

EU imposes new sanctions framework against Russia

For destabilising activities against EU

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USPA NEWS - The European Council had established a new framework for restrictive measures in response to Russia's destabilising actions abroad. This new framework will allow the EU to target individuals and entities engaged in actions and policies by the government of the Russian Federation, which undermine the fundamental values of the EU and its member states, their security, independence and integrity, as well as those of international organisations and third countries.

The EU will as of now be able to address a variety of hybrid threats, such as: the undermining electoral processes and the functioning of democratic institutions; threats against and sabotage of economic activities, services of public interest or critical infrastructure; the use of coordinated disinformation, foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI); malicious cyber activities, the instrumentalisation of migrants, and other destabilizing activities.

The decision, based on a proposal by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell, is part of the EU's response to the continued campaign of hybrid activities by Russia, which has recently increased through new operations on European soil. Under this newly established framework, those designated will be subject to an asset freeze and EU citizens and companies will be forbidden from making funds available to them. In addition, natural persons will also be subject to a travel ban, which will prevent them from entering or transiting through EU territories.

The Strategic Compass for Security and Defence, approved by the Council in 2022, called for the development of an EU Hybrid Toolbox bringing together existing and possible new instruments to detect and respond to a broad range of hybrid threats. Such Toolbox has been operational since December 2022.

On May 21, 2024, the Council approved conclusions acknowledging that state and non-state actors were increasingly using hybrid tactics, posing a growing threat to the security of the EU, its member states and partners, and called on EU institutions and the member states to step up action to monitor attempts by foreign actors to interfere in the EU's democratic process.

In its conclusions of June 27, 2024, the European Council strongly condemned all types of hybrid activities, which are on the rise and target the EU, its member states and partners. Furthermore, the European Council called, inter alia, for work to be taken forward in the Council to establish a new sanctions regime in view of hybrid threats.

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