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Judgment of the Court in Joined Cases C-696/23 P | Pumpyanskiy v Council, C-704/23 P | Khudaverdyan v Council, C-711/23 P | Rashnikov v Council, C-35/24 P | Mazepin v Council and C-111/24 P | Khan v Council

War in Ukraine: the Court of Justice confirms the freezing of the funds of five leading businesspersons operating in Russia

Since the start of Russia's war against Ukraine in February 2022, the Council of the European Union has adopted restrictive measures ¹ against leading businesspersons involved in economic sectors providing a substantial source of revenue to the Russian Government.

In that context, Mr Dmitry Alexandrovich Pumpyanskiy, Mr Tigran Khudaverdyan, Mr Viktor Filippovich Rashnikov, Mr Dmitry Arkadievich Mazepin and Mr German Khan, who have been subject to restrictive measures, brought proceedings before the General Court of the European Union. Their actions having been dismissed by the General Court in 2023, ² they lodged appeals before the Court of Justice.

In its judgment delivered today, **the Court of Justice dismisses all the appeals.**

First of all, it clarifies that it is the 'economic sectors', rather than the leading businesspersons involved in those sectors, that must provide a substantial source of revenue to the Russian Government.

It also clarifies that the concept of the 'influence' of the businesspersons must be understood in the light of the economic context in which they operate, **irrespective of any link that they may have with the Russian Government.** It is indeed because they are of significant importance for the Russian economy that those persons are likely to further, indirectly, the financing of destabilising actions against Ukraine, by contributing to maintaining the profitability, or the prosperity, of the economic sectors in which they are involved.

Next, the Court recalls that the legality of a criterion serving as the basis for the imposition of restrictive measures can be affected only if that criterion is manifestly inappropriate. Such a criterion cannot be regarded as unlawful provided that it targets categories of persons that have, albeit indirectly and albeit independently of any personal conduct, an objective link with the third country against which the European Union is seeking to impose sanctions. In the present cases, the Court finds that there is an objective link between, on the one hand, important businesspersons involved in sectors that are lucrative for Russia and, on the other, the objective consisting in increasing the pressure exerted on that country and the costs of its actions to destabilise Ukraine.

Last, the Court confirms that, in order to determine whether the restrictive measures are proportionate, it is necessary only to verify that they are not manifestly inappropriate for achieving the legitimate objective pursued and that they do not manifestly exceed what is necessary to achieve that objective. Both those requirements are satisfied here.

NOTE: An appeal, on a point or points of law only, may be brought before the Court of Justice against a judgment or order of the General Court. In principle, the appeal does not have suspensive effect. If the appeal is admissible and well founded, the Court of Justice sets aside the judgment of the General Court. Where the state of the proceedings so permits,

the Court of Justice may itself give final judgment in the case. Otherwise, it refers the case back to the General Court, which is bound by the decision given by the Court of Justice on the appeal.

Unofficial document for media use, not binding on the Court of Justice.

The [full text and, as the case may be, an abstract](#) of the judgment is published on the CURIA website on the day of delivery.

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Images of the delivery of the judgment are available on '[Europe by Satellite](#)' ☎ (+32) 2 2964106.

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¹ Council [Decision 2014/145/CFSP](#) of 17 March 2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine, as amended by Council [Decision \(CFSP\) 2022/329](#) of 25 February 2022.

² Judgments of 6 September 2023, *Pumpyanskiy v Council*, [T-270/22](#) (see also Press Release [No 132/23](#)) and *Khudaverdyan v Council*, [T-335/22](#); of 13 September 2023, *Rashnikov v Council*, [T-305/22](#); of 8 November 2023, *Mazepin v Council*, [T-282/22](#) (see also Press Release [No 166/23](#)); and of 29 November 2023, *Khan v Council*, [T-333/22](#).