

Chawy Kurd booklet (27)

# The Russia-Ukraine War and Its Impact on the European Union



by:

**Ismail Abdullah Ahmed**



Chawy Kurd Center for Political Development  
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مركز شاني اسماعيل للتطوير السياسي  
Chany Ismail Center for Political Development

**2024**



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**Book Title:** The Russia-Ukraine War  
and Its Impact on the European Union

**Subject :** International Relations

**Author name :** Ismail Abdullah Ahmed

**Series :** 27

**Year of Publication :** 2024

**Desin :** Aso Ezaddin

### **Publications Of**

**Chawy Kurd Center For Political Development**



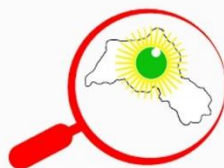
**2024**

## ناوهندی چاوی کورد بۆ پهره پیدانی سیاسی

ناوهندیکی لیکۆلینهوه و توێژینهوهی ئەکادیمی قازانج نهیسته، کاردهکات بۆ پهره پیدان و قۆلکردنهوهی هۆشیاری سیاسی گشتگیر له کۆمهڵگای کوردستاندا، له پرێگهی ئەنجامدانی توێژینهوه و بلۆکردنهوهی کتیب و لیکۆلینهوهی زانستی له بواړی سیاسی و فهرههنگی و پوناکبیریدا، به ئامانجی پێگه یاندنی هاوڵاتی کوردستانی له سه ره بنه مای نیشتمانپه ره وری و شانازی نه ته وایه تی، به دور له ده مارگیری، له گه ل دور که و تنه وه له خۆبه که مزانی له به رانه ر ئەوانی تردا» ناهه ندی چاوی کورد، ده یه ویت پرۆسه ی (ده و له تسازی و نه ته وه سازی و نیشتمانسازی) بکات به خه میکی گشتیی و له کایه مه عریفه ی گشتیدا بیچه سپینیت، به جوړیک که خزمه تی ئامانجه سه ره کیه که ی خه باتی هاو نیشتمانیا نی کوردستان بکات که گه یشتنه به ده و له تی سه ره به خۆی کوردستان.

ناوهندی چاوی کورد به ئه رکی خۆی ده زانی ت کاربکات له پیناو پهره پیدان و چاودێرکردنی پرۆسه ی دیموکراسی له هه ری می کوردستاندا، هاوکات کاردهکات بۆ قۆلکردنه وه ی که لتوری پێکه وه ژیا ن و قبولکردنی جیاوازییه کان له هه ری می کوردستاندا به دور له جیاکاری ره گه زی، ئاینی، نه ته وه یی و ئایدۆلوژی. ته نها له سه ره بنه مای هاوڵاتی بوون.

ناوهندی چاوی کورد مای گشت توێژه ران و ئەکادیمیسته دلسۆزهکانی کوردستانه، دوانگهی بیرو را و سه کو ی خسته پرو ی هزر و کاره زانستییه کانیانه. له سال ی ۲۰۱۸ دامه زرا وه و ئۆفیس ه که ی له شاری سلیمانیه.



ناوهندی چاوی کورد بۆ پهره پیدانی سیاسی  
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## **Dedication**

The research is dedicated to those who have been the pillars of support and inspiration throughout this journey. The research dedicated to my family, for their unwavering love and encouragement, which has been my stronghold for my all achievements in life. Then, researchers and mentors, whose guidance has shaped my academic pursuit. My friends, for their companionship and belief in my potential, and to all those who have contributed, in ways big and small, to the completion of this work. The research dedicated for all the future studies of the case study.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who provided their invaluable support and made this research possible. I want to acknowledge my supervisor, Dr.

Muhammed Mahmood for the unwavering guidance and insights that greatly enriched this work. The faculty and staff of International Relations and Diplomacy Department, whose expertise and assistance were instrumental in my research. My colleagues and peers, for the stimulating discussions and the shared pursuit of knowledge. My family and friends, for their patience, encouragement, and endless love.

