

**February 2023**

After months of threatening military manoeuvres and negotiations in bad faith, on 24 February 2022 Russia launched an all-out assault on Ukraine. [European Union leaders](#) and the [European Parliament](#) condemned this unprovoked and unjustified military aggression in the strongest possible terms, as it grossly violates international law and undermines European and global security. On 2 March 2022, the UN General Assembly [adopted a resolution](#) reaffirming Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity by a broad majority. The war has left thousands of Ukrainian civilians dead and injured, and cities partially razed to the ground. According to UNHCR, as of 21 February 2023 more than [8 million](#) refugees, mostly [women](#) and [children](#), have fled to neighbouring countries. Almost [5 million](#) of these have registered for temporary protection or similar national protection schemes. In addition, in January 2023, the International Organization for Migration reported more than 3.6 million [registered](#) internally displaced persons (IDP).

European Parliament resolutions have highlighted various aspects of the war's impact, including the situation of [women](#) and [children](#) fleeing the war, and have recognised the Russian Federation as a state sponsor of [terrorism](#). The EU and its allies, within and beyond the G7, have adopted [hard-hitting sanctions](#) aimed at causing severe damage to the Russian economy. In an unprecedented move, the EU has mobilised resources under the [European Peace Facility](#) to provide Ukraine with military assistance, including lethal equipment. Moreover, some EU Member States have decided to provide Ukraine with [tanks](#). On the humanitarian front, the EU is providing aid, including through the EU civil protection mechanism, and has [activated](#) the Temporary Protection Directive. After one year of war, EU and Member State assistance to Ukraine and its people totals at least €67 billion. This amount includes a broad spectrum of actions: budgetary support, fast recovery, energy supply, military capabilities, humanitarian aid and support to refugees. Needs are however increasing, as continued shelling destroys Ukrainian critical infrastructure. The conflict has become Europe's worst security crisis since the end of World War Two. 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 alternatives sources for [energy](#), [raw materials](#) and [food](#). Cereal and oilseed exports from Ukraine have been hit hard, not only because of the war but also because of the [Russian blockade](#) of Ukraine's ports on the Black Sea.

All EPRS publications on this topic can be found in one place on the [EPRS blog](#). This topical digest ends with a presentation of EPRS's audio-visual material on Russia's war on Ukraine.

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## Russia's war on Ukraine

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

### EU energy security and the Ukraine war: From sprint to marathon

*Briefing by Lasse Boehm and Alex Wilson, February 2023*

This briefing assesses how the EU has adapted its energy markets and secured supplies over the past year in response to the rupturing of relations with Russia.

### One year of temporary protection for people displaced from Ukraine

*'At a glance' note by Katrien Luyten, EPRS, February 2023*

In response to the mass arrivals of refugees, the EU moved swiftly to grant Union-wide temporary protection to people arriving from Ukraine. By the end of December 2022, 3.8 million non-EU citizens who had fled Ukraine were benefiting from temporary protection. The EU Temporary Protection Directive, activated for the first time, has generally had a very positive response, as it has avoided extreme pressure on national asylum systems and offered security to the people affected.

### Russia's war on Ukraine: US support

*Briefing by Gisela Grieger, February 2023*

The US has been at the forefront of multilateral actions to tackle the multiple adverse implications of Russia's war of aggression both for Ukraine and the whole world. The US has also provided significant military, financial and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and its EU neighbours.

### Russia's war on Ukraine: US sanctions

*Briefing by Marcin Szczepański, February 2023*

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

### Russia-Belarus military cooperation

*'At a glance' note by Jakub Przetacznik, February 2023*

Is the Belarusian army capable of supporting Russia in direct battle, without further undermining the stability of Lukashenka's regime? As bilateral military cooperation progresses, with repetitive military exercises and a growing Russian military presence in Belarus, the answer remains unclear.

### Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in: Outcome of the special European Council meeting of 9 February 2023

*Briefing by Suzana Anghel and Ralf Drachenberg, February 2023*

### Russia's war on Ukraine: Western-made tanks for Ukraine

*'At a glance' note by Sebastian Clapp, January 2023*

Following Ukraine's repeated requests, and almost a year of hesitation and delicate negotiations, in January 2023, EU Member States, Norway, the UK and the US finally decided to send Western-made main battle tanks (MBTs) to Ukraine. This issue of whether or not to supply such tanks has been particularly contentious.

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## **Russia, quo vadis? Chapter 9 by Anna Caprile in Ten issues to watch in 2023**

*In-depth analysis, EPRS, January 2023 (Also video presentation by Anna Caprile)*

Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has shaken the geopolitical foundations of Europe, opening a colossal security and identity rift in the Eurasian region. Its outcome will shape Europe's and Russia's futures, in seemingly drastically divergent directions. In 2023 and beyond, the EU will have consequential choices to make.

### **Russia's war on Ukraine – Maritime logistics and connectivity: State of play**

*'At a glance' note by Karin Jacobs, December 2022*

Russia's war on Ukraine has caused export blockages and rising food prices worldwide. Prior to the war, more than 90 % of these products, around 6 million tonnes, were exported via the Black Sea. Through the Black Sea grain (BSG) initiative and the EU 'solidarity lanes', these goods are being exported again, thereby improving maritime connectivity and logistics.

### **Generators of Hope: Delivering energy equipment to Ukraine for the winter ahead**

*'At a glance' note by Sidona Mazur, Agnieszka Widuto and Jakub Przetacznik, December 2022*

On 23 November 2022, the European Parliament partnered with Eurocities to launch the 'Generators of Hope' campaign to provide Ukraine with energy equipment for the winter. Russian attacks on civilian infrastructure temporarily left around 10 million Ukrainians without power, while temperatures had already dropped below zero. The campaign will facilitate city-to-city donations of power generators, transformers and other devices, sent with the logistical support of the EU civil protection mechanism.

