

**20 May 2022**

After months of threatening military manoeuvres and negotiations in bad faith, on 24 February 2022 Russia launched an all-out assault on Ukraine. [European leaders](#) and the [European Parliament](#) have condemned this unprovoked and unjustified military aggression in the strongest possible terms, as it grossly violates international law and undermines European and global security. During the first month of fighting, Ukrainians repelled many Russian attacks, conducted counter-offensives and liberated some areas, most significantly around the capital Kyiv. On 2 March, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) [adopted a resolution](#) reaffirming Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity with a broad majority. The war has left thousands of Ukrainian civilians dead and injured, and cities partially razed to the ground. According to UNHCR, more than [6.3 million](#) refugees, mostly [women](#) and [children](#), have already fled to neighbouring countries. In addition, as of [3 May](#) the International Organization for Migration estimates that more than 8 million people have been internally displaced. European Parliament resolutions have highlighted the situation of [women](#) and [children](#) fleeing the war. The EU and its allies, within and beyond NATO, have adopted [hard-hitting sanctions](#) aimed at causing severe damage to the Russian economy. In an unprecedented move, the [EU mobilised resources](#) under the European Peace Facility to provide military assistance, including lethal equipment, to Ukraine. On the humanitarian front, the EU is providing aid, including through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, and has agreed to activate the Temporary Protection Directive. [Humanitarian aid](#) mobilised by the European Commission consists of €243 million of humanitarian funding in response to the war in Ukraine, of which €230 million for Ukraine and €13 million for Moldova. The conflict has become Europe's worst security crisis since the end of the Second World War. The future impact of the war not only on the EU economy but also on other economies is largely unknown, depending not least on the duration of the war and on policies adopted by countries and companies around the world to find alternative sources for energy, raw materials and [food](#).

All EPRS publications related to this topic can be found in one place on the [EPRS blog](#). At the end of this topical digest we also present all our audiovisual material related to Russia's war on Ukraine.

## Russia's war on Ukraine

***The following series of EPRS publications, explore in details the EU response to the Russian attack, as well as the military power of both Ukraine and Russia.***

### [Bilateral delivery of weapons and military aid to Ukraine](#)

*'At a glance' note by Sebastian Clapp, May 2022*

This infographic and table present an overview of the types of military equipment (both lethal and non-lethal) and the amount of bilateral military aid (other than weapons deliveries) that EU Member States have sent to Ukraine. It is non-exhaustive and based on open sources only.

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## The EU's financing of military assistance to Ukraine

'At a glance' note by Bruno Bilquin, May 2022

The European Peace Facility (EPF), a new off-EU budget instrument, worth almost €6 billion for the 2021-2027 period, allows the EU, for the first time, to provide training and equipment (with the option to include lethal weapons) to the armies of its partner countries, everywhere in the world. In ten months, EPF-funded assistance measures have been decided by the Council to the armies of seven countries: Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mozambique, Mali and Somalia. This is an update of a [publication from March 2022](#).

## The Kremlin's use of religion as a foreign policy instrument

'At a glance' note by Fearghas O'Beara, May 2022

Since Vladimir Putin took office in 1999, the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) has worked closely with him to consolidate its power. Putin valued such close collaboration as a way to exert control over society, eliminate alternative sources of moral authority at home, and extend Russian influence abroad.

## EU sanctions in 2022: Timeline

'At a glance' note by Sebastian Clapp and Beatrix Immenkamp with Simona Tarpova, April 2022

This note offers a timeline of sanctions adopted in response to Russia's decision to recognise the non-government controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts in Ukraine as independent entities, and to Russia's subsequent invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. The timeline does not include EU sanctions adopted in 2014 in response to Russia's annexation of Crimea.

## Sanctions targeting Belarus

'At a glance' note by Jakub Przetacznik with Simona Tarpova, May 2022

Belarus's involvement in Russia's invasion of Ukraine has triggered EU sanctions targeting over 700 individuals and 50 entities, as well as critical economic sectors and products in this country. The new measures, namely the trade bans on potassium chloride, have affected both the Belarusian economy and EU and global food supplies.

