Ukraine-Russia

Factual update on international response

This document intends to provide an overview of official EU and international government measures taken in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Among a lot of commentary and speculation on the crisis, this report focuses on official sources. H+K Brussels will share daily updates as long as the situation demands it.

- Following previous restrictive measures, the Council of the EU added 26 persons and one entity to the list of persons, entities and bodies subject to EU sanctions against Russia's aggression towards Ukraine.
- Poland, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia have co-signed a letter calling for the EU to immediately grant Ukraine candidate country status to join the EU.
- Switzerland has officially adopted the EU sanctions packages of 23 and 25 February against Russia.

EU measures

EU Council decisions

Following the Council decision yesterday evening (28 February), the EU added **26 persons and one entity** to the list of persons, entities and bodies subject to restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine.

The new listings include **oligarchs and businessmen** active in the **oil, banking and finance sectors**, as well as **government members**, **high-level military officers** and **propagandists** who contributed to spreading anti-Ukrainian propaganda and promoting a positive attitude towards the invasion of Ukraine.

Restrictive measures, which now apply to a **total of 680 individuals and 53 entities**, include an **asset freeze** and a prohibition from making funds available to the listed individuals and entities. In addition, a **travel ban** applicable to the listed persons prevents them from entering or transiting through EU territory.

The relevant legal acts, including the names of the persons and entities concerned, have been published in the Official Journal of the EU.

Developments in EU institutions

On 28 February, EU Energy Ministers convened an extraordinary Transport, Telecommunications and Energy (TTE) Council to address the Ukrainian situation, and the EU's dependency on Russian gas and energy. European Commissioner for Energy Kadri Simson issued remarks, where she emphasised that the EU will move forward with **connecting Ukraine's electricity system to the European Network of Transmission System Operators** (ENTSO-E). The issue was also reiterated in the **European Parliament's extraordinary plenary session** today, 1 March.

The European Parliament's plenary convened today to vote on a motion for resolution, which was adopted with 637 votes to, 13 against and 26 abstentions. Specifically, the motion calls for:

- The scope of sanctions to be broadened;
- The EU to further restrict Russian export goods (including oil and gas);
- The EU to block all Russian banks from the EU's financial system, as well as from the SWIFT communications system;
- Member States to accelerate the provision of weapons to Ukraine;
- The EU to work towards granting Ukraine the status of EU candidate Member.

EU Member States

On 1 March**, Poland, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic**, **Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia** co-signed a letter calling for the EU to immediately grant Ukraine candidate country status to join the EU. This follows an official request from Ukraine to join.

Josep Borrell, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security, had pledged that the EU will provide Ukraine with fighter jets, however Ukrainian pilots are only trained to use Russian-made aircrafts which are only flown in Bulgaria, Poland and Slovakia. **Poland** and **Slovakia** have yet to comment. On 28 February, **Bulgarian** Prime Minister Kiril Petkov said that Bulgaria will not provide fighter jets to Ukraine because it has very few fighters available.

On 1 March, **Slovenia** pledged €1.1 million in aid to Ukraine. €400,000 will be allocated through the UN United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), €400,000 through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), €200,000 through Caritas Internationalis and €100,000 through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

On 28 February, **Croatia** confirmed that it will send €16.5 million worth of weapons to Ukraine and provide health care to Ukrainian refugees, and the necessary medical assistance to the wounded.

On 1 March, **Italy** declared a state of emergency until 31 December 2022. The government decree also provides for strengthening the refugee reception network with 16,000 additional places, an allocation of €10 million and the possibility for Ukrainian refugees to be hosted in reception centres even if they have not applied for international protection.

On 1 March, **Austria** promised that helmets, protective vests and funds from the Foreign Disaster Fund would be provided to Ukraine.

International measures

NATO

On 1 March, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg visited Poland and held a press conference with President Andrzej Duda. Secretary General Stoltenberg said NATO allies will strengthen their presence in Eastern Europe as a reaction to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. However, Secretary General Stoltenberg and President Duda iterated that NATO will not intervene directly in the conflict but will continue sending military assistance to Ukraine such as anti-tank missiles and air-defence systems.

China

On 28 February, spokesperson of China's foreign ministry Wang Wenbin reiterated what he had said last week (here and here): that Western sanctions are **unilaterally imposed and lack legal basis**. He also said that China and Russia will **maintain their trade cooperation** as before the Western sanctions.

United Kingdom

On 1 March, Prime Minister Boris Johnson met Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki in Poland and said Russia has made a "colossal mistake" in Ukraine. Johnson highlighted that NATO allies have imposed severe sanctions on Russia and will further maximise the pressure to compel Russia to stop the war in Ukraine. He, however, did not specify what further measures the allies may take against Russia.
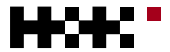
Australia

On 1 March, Australia said it will send $70 million worth of weapons to Ukraine including medical supplies. Australia also announced $35 million to help the urgent needs of Ukrainians affected by the war.

Japan

On 24 February, Japan announced to take the following measures in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine:
- An entry ban on selected Russians and freezing their assets held in Japan.
- Freezing the assets of Russian banks VEB.RF, Promsvyazbank and Bank Rossiya.
- An export ban on entities associated with the Russian military, as well as on dual use items that could help Russian military such as semiconductors.

Switzerland

On 28 February, the Swiss Federal Council decided to **adopt the EU's sanctions packages** of February 23 and 25. The assets of the listed individuals and companies are blocked with immediate effect; the financial sanctions against Russian President Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will also be implemented with immediate effect. Switzerland is currently delivering around 25 tons of aid worth 400,000 francs to the Polish capital of Warsaw, part of the first Swiss aid package worth eight million francs. Switzerland has also indicated its willingness to host any peace talks between Ukraine and Russia.

Russian retaliatory measures

On 28 February, the Russian Federal Agency for Air Transport (Rosaviatsiya) said in a statement that Russia has **closed its airspace to airlines from 36 countries**, including all 27 EU member states, in response to Ukraine-related sanctions targeting its aviation sector.

The listed countries are Albania, Anguilla, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, British Virgin Islands, Germany, Gibraltar, Hungary, Greece, Denmark, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Jersey, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Upcoming meetings

3-4 March 2022
- Justice & Home Affairs Council:
    - Meeting about the influx of refugees from Ukraine
    - Focusing on increased security at the Schengen area's external borders, migration and asylum rules