

**Question for written answer E-000368/2023  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Use of Ceuta for Russian trade

Although the EU has joined forces with the USA and others to sanction Russia and thwart its international trade<sup>1</sup>, Russian oil continues to reach the world market in large quantities. Oil, gas and coal tankers from Europe with a capacity of almost 16 million deadweight tonnes (DWT) have conducted hundreds of voyages from Russia since the Commission started enforcing an embargo on Russian oil exports, accounting for 40 % of the DWT of all ship departures. More than 100 such shipments have been destined for EU ports<sup>2</sup>. Between 5 December 2022 and 5 January 2023, 689 international fossil fuel shipments left Russian ports<sup>3</sup>.

In Spain, Ceuta is being used as an entrepôt to export Russian oil. Small Aframax tankers carrying up to 700 000 barrels are being loaded with crude in Russian Baltic ports such as Primorsk and Ust-Luga. Once the tankers reach Ceuta, the cargo is being transferred to Russian very large crude carriers with a capacity of 2 million barrels, which are then making their way to African and Asian ports<sup>4</sup>.

1. Has Spain informed the Commission about these events?
2. What measures will the Commission implement to ensure that the sanctions against Russia are complied with and no Russian tankers use any harbours in EU Member States?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/sanctions/restrictive-measures-against-russia-over-ukraine/sanctions-against-russia-explained>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://euobserver.com/ukraine/156642>.

<sup>3</sup> Of these journeys, 250 were by European tankers. Moreover, European insurers provided cover for most of them.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.eleconomista.es/mercados-cotizaciones/noticias/12127603/01/23/Putin-utiliza-Espana-para-vender-su-petroleo-asi-opera-la-flota-fantasma-de-Rusia-con-el-crudo-prohibido.html>.