## The situation of children in and outside Ukraine

Briefing by Micaela Del Monte and Maria Margarita Mentzelopoulou, May 2022

Children are at high risk of falling through the cracks of the system, going missing or being subjected to violence. This includes children in institutions, unaccompanied minors, children nearing the age of transition to adulthood, children from Roma or other minority groups or who are asylum-seekers, refugees or migrants and were residing in Ukraine and were stateless before leaving their countries of origin.

This briefing updates and expands on an ['at a glance' note](#) by the same authors from March 2022. See also [Ukraine's children](#), EPRS video, April 2022.

## Preparing for 'RepowerEU': Action for more secure, more affordable and cleaner energy

'At a glance' note by Agnieszka Widuto, May 2022

The EU is aiming to bring about an accelerated shift away from fossil fuels by means of increased energy efficiency and use of renewables (wind and solar capacity, green hydrogen, heat pumps, electrification, and faster permits for renewable energy projects).

## EU trade policy

'At a glance' note by Matthew Parry, May 2022

The EU has joined partners at the World Trade Organization in imposing import and export bans and other trade restrictions to punish Russian and Belarusian elites and degrade Russia's military and industrial capacity. Now it is proposing to support Ukraine by temporarily scrapping all tariffs and quotas on Ukrainian imports.

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## The situation of LGBTI people

'At a glance' note by David de Groot, May 2022

The chaos engendered by the war increases the risk of violence and exploitation exponentially, in particular for the most vulnerable, including women, children, Roma people, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersexual (LGBTI) community.

## The risk of trafficking of human beings

'At a glance' note by Maria Margarita Mentzelopoulou, May 2022

The chaos generated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine has exponentially increased the risk of human trafficking and exploitation, especially of the most vulnerable persons.

## NATO response

'At a glance' note by Sebastian Clapp, April 2022

The Alliance calls on Russia to cease hostilities immediately, withdraw all its forces from Ukraine and work towards a peaceful diplomatic solution. To avoid direct confrontation with Russia, NATO has made clear that it will not deploy forces to Ukraine, which is not a NATO member, nor will it enforce a no-fly zone over Ukraine. The delivery of weapons and equipment to Ukraine (by individual NATO Allies) and the imposition of unprecedented sanctions are being organised predominantly outside the NATO framework.

## EU gas storage and LNG capacity as responses to the war in Ukraine

Briefing by Lasse Boehm and Alex Wilson, April 2022

Since most of Europe's pipeline infrastructure is organised to import Russian gas, alternative supplies will mostly have to come by sea in the form of liquefied natural gas (LNG). To guarantee security of supply, the EU will also need to ensure gas storage levels remain high so Member States can cope with a sudden interruption of gas supplies. However, both LNG terminals and gas storage capacity are unevenly spread across Europe.

## New EU regulation on gas storage

Briefing by Alex Wilson, April 2022

The problem is particularly acute in the gas sector, where Russia is the leading third-country supplier, on which several Member States are heavily dependent. To ensure the EU is prepared for the risk of an interruption of gas supplies next winter, the Commission has proposed an urgent regulation on gas storage, requiring Member States to: fill in at least 80 % of their storage capacity by 1 November 2022 (rising to 90 % in subsequent years); carry out the certification of all gas storage system operators; and provide a 100 % tariff discount on entry and exit points into gas storage.

## Reassessing 'citizenship by investment' schemes

'At a glance' note by David de Groot, April 2022

The European Parliament and European Commission have been calling on Member States not to grant citizenship in return for investment in the country concerned. Following the invasion of Ukraine by Russian military forces, these calls have intensified, with Member States now being urged to withdraw such citizenship when it has been granted to Russian or Belarusian nationals who are on the sanctions list or support the invasion.

