

(English version)

Priority question for written answer P-004199/25
to the Commission
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(24 October 2025)

Subject: Actions of the Commission concerning the Russian shadow fleet

The so-called Russian shadow fleet constitutes a serious threat to European security. Credible evidence indicates that missiles and drones have been launched from vessels belonging to this fleet, thereby endangering the airspace of EU Member States as well as critical infrastructure located in European maritime basins.

Beyond its immediate military dimension, the Russian shadow fleet represents a significant ecological, financial and political risk. The shadow fleet continues to serve the Russian war machine by facilitating the revenue generation from the export of raw materials, in particular crude oil, thereby undermining the effectiveness of EU sanctions.

While the EU has addressed this issue on several occasions, Russian activities continue to evolve and adapt rapidly to newly adopted restrictive measures.

1. How does the Commission intend to accelerate the mechanism for the preparation and adoption of sanctions?
2. What concrete steps have been taken to ensure that sanction decisions concerning the vessels of the Russian shadow fleet and the entities responsible for their registration can be adopted more quickly and that those already in force are being implemented effectively?
3. Is the Commission considering establishing a list of approved insurers of vessels operating in European waters, to be used by the legislators of the EU Member States?

Submitted: 24.10.2025

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

The Council, based on proposals from the High Representative/Vice-President and the Commission, has adopted several restrictive measures to further constrain the Russian shadow fleet and its enablers.

Between July 2024 and October 2025, the EU has already imposed a port access ban and a ban on the provision of a broad range of services related to maritime transport on 556 vessels ⁽¹⁾.

The EU has also imposed full-fledged sanctions on several actors supporting the Russian shadow fleet ⁽²⁾, including supportive or false flag registries that allow the continued operation of shadow fleet tankers by creating a fraudulent impression of compliance with certification requirements.

The EU is now fully engaged in discussions in relevant formats with like-minded partners, including the G7 — Nordic-Baltic 8 ++ Shadow Fleet Task Force ⁽³⁾, to further facilitate preparation of additional measures. The EU also continues conducting outreach to flag states to ensure that ship registers do not allow shadow fleet tankers to sail under their flag.

Member States are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of EU sanctions. The Commission stands ready to support their national competent authorities.

The verification of marine insurance remains with the Member States but has been addressed within the International Maritime Organisation, whose member states have agreed guidelines for accepting insurance companies and certificates, financial security providers, and protection and indemnity clubs.

At EU level, such acceptance should in the future be shared within the Union Maritime Information and Exchange System (SafeSeaNet) ⁽⁴⁾, in relation to the recent amendment to the Vessel Traffic Monitoring Directive ⁽⁵⁾.

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/10/23/19th-package-of-sanctions-against-russia-eu-targets-russian-energy-third-country-banks-and-crypto-providers/>.

⁽²⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/02/24/16th-package-of-sanctions-on-russia-s-war-of-aggression-against-ukraine-eu-lists-additional-48-individuals-and-35-entities/>.

⁽³⁾ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/joint-statement-shadow-fleet-task-force_en.

⁽⁴⁾ https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-modes/maritime/eu-wide-digital-maritime-system-and-services/union-maritime-information-and-exchange-system-safeseanet_en.

⁽⁵⁾ Directive 2002/59/EC, as amended.

This amendment introduced a mandatory requirement for ships passing through EU ship reporting systems to also report insurance information.
