

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002789/24
to the Council
Sebastian Tynkkynen (ECR)
(5 December 2024)**

Subject: Measures to restrict access to EU airspace from Russian airspace

Following the start of Russia's brutal war of aggression against Ukraine, the use of Russian airspace by European airlines has largely stopped. Only four European carriers — Air Serbia, Turkish Airlines, Pegasus Airlines and Belavia — are still operating in Russian airspace due to their diplomatic ties with Russia.

It should be underlined that Russia continuously profits from collecting fees from the airlines operating in its airspace. Every possible measure should be taken to restrict Russia's ability to wage its imperialistic war of annihilation.

Of all countries, China has the largest number of airlines using Russian airspace. In addition to funding the Russian war machine, China's continued operation in Russian airspace creates an unfair market situation for European airlines, such as Finnair, by hampering competition for passenger flights to Asia. It is extremely hard for European operators to compete against airlines that can use a far faster and thus cheaper route.

In light of the above:

What concrete measures can be taken to restrict airlines from entering EU airspace from Russian airspace, to strike a blow at Russia's funding for its war machine and help secure a more level playing field for European operators?

Submitted: 5.12.2024

**Reply
(24 April 2025)**

In the light of Russia's continuing war of aggression against Ukraine and the atrocities being committed by Russian armed forces in Ukraine, the Council of the EU has adopted the largest and most ambitious ever set of restrictive measures, with 16 packages of restrictive measures adopted to date.

The 14th package of sanctions adopted on 24 June 2024 banned Russian carriers of all kinds from accessing EU airports and from overflying EU airspace (see Article 3d of Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014).

This means that aircraft registered in Russia or elsewhere and leased or rented to a Russian citizen or entity are banned from landing at any EU airports and from flying over EU countries. Private aircraft are included in the ban.

The 16th package has extended this provision with the new paragraph 1b: 'it shall be prohibited for air carriers operating domestic flights within Russia or selling, supplying, transferring or exporting, directly or indirectly, aircraft, or any of the goods or technology referred to in Article 3c(1) to a Russian air carrier or for flights within Russia, as listed in Annex XLVI, as well as for any entity owned or controlled by such air carrier, to land in, take off from or overfly the territory of the Union'.

Restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine apply within the territory of the Union, aboard any aircraft under the jurisdiction of a Member State, and to any legal person, entity or body, whether inside or outside the territory of the Union, which is incorporated or constituted under the law of a Member State, as well as to any business carried out in whole or in part within the Union, as set out in Article 13 of Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014.

In addition, the management of air traffic rights falls within the competence of Member States in their bilateral relations with China. In this respect, it is up to the Member States to ensure the principle of fair and equal opportunities in their air services agreements.

Further measures may be proposed to the Council by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and by the European Commission.