## Russia's war on Ukraine's cultural heritage

'At a glance' note by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, April 2022

Russia's invasion of Ukraine aims to deny the sovereign country its right to a distinct identity. Indiscriminate shelling is seriously damaging Ukraine's cultural heritage. International law sets rules to limit civilian deaths and destruction of cultural heritage, both are war crimes that the international community will need to address

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## Impact on athletes and sports competitions

*'At a glance' note by Ivana Katsarova, April 2022*

Other authoritarian regimes, such as China's and Qatar's, have engaged in similar 'sports-washing' activities to gain international credibility and divert attention from their troublesome human rights records. However, Putin's decision to invade Ukraine put an end to sport's neutrality. In the weeks following the invasion, multiple sports governing bodies and international federations moved to exclude Russia from major sporting events, thus depriving its regime of a precious soft power.

## Support for the fishing, aquaculture and fish-processing sectors

*'At a glance' note by Frederik Scholaert, April 2022*

The Russian war against Ukraine has a significant impact on the EU seafood sector. Increased prices for energy and raw materials have led to high operating costs for fishermen, aquaculture farmers and fish-processing companies. The European Commission has responded with emergency measures, adapting State aid rules and activating exceptional support from the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF).

## EU food policy implications

*'At a glance' note by Tarja Laaninen, April 2022*

The impact on EU food markets of Russia's war on Ukraine is likely to be multi-faceted, with many companies already struggling with shortages of food ingredients and packaging materials. Using alternative ingredients requires altering labels, but this could mean months of testing recipes and waiting for new packaging with accurate labels. EU and global food prices are rising, but so are production costs, and transport prices.

## Food security in times of crisis

*Video with Anna Caprile, April 2022*

## Impact on food security and EU response

*'At a glance' note by Anna Caprile, April 2022*

Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, a country known as the 'breadbasket of Europe', is raising fears of a global food crisis, further exacerbating existing food security challenges worldwide. Much depends on the response of the international community, including the EU, to a number of rapidly evolving scenarios.

## EU cohesion policy support for refugees

*'At a glance' note by Christiaan van Lierop, April 2022*

As millions flee Ukraine, the European Commission has put forward two proposals that seek to adapt cohesion policy rules to facilitate the rapid rollout of funding to help Member States host Ukrainian refugees.

## New EU sanctions

*'At a glance' note by Beatrix Immenkamp with Simona Tarpova, April 2022*

Outraged by Moscow's aggressive invasion of Ukraine, EU countries have adopted unprecedentedly tough sanctions in cooperation with close partners such as the US, Canada and the UK. Although Russia will partially adapt, these measures are expected to cause major disruption and isolate the country from the global economy. This paper [updates a previous 'at a glance' note of 3 March 2022](#), by Martin Russell.

## EPRS online roundtable Russia's war on Ukraine - Policy implications for Europe, today and tomorrow

*EPRS, April 2022*

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## The religious dimension

*'At a glance' note by Fearghas O'Beara, April 2022*

Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 drew attention to the close relationship between Vladimir Putin's regime and the Russian Orthodox Church. The latter has strongly backed Putin's war and has long provided theological and ideological justifications for his domestic and international actions. The Church's overtly political approach has contributed to deep divisions within the wider Orthodox world, including a formal split with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and significant tensions with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

## Speeches by Ukraine's President to the European Parliament and national parliaments

*Briefing by Micaela Del Monte, April 2022*

Volodymyr Zelenskyy has been addressing parliaments around the world to plead the cause of the Ukrainian people and ask for both military and humanitarian help. He began by addressing the European Parliament, before continuing with many others, both in Europe and further afield. Zelenskyy's speeches have each been tailor-made to their specific audience.

## Implications for EU commodity imports from Russia

*'At a glance' note by Guillaume Ragonnaud and Marcin Szczepanski, March 2022*

Russia is a major global commodity producer and exporter. The country's invasion of Ukraine has already pushed commodity prices to historically high levels, and could also lead to commodity shortages. This situation may cause considerable economic damage, with far-reaching consequences for EU industry.

