and the Belarusian Bank For Development And Reconstruction;
- *Broadcasting*: Suspension of the broadcasting activities in the EU for three Russian state-owned outlets (Rossiya RTR/RTR Planeta, Rossiya 24/Russia 24 and TV Centre International) that have been used to spread propaganda and promote disinformation about the invasion of Ukraine. In accordance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights, these media outlets and their staff will still be able to carry out activities in the EU other than broadcasting, e.g. research and interviews;
- *Export*: Expansion of the list of persons and entities concerned by export restrictions regarding dual-use goods and technology, and expansion of the list of goods and technology that may contribute to the technological enhancement of Russia's defense and security sector;

As part of the sixth package of sanctions, the Council also decided to impose [restrictive measures on additional 65 individuals and 18 entities](#), bringing the total number of sanctioned individuals and entities to 1,158 individuals and 98 entities.

In the list of the 65 individuals are among others the military staff members who led the actions of the Russian army units in Bucha (including Colonel *Azatbek Omurbekov* – called the 'Butcher of Bucha'), who are considered responsible for the siege of Mariupol (including Colonel-General *Mikhail Mizintsev* - called the 'Butcher of Mariupol'), and who participated in the creation of the so-called Committee of Salvation for Peace and Order. The 18 sanctioned entities include a variety of companies that are supporting, directly or indirectly, the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Russian Federation. The legal acts, including the names of the listed individuals and entities, have been published in the [Official Journal of the EU L 153](#).

On 21 July 2022, the EU adopted the aforementioned “[maintenance and alignment](#)” package. This new package includes the following:

- Introduction of a new prohibition to purchase, import, or transfer, directly or indirectly, gold (including jewellery), if it originates in Russia and has been exported from Russia into the EU or to any third country after;
- Extension of the list of controlled items which may contribute to Russia’s military and technological enhancement;
- Extension of the port access ban to locks in order to ensure full implementation of the measure and avoid circumvention;
- Expansion of the scope of the prohibition on accepting deposits, including those from legal persons, entities or bodies established in third countries and entities majority-owned by Russian nationals or natural persons residing in Russia;
- Need of a prior authorisation for the acceptance of deposits for non-prohibited cross-border trade;
- Extension of the list of individual sanctions to additional 54 individuals (including senior members of the political or cultural establishment, high ranking military leaders and staff, politicians appointed in Ukrainian territories invaded by Russia, members of the Nightwolves (a nationalist motorcycle club) propagandists and leading businesspersons) and 10 entities (including Sberbank, the Nightwolves, companies operating in the military sector or the shipbuilding industry or involved in the stealing of Ukrainian grain, and a variety of entities that have disseminated pro-Kremlin and anti-Ukrainian propaganda).

In an effort to ensure access to justice the “maintenance and alignment” package also allows exemptions from the prohibition to enter into any transactions with Russian public entities necessary to ensure access to judicial, administrative or arbitral proceedings.

In order to combat food and energy insecurity around the world, and in order to avoid any potential negative consequences, the package extended the exemption from the prohibition to engage in transactions with certain State-owned entities as regards transactions for agricultural products and the supply of oil and petroleum products to third countries. The package clarified that none of the measures in this Regulation or any of those adopted earlier in view of Russia’s actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine are targeting in any way the trade in agricultural and food products, including wheat and fertilisers, between third countries and Russia. The Union measures also do not prevent third countries and their nationals operating outside of the Union from purchasing pharmaceutical or medical products from Russia.

A complete timeline of the EU restrictive measures against Russia over Ukraine is available on the [Council's website](#).

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