

EN

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Answer given by Vice-President Jourová
on behalf of the European Commission
(10.10.2022)

State sponsored information manipulation has been instrumental in supporting Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The EU has sanctioned those responsible for this.

Council Regulation (EU) 2022/350 of 1 March 2022¹ amending Regulation (EU) No 833/2014² prohibited the broadcasting, including through transmission or distribution by any means, of several RT (formerly Russia Today) channels (RT English, RT UK, RT Germany, RT France and RT Spanish) and Sputnik. It entered into force on 2 March 2022, the date of its publication in the Official Journal of the EU. The Regulation is directly applicable in all Member States.

Overall, the implementation of these restrictive measures has been effective, and the distribution of the targeted outlets was stopped in the EU. The Commission is aware of reports of limited, temporary problems regarding the distribution online. This is in particular related to the dynamic nature of online distribution (e.g. frequent emergence of and changes in relevant websites and social media accounts).

The primary responsibility for ensuring the proper implementation and enforcement of EU sanctions rests with the Member States. In its role as guardian of the Treaties, the Commission ensures uniform implementation throughout the EU and also monitors enforcement. The Commission is in close contact with the relevant national regulatory authorities regarding the implementation of the restrictions. Moreover, when it comes to implementation of the sanctions on the online services, the Commission holds regular informative meetings with the signatories of the Code of Practice on Disinformation in the framework of its Permanent Task-force.

The Commission is considering further action against Russian propaganda channels, including to ensure the effective implementation of already adopted measures.

¹ Council Regulation (EU) 2022/350 of 1 March 2022 amending Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, OJ L 65, 2.3.2022, p. 1–4.

² Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 of 31 July 2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, OJ L 229, 31.7.2014, p. 1–11.