## Russia ceases to be a member of the Council of Europe

*'At a glance' note by Micaela Del Monte, March 2022*

On 16 March 2022, the Committee of Ministers decided that Russia would no longer be a member of the Council of Europe. Also on 16 March following the above-mentioned decision of the Committee of Ministers, the Court decided to suspend the examination of applications against Russia.

## A gender-sensitive humanitarian response

*'At a glance' note by Rosamund Shreeves, March 2022*

Even – or especially – in complex, emergency situations, a gender perspective is vital in order to take into account the specific needs of women and men and the different risks to which they are exposed. Humanitarian actors are calling for a gender-sensitive response to the Ukraine crisis, to help tackle barriers to accessing vital services, address increased risks of gender-based violence and facilitate the reception and integration of refugees.

## Ukrainian students in the EU

*'At a glance' note by Ivana Katsarova, March 2022*

Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 has caused vast displacement of people within the country as well as across the EU borders. While the annexation of Crimea had a negative impact on the country's education system, recent events have added additional strain. Outbound student mobility was already substantial in recent years, but it has accelerated even further since the Crimean conflict began. After doubling from some 25 000 to nearly 50 000 between 2007 and 2014, the number of Ukrainian students abroad has since skyrocketed by another 54 % to around 78 000 in 2019.

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## EU-Ukraine trade in agri-food products

*'At a glance' note by Giulio Sabbati and Claudia Vinci, March 2022*

Up until the 2022 Russian invasion, Ukraine was exporting more than 40 % of its goods to the EU, making the EU the country's leading trading partner. The principal goods imported by the EU were raw materials, chemical products and machinery. With regard to the agri-food sector, Ukraine supplied almost half of the cereals and vegetable oils and a quarter of the poultry meat imported to Europe. While the full impact of the Russian invasion on Ukraine's agri-food trade has still to be assessed, some possible scenarios have already emerged.

## The digital dimension of Russia's war on Ukraine

*EPRS video, March 2022*

### The digital dimension

*'At a glance' note by Tambiama Madiega, March 2022*

While Russia deploys cyber warfare and disinformation strategies in its war on Ukraine, social platforms, and telecommunication, media and internet operators are playing an important role in relaying information on the war and shaping public opinion. The EU has taken a number of immediate, practical, measures to support Ukraine, and is contemplating further action to build the resilience of its communications infrastructure, strengthen cybersecurity and counter disinformation.

## 5 facts on how the war in Ukraine impacts EU transport

*EPRS video, April, 2022*

### Implications for EU transport

*'At a glance' note by Marketa Pape, March 2022*

Sanctions include a ban of all Russian aircraft from EU airspace, to which Russia reacted by banning all EU airlines from its skies. While the full weight of these decisions is only starting to be felt, the implications of the conflict for EU transport are much larger and include steep increases in fuel prices, interruptions to supply chains and the need to ensure the safe return of stranded drivers and seafarers.

### International reactions

*'At a glance' note by Matthew Parry and Ionel Zamfir, March 2022*

International condemnation of Moscow's war on Ukraine has reached far beyond Europe, as evidenced by overwhelming support for a United Nations (UN) resolution condemning the invasion. Several countries have gone further and joined the EU in adopting sanctions against Russia or sending military aid to Ukraine.

### EU budget response

*'At a glance' note by Sidonia Mazur, March 2022*

Russia's invasion of Ukraine, launched on 24 February 2022, has triggered a historic and twofold mobilisation of EU funds – for humanitarian action and military support. The European Commission has announced over €500 million in financing for humanitarian aid and the Council has decided to use the off-budget European Peace Facility (EPF) to assist Ukraine with €500 million in military aid.

