

# EU Reactions to Russian War against Ukraine: Overview February – June 2024

## News

Anna Pinggen, Thomas Wahl

This news item continues the reporting on key EU reactions following the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022: the impact of the invasion on the EU's internal security policy, on criminal law, and on the protection of the EU's financial interests. The following overview covers the period from the beginning of February 2024 to the end of June 2024. For overviews of the developments from February 2022 to mid-July 2022 → [euclid 2/2022, 74-80](#); for the developments from the end of July 2022 to the end of October 2022 → [euclid 3/2022, 170-171](#); for the developments from November 2022 to December 2022 → [euclid 4/2022, 226-228](#); for the developments from January 2023 to June 2023 → [euclid 1/2023, 6-9](#); for the developments from July 2023 to September 2023 → [euclid 2/2023, 116-117](#); for the developments from October 2023 to January 2024 → [euclid 4/2023, 313-315](#).

- 6 February 2024: The Council and European Parliament reach a [provisional agreement](#) on the Ukraine Facility, a new €50 billion support mechanism for Ukraine's recovery, reconstruction, and modernization, while continuing to assist its EU accession efforts. The Facility will provide coherent, predictable, and flexible support from 2024 to 2027, structured into three pillars: (1) a "Ukraine Plan" for recovery and reforms; (2) the Ukraine Investment Framework for financial support, including grants and loans; and (3) the Union accession assistance for aligning with EU laws. The budget consists of €33 billion in loans and €17 billion in grants. Ukraine can receive pre-financing, and funds will be allocated with a focus on green investments and SMEs. The Facility requires Ukraine to uphold democratic mechanisms, the rule of law, and human rights. A Ukraine Facility Dialogue will involve the European Parliament in overseeing the plan's implementation, with progress monitored by means of a detailed scoreboard.
- 12 February 2024: The Council [adopts a decision and regulation clarifying the obligations of central securities depositories](#) holding assets and reserves of the Central Bank of Russia, which have been immobilised due to EU restrictive measures. Specifically, the Council decides that, if a central securities depository holds more than €1 million in assets from the Central Bank of Russia, it must separately account for the extraordinary cash balances accumulating due to EU restrictive measures separately and keep corresponding revenues separate. This decision sets the stage for the Council to potentially establish a financial contribution to the EU budget from these net profits, which could be used to support Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction efforts in the future.

