

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002075/24
to the Commission
Michał Dworczyk (ECR)
(15 October 2024)

Subject: German industrial machinery driving the Russian armaments sector

Following the introduction of European sanctions banning exports of goods with a potential military use, Russia stepped up its efforts to increase arms production in its domestic factories. The products of German industrial machine-building companies which can be used in the manufacture of military equipment, ammunition and weapons are playing an important role in this process. According to Russian customs documents obtained by Südwestrundfunk, by the end of December 2023 Russia had imported more than 300 machines from over 30 German manufacturers ⁽¹⁾.

For example, Walter Maschinenbau from Tübingen made 11 deliveries in 2023; its machinery is used by the Russian firm NIR JSC, which supplies the military with aircraft and rocket engines. Vollmer from Biberach and Fein GmbH from Schwäbisch-Gmünd have not only supplied machinery to Russia, but continue to maintain active Russian websites with service and technical support. The Russian companies Parsek, Kamaz, NIR and Industrial Solutions are supplying the Russian army with engines and parts for aircraft and missiles using German machinery to produce them.

I think this is unacceptable and would like to ask the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware that German companies are circumventing the sanctions imposed on Russia as a result of its war of aggression against Ukraine?
2. Is the Commission planning to take action against companies breaking the sanctions?
3. Is the Commission planning to strengthen the sanctions regime and export controls in the private sector, in particular to monitor supply chains and the activities of subsidiaries of European companies operating in Russia?

Submitted: 15.10.2024

Answer given by Ms Albuquerque on behalf of the European Commission
(3 January 2025)

In response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the EU has imposed unprecedented restrictive measures (sanctions). The 14 sanctions packages adopted since February 2022 ⁽¹⁾ include wide-ranging export restrictions on dual-use and advanced technological and industrial goods, to further weaken Russia's military capabilities. These measures cover many types of machinery that can be used by Russia's military-industrial complex.

Member States are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of EU sanctions. Any credible allegations of sanctions violations must be carefully investigated by the responsible authorities in Germany.

Directive (EU) 2024/1226 ⁽²⁾ introduced new rules to harmonise criminal offences and penalties for the violation of EU sanctions. It will ensure that such violations can be criminally investigated and prosecuted in all Member States.

In the meantime, Member States should apply their existing national rules as necessary. The Commission ensures the uniform implementation of the sanctions and monitors their enforcement by national competent authorities.

To this end, the Commission is in constant dialogue with national competent authorities and with industry, and has issued guidance on due diligence standards, in particular for exports.

The Commission frequently engages with Member States on the actions they have taken in follow-up to press reports such as the one referred to by the Honourable Member.

Any decision to expand or amend sanctions is for the Council to take, acting by unanimity.

¹ <https://www.tagesschau.de/investigativ/swr/embargo-russland-maschinen-100.html>

⁽¹⁾ https://finance.ec.europa.eu/eu-and-world/sanctions-restrictive-measures/sanctions-adopted-following-russias-military-aggression-against-ukraine_en
⁽²⁾ OJ L, 2024/1226, 29.4.2024.