### Military balance of power

*'At a glance' note by Jakub Przetacznik, March 2022*

While Ukraine defends its territory with a much more motivated army, it is nevertheless smaller than and not as well equipped as the Russian forces. Military aid is being provided by EU Member States and other like-minded countries, including the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

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## Assisting Ukrainians at the EU's borders

*EPRS video, March 2022*

## Assisting Ukrainians at the EU's borders

*'At a glance' note by Costica Dumbrava, March 2022*

The EU has also adopted measures to help people, mostly women and children, fleeing Russian aggression, while ensuring proper management of the EU's external borders. These measures include a proposal to grant EU-wide temporary protection to people arriving from Ukraine, guidelines to assist border guards carrying out checks at the EU-Ukraine borders, and support from specialised EU agencies.

## Developing EU energy independence

*Video with Lasse Boehm, March 2022*

## Implications for EU energy supply

*'At a glance' note by Lasse Boehm, March 2022*

Russia is the largest exporter of oil, natural gas and coal to the EU. Already before the crisis, natural gas prices had increased significantly. The current crisis is likely to have a major impact on price levels in Europe. The EU will need to see how to increase its energy independence, using some of the building blocks of the Green Deal.

## Cutting certain Russian banks off from SWIFT

*'At a glance' note by Lasse Boehm and Carla Stamegna, March 2022*

As a system for standardised payment instructions and messaging services, SWIFT has become the basis for most global financial transactions. On 2 March 2022, the Council decided to cut seven Russian banks from the SWIFT network, as part of a wider sanctions package, including sanctions against Russia's central bank.

## Outcome of the special European Council meeting of 24 February 2022

*Briefing by Suzana-Elena Anghel, February 2022*

On 24 February 2022, at a special European Council meeting following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, EU leaders delivered a message of unity and determination, acknowledging 'the European aspirations and the European choice of Ukraine' and reiterating the EU's support to the territorial integrity of the country.

***The following EPRS publications written before the start of hostilities, explore the background to the crisis, starting with Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the EU's response.***

## Is Russia planning a new conflict in Ukraine?

*'At a glance' note by Martin Russell, EPRS, December 2021*

For the second time in 2021, a massive Russian military build-up and increasingly hostile rhetoric point to a planned attack on Ukraine. Whereas the previous build-up ended in April with the withdrawal of most troops, this time the signs are more worrying. Russia is demanding a halt to NATO activity in and around Ukraine. The US and the EU are threatening harsh new sanctions against Russia if the attack goes ahead.

## Russia-Ukraine stand-off ends – For now

*'At a glance' note by Jakub Przetacznik and Martin Russell, EPRS, April 2021*

After a period of relative calm, the seven-year-old conflict in eastern Ukraine is heating up again. On the Russian side of the border, recent mass deployments of troops and weapons, now ended, led to fears that Moscow was considering further military aggression against Kyiv. The EU and its Western partners have expressed concern about escalating tensions, and affirmed their strong support for Ukraine.

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## Russia's armed forces: Defence capabilities and policy

*Briefing by Martin Russell, EPRS, March 2021*

Reforms launched under Vladimir Putin have restored some of the Russian armed forces' former glory. Russia now has a streamlined, mobile and mostly professional military, equipped with modern weapons. The impact of these changes was visible in Syria, Russia's first military intervention outside the post-Soviet region.

Despite this increased capability, there are demographic and financial constraints on Russian military power. The armed forces are not attracting enough recruits to go fully professional, and therefore still need conscripts to make up the numbers. Moscow has spent billions of dollars on new weapons, such as the innovative nuclear missiles unveiled by President Putin in 2018, but not all branches of the armed forces are equally well equipped.

## EU-Ukraine

### Temporary Protection Directive

*EPRS podcast, April 2022*

### Temporary Protection Directive

*Briefing by Katrien Luyten, March 2022*

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, over 3.4 million people have already been forced to seek refuge, mostly in neighbouring countries. The European Commission estimates that Russian aggression may have displaced up to 6.5 million people. In response, the European Union swiftly decided to grant EU-wide temporary protection to people arriving from Ukraine.

