

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000937/25
to the Commission**

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(5 March 2025)

Subject: Strengthening EU sanctions against the Russian shadow fleet by aligning with international partners

There are significant discrepancies in sanctions targeting the Russian shadow fleet, with 80 vessels sanctioned by the EU compared to 450 by the United States and 110 by the UK. This disparity raises concerns about the effectiveness of EU sanctions in preventing environmental risks in European waters, including the Baltic, Black, and Mediterranean Seas.

1. How does this imbalance affect EU interests, and does the Commission have information on vessels sanctioned by the United States and the UK that have not been sanctioned by the EU, particularly those operating in European waters?
2. Will the Commission commit to exploring and implementing mechanisms to automatically align EU sanctions with those imposed by the United States and the UK, to ensure a unified approach to effectively counter the Russian shadow fleet?

Submitted: 5.3.2025

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(14 April 2025)

Since the 14th package, the EU has taken far-reaching initiatives to curb the operation as well as the risks posed by Russia's shadow fleet.

The recent 16th package significantly expanded the number of listed vessels by 74, thereby bringing the total number of ships subject to EU sanctions to 153.

To date, this measure has had a considerable impact on the activity of the shadow fleet. These ships have often changed their names, flag and ownership to obfuscate their identities. Despite such attempts, the vessels become tainted and struggle to lift oil, increasing the cost for Russia to operate such a fleet.

In addition to listing vessels, the Council has taken auxiliary measures to weaken the shadow fleet. For example, it has broadened the listing criterion, and designated companies which are material in enabling the fleet.

This includes shipping companies and their managers, who facilitate the transport of Russian oil. Any vessels owned or controlled by these individuals or entities also become subject to restrictions, for example on accessing EU services.

Coordination with international partners plays an important role in undermining the shadow fleet. The EU is committed to continued strong multilateral cooperation, with the goal of implementing measures that will further weaken Russia's ability to wage its war of aggression.

At the same time, it should be noted that targeting requires thorough preparation to ensure a solid legal basis. Variations in legal standards between the United Kingdom, United States and EU can apply, and may result in designations that are different in scope and number.

Ultimately, any decision on new listings, including those which result in a closer alignment with partners, is taken by the Council acting through unanimity.