## Abstract

This bachelor's thesis examines the multifaceted impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on the European Union (EU), with a focus on the political, economic, security, and energy security effects. The war, which began in 2022, has significantly altered the EU's internal and external dynamics, necessitating a comprehensive analysis. Politically, the EU has faced challenges in maintaining unity while supporting Ukraine and imposing sanctions on Russia. Economically, the conflict has disrupted trade, increased inflation, and strained financial systems. Security-wise, the EU has been prompted to strengthen its defence capabilities and reassess its strategic posture. In terms of energy security, the war has exposed the EU's reliance on Russian energy, accelerating the shift towards alternative sources and energy

independence. This study employs a qualitative approach, analysing policy documents, economic data, and security strategies to assess the war's ongoing impact on the EU. The findings suggest that the war has been a catalyst for significant changes within the EU, pushing it towards greater integration and autonomy.

### **Keywords**

Russia-Ukraine War, Political Effects, Economic Effects, Security Effects, NATO security dynamics, Energy Effects, EU political response, economic sanctions, EU-Russia Relations



List of Acronyms

Acronym	Full Form
EU	European Union
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
UPA	Ukrainian Insurgent Army
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republic
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
ECB	European Central Bank
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
FSRUs	Floating Storage and Regasification Units

## 1. introduction:

The outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine War has precipitated a watershed moment in European geopolitics, with reverberations that have echoed across the political, economic, security, and energy landscapes of the European Union (EU). This research endeavours to dissect and analyse the multifaceted effects of this ongoing conflict, which has not only challenged the EU's internal cohesion but also its external posture on the global stage.

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which escalated into a full-scale war in 2022, has sent shockwaves across the globe, with particularly profound implications for the European Union (EU). This research paper aims to dissect the multifaceted impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on the EU, focusing on the political, economic, security, and energy security dimensions. The war has not only tested the EU's foreign policy resilience but has also challenged its economic stability, security dynamics, and energy supply chains. Politically, the EU has been compelled to navigate a delicate balance between

supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and managing its complex relationship with Russia. Economically, the war has inflicted significant disruptions, leading to heightened inflation rates and defence expenditures, while simultaneously impacting trade and investment within the EU (Ogryzko, 2024). From a security standpoint, the EU has faced increased pressures to bolster its defence mechanisms and address the strategic vulnerabilities exposed by the conflict. Lastly, the war has underscored the EU's energy security risks, particularly its dependency on Russian fossil fuels, prompting a radical reevaluation of its energy policies and a hastened transition towards renewable sources (Borrell, 2022).

### **1. 2. Research Importance**

The importance of the academic research multifaceted in providing critical insights into current geopolitical conflicts and their broader implications for international relations and global security. The research enhances understanding of the EU's political,

economic, and social responses to external crises. It contributes to the historical record, offering future scholars a detailed account of this period. The study develops analytical and critical thinking skills, preparing students for careers in policy-making, diplomacy, and academia. It fosters a deeper comprehension of the humanitarian aspects of conflict, such as the refugee crisis and human rights issues. This research is not only academically enriching but also socially and politically relevant, providing a comprehensive view of the war's impact on the EU.

### **2. 3. Research Objectives**

The objectives of the academic research aim to create a comprehensive understanding of the war's multifaceted impact on the European Union. The objectives of the study include the following points:

1. **Examine Political Realignments:** Analysing how the war has influenced political dynamics within the EU, including shifts in alliances and policy-making processes.
2. **Assess Economic Disruptions:** Evaluating the economic repercussions of the conflict on the EU, particularly in terms of trade, investment, and financial stability.
3. **Analyse Security Strategies:** Scrutinizing the EU's security posture and defence strategies in response to the heightened threat environment.
4. **Investigate Energy Security:** Exploring the impact of the war on the EU's energy security, focusing on changes in energy supply, demand, and the shift towards renewable sources.

## **1. 4. Research Questions**

The main question of the research is:

How the Russia-Ukraine war has impacted the European Union?

