

# Russia's War Against Ukraine: European Union Responses and U.S.-EU Relations

Updated November 1, 2024

The 27-member European Union (EU) has implemented various policy responses to Russia's war against Ukraine. [EU actions](#) and [coordination with the United States](#) are of interest to Congress given the [EU's role](#) as an important [U.S. partner](#). (Also see CRS In Focus IF12277, *Russia's War on Ukraine: U.S. Policy and the Role of Congress*.)

## Key EU Responses

### Sanctions

Since February 2022, the EU has imposed [14 packages](#) of sanctions—or *restrictive measures*—intended to reduce Russia's ability to finance the war against Ukraine, to enact costs on Russia's elites, and to diminish Russia's economic base. Imposing sanctions requires unanimity among EU members.

To date, [EU sanctions](#) on Russia's government and financial, business, defense, technology, and media sectors include

- Freezing the assets of [over 2,300 individuals and entities](#); travel bans also apply to designated individuals.
- Restricting transactions with [Russia's central bank](#) and blocking access to its reserve holdings.
- Imposing debt and equity restrictions on certain banks and companies.
- Banning transactions with certain Russian state-owned [military-industrial enterprises](#).
- Disconnecting 10 leading Russian financial institutions—including [Sberbank](#), Russia's largest bank—from [SWIFT](#) (the world's dominant international financial messaging system).
- Expanding and tightening export controls on [dual-use goods and technologies](#) to Russia and to [selected entities](#) in China, India, Kazakhstan, and elsewhere directly [supporting](#) Russia's military-industrial complex.

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IN11897

- Banning certain exports in the [aviation, maritime, and technology sectors](#) (e.g., semiconductors) and the export of [drone engines](#) and [luxury goods](#) to Russia.
- Prohibiting imports of [steel](#), [spirits](#), [seafood](#), [gold](#), [diamonds](#), and [other products](#) from Russia.
- Closing EU [airspace](#), [seaports](#), and [roads](#) to Russian operators.
- Suspending broadcasting activities of 18 Russian [media outlets](#) (including subsidiaries).

[EU energy dependence on Russia](#) has made [targeting](#) its energy sector [challenging](#). The EU has not prohibited Russian natural gas imports, but sanctions include

- Prohibiting most imports of Russian [crude oil and petroleum products](#) (applying to [around 90%](#) of Russian oil imports), with an exemption for crude oil delivered by pipeline.
- Banning EU companies from providing [oil transport services](#), except for [Russian crude oil](#) and [petroleum products](#) sold to non-EU countries at or below agreed price caps (established in [cooperation](#) with the [Group of Seven \[G7\] price cap coalition](#) to reduce Russia's oil revenues while keeping global energy markets stable).
- Prohibiting transshipment of [Russian liquefied natural gas \(LNG\)](#) through EU ports, among other LNG-related measures.
- Banning EU exports of [oil refining technologies](#).
- Prohibiting [Russian coal imports](#).

The EU also has established mechanisms aimed at [preventing the circumvention of sanctions](#) and sought to [tighten](#) implementation of the oil price cap.

## EU Assistance to Ukraine

According to EU data, EU and member state support to Ukraine as of October 2024 totaled nearly [€122 billion](#) in military, financial, humanitarian, and emergency assistance and EU funding to help [Ukrainian refugees](#) within the EU. (U.S. dollar figures are slightly higher at the current €1:\$1.09 exchange rate.)

**Financial and Other Aid.** Since 2022, the EU, its member states, and European financial institutions have [collectively made available €60 billion](#) in financial, humanitarian, and emergency aid for Ukraine, including

- €15.4 billion committed for 2024 (part of [€50 billion in financial assistance](#) for the 2024-2027 period, provided through a new [Ukraine Facility](#) agreed to in March 2024).
- €18 billion in EU [financial assistance](#) for 2023 (in the form of [favorable loans](#)).
- €12.2 billion from member states.

The EU also coordinates the delivery of [in-kind emergency supplies](#) to Ukraine.

**Military Assistance.** The EU and its member states have committed €43.5 billion in military support to Ukraine to date, consisting of

- €6.1 billion through the [European Peace Facility \(EPF\)](#), including [€3.6 billion](#) in military assistance financing and [€2 billion](#) for 1 million rounds of ammunition (either from member state stocks or through joint procurement).
- An estimated [€37.4 billion](#) in bilateral military support from member states.

In May 2024, EU member states [approved](#) using the financial proceeds (of up to €3 billion per year) generated by [immobilized Russian sovereign assets](#) held in the EU (around €210 billion) to help support

Ukraine. The EU made the first such transfer of [€1.5 billion](#) to Ukraine in July 2024, with 90% of this amount designated for military support through the EPF and the remaining 10% for reconstruction needs. The EU also has [trained](#) almost 60,000 members of Ukraine’s armed forces.

## Addressing Energy Dependence

Following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the [EU pledged](#) to phase out all Russian fossil fuel imports—including natural gas—before 2030. According to the EU, the share of Russia’s pipeline gas in EU imports [decreased](#) from over 40% in 2021 to about 8% in 2023, although this decrease reflects in part [Russia’s decision to reduce deliveries](#). EU statistics also [indicate](#) imports of Russian LNG have [increased](#) somewhat since 2022.

## U.S.-EU Cooperation and Congressional Interests

The U.S. government and the EU have worked together closely in responding to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. Cooperation has included [devising](#) and [enforcing sanctions](#), suspending [Russia’s preferential trade treatment](#) under World Trade Organization rules, formulating the [G7 oil price cap](#), and ensuring [accountability for war crimes](#). The Biden Administration also [committed](#) to help the EU [reduce](#) its [dependency](#) on Russian gas, in part by [boosting LNG shipments](#) to the EU.

In October 2024, U.S. and EU officials agreed to a [G7 plan](#) for a [\\$50 billion loan](#) to Ukraine, backed by the interest earned on immobilized Russian sovereign assets. The United States and the EU are to provide \$20 billion each, with the remaining \$10 billion from the other G7 partners. The [Biden Administration](#) intends to seek congressional approval to use half of the U.S. loan amount for military assistance to Ukraine.

Some in Congress may be interested in monitoring EU responses to Russia’s aggression in Ukraine and implications for other aspects of U.S.-EU relations, including

- **Security and Defense.** The war in Ukraine has [prompted](#) debate on improving EU military capabilities and strengthening the [NATO-EU partnership](#).
- **Energy and Climate.** Russia’s actions have [accelerated](#) the EU’s energy transition and [U.S.-EU energy cooperation](#), despite some [tensions](#) over U.S. “green” [subsidies](#).
- **EU Enlargement.** Traditionally, bipartisan support has existed in Congress for [EU enlargement](#). The EU declared [Ukraine](#) an official candidate for membership in June 2022. Joining the EU typically takes many years.

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