### EU-Ukraine relations and the security situation in the country

*Briefing by Jakub Przetacznik with Linda Tothova, EPRS, February 2022*

Since the beginning of 2021, Ukraine has struggled with Russia's attempts to further destabilise the country and intensify tensions in Europe's east, including through repetitive military build-ups along Ukraine's borders. Russia's most recent threatening troop manoeuvres, together with its unsupportable security demands, met with a united response from Western countries, making it clear that a very high price will be paid if Russia attacks Ukraine.

### Eastern Partnership post-2020 agenda

*In-depth analysis by Jakub Przetacznik and Martin Russell, EPRS, December 2021*

The geopolitical, economic and security situation in Europe has evolved significantly in the past 12 years since the Eastern Partnership (EaP) was launched in 2009. Taking into account the pandemic context and the growing pressure on democracies and multilateralism worldwide, an assertive Russia under Vladimir Putin and an increasingly influential China, the role and responsibility of the European Union – a major global champion of democracy and multilateralism – in the EaP region are growing. Against this backdrop, the European Commission and the EU High Representative have put forward a proposal for the EaP policy beyond 2020, focused on 'recovery, resilience and reform'. This new agenda was endorsed at the EaP summit, held in Brussels on 15 December 2021. The paper includes a three-page long country profile of Ukraine.

### Implementation of the EU Association Agreement with Ukraine

*'At a glance' note by Jakub Przetacznik, February 2021*

The Association Agreement is the main framework for EU-Ukraine relations, and promotes economic and political cooperation, as well as respect for common values.

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## EU-Ukraine people-to-people contacts

'At a glance' note by Naja Bentzen, February 2019

The 2014 Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine began as a grassroots movement, channelling public calls for a functioning democracy, a European outlook and an end to corruption. Since then, the European Union has been unrelenting in its support for Kyiv's ambitious reform process as well as for Ukraine's vibrant civil society.

## Ukraine: Religion and (geo-)politics: Orthodox split weakens Russia's influence

Briefing by Naja Bentzen, February 2019

Five years after the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople – widely seen as the spiritual leader (primus inter pares) of the Eastern Orthodox world – granted the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) 'autocephaly' on 5 January 2019, formalising a split from the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC).

## EU-Russia

### Human development in Putin's Russia: What the data tell us

Briefing by Eric Pichon and Martin Russell, April 2022

While the UN Human Development Index, which assesses progress in the standard of living, health and education, ranks Russia among the 'very high human development' countries, other data suggest a more nuanced reality.

### Outcome of the informal European Council in Versailles on 10-11 March 2022

Briefing by Suzana Anghel, March 2022

The European Council adopted the 'Versailles Declaration', condemning the 'unprovoked and unjustified' Russian military aggression against Ukraine, praising the Ukrainian people's courage, demanding that Russia end its aggression, and stressing that the EU remained 'ready to move quickly with further sanctions'

### Before the war: Russia's economic indicators and trade with EU

'At a glance' note by Györgyi Mácsai, EPRS & Igor Tkalec, GlobalStat, EUI

The data in this infographic illustrate the extent of trade between the EU and Russia in the years up to the latter launching its war on Ukraine, as well as the state of Russia's economy more generally in the same period. This is an update of an infographic originally drafted by Martin Russell and Giulio Sabbati in May 2016.

### Foreign agents' and 'undesirables': Russian civil society in danger of extinction?

Briefing by Martin Russell, March 2022

As part of a more general drive to exclude external influences after a wave of post-election protests in 2011, in 2012 Russia adopted a Foreign Agent Law, whose scope since then has been progressively expanded to include media and individual activists as well as NGOs. A second Undesirable Organisations Law from 2015 excludes numerous international NGOs from the country. While the Foreign Agent Law does not actually ban Russian NGOs from receiving foreign support, it makes it much harder for them to operate and has forced many to close down.

