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Tankers

EU's new Russia sanctions package leaves out maritime services ban

Delayed package of measures includes ship designations and port bans coupled with a loan for Ukraine



EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas.

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The European Union unveiled its latest package of sanctions on Thursday — but without a proposed full maritime services ban that would have ended any EU involvement in Russian crude shipments.

EU leaders trumpeted the planned ban in early February but could not secure full agreement from all 27 member states, with Hungary leading the opposition.



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The disagreements meant that the EU was forced to postpone the 20th round of sanctions to mark the fourth anniversary of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February.

But it moved swiftly after Hungary lifted its veto following the fall from office of former Hungarian prime minister and Kremlin ally Viktor Orban. The bloc agreed a \$90bn loan to Ukraine and other measures, including the blacklisting of another 46 ships.

The bloc said it had agreed only on the “basis for a future maritime services ban” on crude and refined products from Russia.

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crude shipments. The UK said it would have followed suit with its own ban.

The EU said any future ban would now be coordinated with other G7 nations and countries backing the oil price cap.

The price cap scheme prevents EU-linked shipowners and service providers from involvement in Russian crude shipments if prices rise above \$44.10 per barrel.

Critics of the scheme said the cap was too complex, easily evaded and added levels of bureaucracy to oil shipments.

The package does include the blacklisting of Russian maritime insurer, Soglasie, which was designated by the UK last year.

The extra ships sanctioned take the total from the bloc alone to 632, it said. More than 30 have not been previously listed before.

It takes the total of crude and product tankers listed by either the UK, US or the EU to more than 650, according to a TradeWinds tally.

It also introduces mandatory checks before sales of tankers that might end up in the shadow fleet. It follows a previous scheme that has proved toothless.

The measures also include bans on transactions with two Russian ports, Murmansk and Tuapse, and an oil terminal at the Karimun port in Indonesia, which it said were used to get around the oil price cap. It also bans maintenance and other services for Russia's LNG carrier fleet.

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said: "Today we have finally broken the deadlock.

"On top of the €90bn loan for Ukraine, we have also adopted the 20th sanctions package.

"The EU will provide Ukraine what it needs to hold its ground while we inhibit those enabling Russia's illegal aggression."

“During meetings in Cyprus, we will also discuss with partners further sanctions pressure on Russia over this war,” he said.

“The 20th package has been unblocked, and it must be followed by other sanctions steps.”

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