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- 23 February 2024: On the second anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the President of the European Parliament publish a [joint statement](#). They, *inter alia*, stress that the European Union will continue to provide Ukraine with regular and predictable financial support, welcoming the agreed €50 billion financial assistance package for 2024-2027 (see above).
- 23 February 2024: The Council [adopts the 13th package of sanctions against Russia](#), imposing restrictive measures on an additional 106 individuals and 88 entities. These new sanctions target the military and defense sectors, members of the judiciary, local politicians, and individuals responsible for the illegal deportation and military re-education of Ukrainian children. Additionally, 27 new entities are added to the list of those directly supporting Russia's military and industrial complex, including those located in third countries involved in circumventing trade restrictions. The package also expands the scope of restrictions to the export of goods.
- 12 March 2024: The Council [decides to extend the restrictive measures against individuals and entities](#) responsible for undermining or threatening Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence for another six months, until 15 September 2024. These measures include travel restrictions for individuals, asset freezes, and a ban on providing funds or economic resources to those listed. The sanctions will continue to apply to over 2100 individuals and entities, primarily in response to Russia's ongoing military aggression against Ukraine.
- 20 March 2024: The European Commission [disburses the first €4.5 billion of support from the EU's new Ukraine Facility](#) (see above), providing essential liquidity for Ukraine to finance public wages, pensions, and basic public services. This funding helps Ukraine focus on its war efforts. On this day, Ukraine submits its official Ukraine Plan, which outlines the reform and investment agenda for the next four years and will condition access to further payments under the Facility (see above). The Commission will now assess the Ukraine Plan and propose a Council implementing decision to approve it, enabling regular payments.
- 21 March 2024: Commissioner for Budget and Administration *Johannes Hahn* and Minister of Finance of Ukraine *Serhii Marchenko* sign an association agreement that allows [Ukraine's participation in the Union Anti-fraud Programme](#) (2021-2027). It is the first time that a non-EU/candidate country joins the programme. Ukraine can now benefit from EU funding of measures enhancing its national capacity to protect the Union's budget, such as the purchase of specialised anti-fraud equipment/tools and specific trainings.
- 21/22 March 2024: The [conclusions of the European Council](#) reaffirm the EU's unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The EU commits to providing continued political, financial, military, and humanitarian aid, including accelerated delivery of air defense systems and ammunition. The heads of state and government welcome recent security agreements with Ukraine and initiatives for further financial measures, including utilizing Russia's immobilized assets to support Ukraine. They call on to take further action against the circumvention of EU sanctions through third countries. The European Council supports ongoing efforts, including in the Core Group, to establish a tribunal for the prosecution of the crime of aggression against Ukraine.
- 22 March 2024: The Council [imposes restrictive measures on 33 individuals and two entities](#) with alleged links to the sudden death of Russian opposition politician *Alexei Navalny* in a strict penal colony. This decision constitutes a further element of the EU's global human rights sanctions regime. The recently introduced sanctions list comprises the IK-6 corrective colony and the IK-3 maximum security corrective colony, where Navalny was incarcerated from June 2022 until his demise. These colonies have a reputation for subjecting prisoners to physical and psychological pressure, complete isolation, torture, and violence. The head of IK-3, *Vadim Kalinin*, and several deputy heads of the colony are also sanctioned. Furthermore, the Council decides to sanction members of the judiciary as well as high-level officials in the penitentiary system and in the Russian Ministry of Justice.

- 10 April 2024: The [General Court upholds actions for annulment](#) brought by two Russian businessmen against their inclusion on the lists of restrictive measures for the period from 28 February 2022 to 15 March 2023. The Court finds that the reasons set out by the Council were not sufficiently substantiated and no additional evidence was adduced to justify the inclusion or maintenance of the complainants on the list (Cases T-301/22, *Aven v Council* and T-304/22, *Fridman v Council*).
- 16-17 April 2024: OLAF hosts the first in-person [operational meeting of the G7 Sub-Working Group on Export Control Enforcement](#). Experts discuss latest trends in research and analysis to further strengthen the fight against the circumvention of sanctions against Russia and Belarus. Since summer 2023, OLAF coordinates customs operations against the export of dual use goods from the EU to Russia/Belarus in circumvention of the EU's sanctions against the countries in war.
- 17/18 April 2024: Reaffirming its conclusions of 21/22 March 2024, the European Council, *inter alia*, [backs proposals to direct extraordinary revenues](#) stemming from Russia's immobilised assets for the benefit of Ukraine and calls for their swift adoption.
- 14 May 2024: The [Council positively assesses the "Ukraine Plan"](#), which sets out the intentions of the government of Ukraine regarding the recovery, reconstruction and modernisation of the country, and the reforms it plans to undertake as part of its EU accession process in the next four years. The Council's positive decision also paves the way for regular disbursements under the Ukraine Facility (see above). The Commission is enabled to disburse up to €1.89 billion in pre-financing to Ukraine.
- 17 May 2024: The Council [decides to suspend the broadcasting activities in the EU of four additional media outlets](#): Voice of Europe, RIA Novosti, Izvestia, and Rossiyskaya Gazeta. The suspension is due to their role in spreading and supporting Russian propaganda.
- 21 May 2024: The Council [adopts legal acts](#) mandating that net profits from unexpected revenues accruing to central securities depositories (CSDs) in the EU, due to EU sanctions, will be used to support Ukraine (see also above). CSDs holding Russian sovereign assets and reserves over €1 million must contribute financially from their net profits, which have been accumulating since 15 February 2024. The funds will be allocated as follows: 90% to military support via the European Peace Facility and 10% to Ukraine's defense industry and reconstruction through EU programmes.
- 27 May 2024: The Council [imposes sanctions on two individuals](#), *Artem Marchevskyi* and *Viktor Medvedchuk*, and the media outlet "Voice of Europe" for spreading propaganda to justify Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The sanctions include asset freezes and travel bans. These actions are part of a broader EU effort targeting over 2100 individuals and entities undermining Ukraine's sovereignty and integrity (see above).
- 27 May 2024: The Council [establishes a new sanctions framework](#) targeting those responsible for human rights violations, civil society repression, and undermining democracy in Russia. The [Council's approval](#) comes after a proposal by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy in reaction to the death of opposition politician *Alexei Navalny* in February 2024 (see above). The new regime allows the EU to target also those who provide financial, technical, or material support for, or are otherwise involved in or associated with people and entities committing human rights violations in Russia. The measures include asset freezes and travel bans for individuals and entities, including the Federal Penitentiary Service of the Russian Federation as well as 19 individuals linked to the death of *Alexei Navalny* and other political persecutions. The regime also restricts trade in equipment and technology used for internal repression.
- 24 June 2024: In order to weaken Putin's regime, the EU Council adopts the [14th package of sanctions](#) against Russia, targeting sectors like energy, finance, and trade. Key measures include a ban on reloading Russian LNG in EU territories, restrictions on battlefield goods, and a prohibition on using the Russian financial messaging service SPFS. The EU also bans funding from Russian state sources to EU political parties and NGOs, targets specific vessels aiding Russian warfare, and broadens flight and road transport bans. Further export and import restrictions are also imposed, including on dual-