### EU-Russia trade in agri-food products

'At a glance' note by Claudia Vinci, March 2022

Up until Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the EU and Russia were important trade partners trading in a wide variety of goods, including agri-food products. Russia was the fifth largest importer of EU goods in 2020, despite the disruption of trade relations caused by the first Ukraine crisis in 2014. Furthermore, Russia is a major global exporter of several commodities, including sunflower oil, wheat and barley.

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## Western sanctions and Russia: What are they? Do they work?

*In-depth analysis by Martin Russell, EPRS, February 2022*

This paper summarises the main EU and US sanctions against Russia – principally those that respond to violations of Ukrainian territory but also to developments in other fields such as chemical weapons and human rights abuses. It also discusses the economic and political impact of existing sanctions on Russia and the EU, and outlines possible sanction-based responses to further Russian aggression against Ukraine.

## The direction of EU-Russia political relations

*'At a glance' note by Martin Russell, EPRS, September 2021*

Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea marked the beginning of a new and difficult phase in bilateral relations. These relations are based on the five principles agreed by EU foreign ministers in 2016, in addition to the joint communication of June 2021. During the September 2021 plenary session, the European Parliament held a debate on EU–Russia political relations and voted a draft recommendation to the Council, the Commission and the High Representative. While acknowledging that the EU approach had contained the risk of Russian aggression, the draft recommendation called for a review of EU policy, including more support for human rights.

## The Nord Stream 2 pipeline: Economic, environmental and geopolitical issues

*Briefing by Martin Russell, EPRS, July 2021*

Launched in 2015, the Nord Stream 2 pipeline will connect Russia and Germany directly via the Baltic Sea, following a similar route to Nord Stream 1 completed in 2011. Some opponents point to the environmental impact of the pipeline's construction, as well as the contradiction between the EU's climate goals and long-term investments in fossil fuel import infrastructure. However, the pipeline's geopolitical implications are its most controversial aspect. The pipeline had looked set to perpetuate Russia's stranglehold on EU energy markets and compromise European strategic autonomy.

## China-Russia & US-Russia

### Response of the United States

*'At a glance' note by Matthew Parry and Marcin Szczepański, April 2022*

The United States has imposed a battery of sanctions and multilateral measures on Russia while also providing Ukraine and its EU neighbours with military, economic and humanitarian aid.

### China-Russia relations: A quantum leap?

*Briefing by Ulrich Jochheim, March 2022*

In the joint statement issued after the meeting on 4 February 2022 between the presidents Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin, the Chinese leader for the first time voiced his country's outright opposition to NATO enlargement and support for Russia's 'proposals to create legally binding security guarantees' in Europe.

### US-Russia relations: Geopolitical, security, economic and human dimensions

*Briefing by Martin Russell, EPRS, February 2022*

After a period of détente, tensions are rising between the two former Cold War enemies again. There are few issues that Washington and Moscow agree on, but none is more divisive than Ukraine. Russia is determined to prevent further NATO expansion into post-Soviet eastern Europe, which it still sees as a buffer zone vital to its security and as a sphere of influence. From late 2021, there were signs that Russia was planning renewed aggression against Kyiv; the US promised a robust response if that happens.

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## **The New START Treaty between the US and Russia: The last surviving pillar of nuclear arms control**

*Briefing by Martin Russell, EPRS, March 2021*

The US and Russia both have formidable arsenals of potentially destructive nuclear weapons. Although a nuclear-free world remains a distant dream, the two countries have taken steps to limit the risk of nuclear conflict, through a series of arms control agreements limiting the number of strategic weapons that each can have. In force since 2011, the New Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty (New START) is the latest of these agreements. Under New START, Russia and the US are limited to an equal number of deployed strategic warheads and weapons carrying them, such as intercontinental ballistic missiles. To ensure compliance, there are strict counting rules and transparency requirements, giving each side a reliable picture of the other's strategic nuclear forces.