### **2022 Sakharov Prize laureate: The brave people of Ukraine**

*'At a glance' note by Jakub Przetacznik, EPRS, December 2022*

The 2022 Sakharov Prize was awarded to the people of Ukraine, represented by their president, elected leaders, and civil society, who are fighting hard and have sacrificed so much to protect their country from Russia's war of aggression.

### **Macro-financial assistance for Ukraine in 2023**

*'At a glance' note by Marianna Pari, November 2022*

On 9 November 2022, the European Commission presented an €18 billion Ukraine support package for 2023, in the form of highly concessional loans backed by the EU budget. Three acts must be passed for disbursement to begin in early January.

### **Russia's war on Ukraine: People with disabilities**

*'At a glance' note by Micaela del Monte and Marie Lecerf, November 2022*

Estimates show that around 2.7 million people with disabilities in Ukraine face a disproportionate risk of violence or death, and lack access to medical support; this number will most likely increase as the conflict goes on. Since the war began, the European Parliament has been drawing attention to the needs of people with disabilities.

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## European Peace Facility: Ukraine and beyond

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

The European Peace Facility (EPF), operational since July 2021, finances activities with military implications, and supports the armies of partner countries and EU Member States with infrastructure, training and equipment. Reacting to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, for the first time in its history the EU has now mobilised funds for the delivery by Member States of military equipment, including lethal weaponry, to assist a partner country.

## Russia's war on Ukraine: Designating a state as a sponsor of terrorism

'At a glance' note by Beatrix Immenkamp, November 2022

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy first asked the United States (US) Congress and the White House to add Russia to the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism in April 2022. He has since extended the call to governments around the world. Both the US House of Representatives and the Senate have passed resolutions calling on the Secretary of State Antony Blinken to add Russia to the list, which he has so far refused to do. On 18 October 2022, the European Parliament held a debate on designating Russia as a state sponsor of terrorism.

## Confiscating Russian sovereign assets to fund Ukraine's reconstruction: Mission impossible?

'At a glance' note by Eamonn Noonan, October 2022

Some EU leaders have expressed support for using frozen Russian Central Bank (RCB) assets to fund reconstruction, but it is unclear if this will actually happen. There are recent examples of sovereign assets being confiscated and used to compensate victims of injustice, but the confiscation of Russia's sovereign funds raises complex legal and political issues that are unlikely to be resolved quickly or easily.

## Russia's war on Ukraine: New EU sanctions under the eighth package

'At a glance' note by Anna Caprile, October 2022

The EU moved swiftly to approve an eighth package of EU sanctions, including the legal basis to cap Russian oil export prices, in retaliation for Russia's illegal annexation of four regions of Ukraine, the first nation-wide mobilisation since World War Two, and its unequivocal nuclear threat.

## Outcome of the European Political Community and European Council meetings in Prague on 6-7 October 2022

Briefing by Suzana Anghel, October 2022

EU leaders focused on Ukraine and energy. As regards Ukraine, the European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, stressed that, with the successive packages of sanctions, including the agreed oil price cap, the EU was depriving Putin's regime of the ability to wage war in Ukraine and that Team Europe (EU and the Member States) had pledged €19 billion to Ukraine (military aid excepted).

## Russia's war on Ukraine: Impact on global food security and EU response

Briefing by Anna Caprile and Eric Pichon, September 2022

The response of the international community, including a United Nations–Turkey-brokered agreement to unblock exports from Black Sea ports, has calmed fears of an imminent widespread food global crisis. A number of food import and food aid-dependent countries, however, remain highly vulnerable to food price and foreign exchange volatility. This publication updates and expands an 'at a glance' note from April 2022.

## European Cultural Heritage Days: Russia's cultural war against Ukraine

Briefing by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, September 2022

The Russian aggressors have looted artefacts from Ukraine's public and private collections, added them to Russian collections and declared them to be part of Russian history and culture.

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## EU entry restrictions in relation to Russia's war on Ukraine

*Briefing by Costica Dumbrava, September 2022*

After partially suspending the EU-Russia visa facilitation agreement in February 2022, the Council decided to fully suspend the agreement in September 2022. This made the visa application process for all Russian nationals more expensive, lengthier and subject to increased scrutiny.

## Russia's war on Ukraine: Support for the seafood sector using leftover 2014-2020 budget

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

Russia's war against Ukraine has led to high operating costs for the seafood sector. In late March 2022, the EU responded with temporary State aid and exceptional support for the current programming period under the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF).

## Peace and Security in 2022 – EU Association Agreements with Georgia and Moldova and Ukraine – The roads to EU membership

*In-depth analysis by Hannah Ahamad Madatali and Talander Jansen, July 2022*

The paper provides the background to EU relations with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine and analyses the most recent reforms achieved through the implementation of the association agreements in each country, up to the date of their applications for membership. Through an overview of the requirements for accession and of the EU's experiences with enlargement, and within the new context of the reframing of the EU's relations with its neighbourhood, the paper assesses the potential steps each of these countries could take to advance on their roads to EU membership.

## Audiovisual material

### Russia, quo vadis?

Video with Anna Caprile, January 2023, in 10 issues to watch in 2023

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

*EPRS video, May 2022*

The EU is now using a dedicated, although off-budget, tool to finance – but not deliver, with that responsibility falling on Member States alone – lethal military equipment to a third country.

### 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.

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## 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.

## Further reading

### Ukraine: Awaiting Russia's offensive [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Briefing by Marcin Grajewski, February 2023

### Latest on Russia's war in Ukraine [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Briefing by Marcin Grajewski, January 2023

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