use goods and intellectual property rights, with additional protections for EU operators against damages from sanctions enforcement. The Council also agrees on further measures that seek to prevent circumvention from EU sanctions, such as strengthened due diligence obligations for EU operators selling battlefield goods to third countries.

- 24 June 2024: As part of the comprehensive 14th package of sanctions, the Council **imposes** restrictive measures on an additional 69 individuals and 47 entities for actions undermining Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence. The new listings target businesspersons, propagandists, public figures, military members, judiciary officials, those responsible for deporting Ukrainian children, and FSB members involved in religious persecution in Crimea. Companies involved in circumventing EU sanctions and transporting weapons, including the Volga Dnepr Group and Sovcomflot, are also listed. The sanctions extend to the International Children's Center Artek, the Kadyrov Foundation, and the Belarusian Republican Youth Union for their roles in the deportation and re-education of Ukrainian children.
  - 27 June 2024: In its conclusion, the **European Council reiterates the EU's unwavering commitment** to continue to provide political, financial, humanitarian and military support for Ukraine and its people "for as long as it takes and as intensively as needed." EU leaders also acknowledge Ukraine's current and future military, budgetary and reconstruction needs. In this context, the Commission, the High Representative and the Council are invited to take work forward in order to provide additional funding for Ukraine by the end of the year in the form of loans serviced and repaid by future flows of the extraordinary revenues with a view to reaching approximately €50 billion.
  - 29 June 2024: The **Council adopts sanctions targeting the Belarusian economy** due to the regime's involvement in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. These sanctions basically mirror several of the restrictive measures already in place against Russia, and include: a ban on the export of dual-use goods and technologies, maritime navigation goods and luxury goods to Belarus; a ban on the import of gold, diamonds, helium, coal and mineral products from Belarus; a ban on the provision of certain services; a requirement for EU exporters to insert the so-called "no-Belarus clause" in future contracts through which they contractually prohibit the re-exportation to Belarus or re-exportation for use in Belarus of sensitive goods and technology, battlefield goods, firearms and ammunition. Similar to measures against Russia, the Council adopts additional anti-circumvention measures.
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