## **Audiovisual material**

### **A Strategic Compass for the EU**

*Video with Elena Lazarou, April 2022*

Russia's war on Ukraine has brought geopolitics, security and defence back to the fore of global conversations. And just like all actors around the world, the European Union is also reflecting on the future of its security and defence policy.

### **Temporary Protection Directive**

*EPRS podcast, April 2022*

The EU Temporary Protection Directive enables EU Member States to move rapidly to offer protection and rights to people in need of immediate protection and to avoid overwhelming national asylum systems in cases of mass arrivals of displaced persons. Although invoked several times in the past, the directive has never been activated before.

### **Food security in times of crisis**

*Video with Anna Caprile, April 2022*

Russia and Ukraine are key agricultural players, together exporting nearly 12 % of food calories traded globally. They are major providers of basic agro-commodities, including wheat, maize and sunflower oil, and Russia is the world's top exporter of fertilisers.

### **5 facts on how the war in Ukraine impacts EU transport**

*EPRS video, April, 2022*

Sanctions include a ban of all Russian aircraft from EU airspace, to which Russia reacted by banning all EU airlines from its skies. While the full weight of these decisions is only starting to be felt, the implications of the conflict for EU transport are much larger and include steep increases in fuel prices, interruptions to supply chains and the need to ensure the safe return of stranded drivers and seafarers.

### **EPRS online roundtable Russia's war on Ukraine - Policy implications for Europe, today and tomorrow**

*EPRS, April 2022*

Three weeks after the first Russian military units started their offensive, it had become clear that all EU policies will be fundamentally changed by this conflict. Almost overnight the EU has been forced to bolster its defence dimension, including by further deepening relations with NATO. European citizens welcomed refugees in their thousands, also thanks to EU funding and the activation of special rules. Europe's energy supply will have to rapidly decarbonise and wean itself off Russian gas, oil and coal. Supply chains have been interrupted, as are deliveries of agricultural products and food from both Russia and Ukraine.

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## Ukraine's children

*EPRS video, April 2022*

Ukraine's civilian population is being subjected to shelling and violence, while outside Ukraine's borders, the international humanitarian community has quickly mobilised to provide support. As the humanitarian situation deteriorates, children are particularly vulnerable.

## Developing EU energy independence

*Video with Lasse Boehm, March 2022*

Last year, the EU imported well over one-third of its natural gas from Russia, to heat homes and provide us with electricity. But what if Russia no longer delivers?

## Assisting Ukrainians at the EU's borders

*EPRS video, March 2022*

The EU has adopted measures to help people, mostly women and children, fleeing Russian aggression, while ensuring proper management of the EU's external borders. These measures include a proposal to grant EU-wide temporary protection to people arriving from Ukraine, guidelines to assist border guards carrying out checks at the EU-Ukraine borders, and support from specialised EU agencies.

## The digital dimension of Russia's war on Ukraine

*EPRS video, March 2022*

In the weeks preceding the war, Russia attacked Ukrainian websites in the context of its hybrid war on the country. In the past, cyber-attacks have cut off electricity networks in Kyiv.

## The EU's financing of military assistance to Ukraine

*EPRS podcast, March 2022*

In an unprecedented and unanimous reaction to the Russian war on Ukraine that began on 24 February 2022, the EU swiftly decided to provide €500 million from the European Peace Facility to fund and coordinate EU military assistance and to deliver military (including lethal) equipment to Ukraine.

## Further Reading

### **The latest Russia's war in Ukraine [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

*Briefing by Marcin Grajewski, May 2022*

### **The Ukraine war and energy supply [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

*Briefing by Marcin Grajewski, April 2022*

### **EU-China ties and Russia's war on Ukraine [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

*Briefing by Marcin Grajewski, March 2022*

### **War in Ukraine [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

*Briefing by Marcin Grajewski, March 2022*

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## Russian invasion of Ukraine, situation as of 1 May 2022



Source: EPRS based on [Institute for the Study of War](#). Map by Samy Chahri

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