The sub-question of the research is:

How the war has impacted European Union in the terms of political, economy, security and energy security issues?

## **1. 5. Research Hypothesis**

The research hypothesis states that the ongoing Russia-Ukraine War has significantly altered the European Union's political landscape, economic stability, security dynamics, and energy security framework. This research hypothesizes that the conflict has led to a revaluation of the EU's defence policies, increased economic vulnerability, particularly in energy sectors,

and necessitated a strategic shift towards greater political cohesion and energy diversification. The hypothesis sets a clear direction for the research, proposing that the war has had profound and multifaceted effects on the EU.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2. 1. Research Design**

This study employs a qualitative research design using a case study approach to explore ‘The Russia-Ukraine War and its impact on the European Union: Political, Economic, Security and Energy Security Effects’. The case study method is chosen for its ability to provide an in-depth, contextual analysis of

complex social phenomena within real-life settings.

## **2. 2. Data Collection**

Data will be collected through a variety of sources to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the topic. These sources include official EU documents, policy statements, economic reports, energy consumption data, security briefs, and academic literature on the subject.

Qualitative content analysis will be used to systematically examine the collected data. This will involve coding textual material, categorizing themes, and identifying patterns. The analysis will focus on the content and context of the data to interpret the underlying meanings and implications related to the research topic.

The case study analysis will integrate the qualitative content analysis findings to



construct a comprehensive narrative of the Russia-Ukraine War's impact on the EU. It will consider the political, economic, security, and energy dimensions, providing a multifaceted view of the effects and implications for the EU.

### **2. 3. Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations has been taken into account throughout the research process, ensuring confidentiality and informed consent, particularly when handling numerical, sensitive and detailed information.

### **2. 4. Limitations**

Due to the restriction imposed in a limited impermanent time primary data couldn't be collected, and a lot of resources made the research hard to control. There was another limitation in writing the paper, which was the inability to access some sources.

There were researchers who couldn't be reached to interview, and some of them haven't agreed to interview because they did not have time, then the research has relied on secondary data to fulfil the limitations. The current Russia-Ukraine war needs the newest numerical data of the war consequences, and the numerical data of the war consequences are changeable.

### **3. Research Structure**

The research paper after giving an introduction to the Russia-Ukraine War, the study is divided into two main discussions. The first chapter, delves into the historical context, tracing the evolution of the longstanding conflict, its escalation into a crisis, and subsequently into a full-blown war marked by Russia's comprehensive invasion of Ukraine. The second chapter, examines the multifaceted repercussions of the Russia-

Ukraine conflict on the European Union, encompassing political, economic, security, and energy considerations. It also explores the EU's strategic approach to the war, including its policy responses, imposition of sanctions on Russia, and the pursuit of alternative energy sources to meet its needs. In the conclusion, the findings that the research made during the writing of the thesis are presented.

#### **4. Literature Review**

The war in Ukraine is seen as a geopolitical confrontation between Russia and Western nations, and it has profoundly affected the intricacy of their all-encompassing relations. At the level of the parties involved in the conflict, the implementation of punitive and restrictive measures has various effects. The European Union has reviewed its approach and policy on a number of topics, as well as

the nature of its multilateral relations with Russia and its other partners, in light of the substantial ramifications that the war in Ukraine has had for the organization (Majeed, 2023, P. 187).

The Russia-Ukraine War, erupting amidst the global unease following the COVID-19 pandemic, has been a defining event with expected significant repercussions on the world's economies, particularly within the European Union (EU). Negri and Dincă (2023) provide a comprehensive analysis of the war's impact on the EU's economic output, emphasizing the deepening energy crisis, inflation, and the restructuring of governmental expenditures due to the conflict. Their study utilizes a difference-in-difference methodology alongside panel data econometric techniques, revealing a notable drop in economic output within the EU,

especially for countries heavily reliant on Russian energy imports.

The European Council's response to the economic challenges posed by the war has been multifaceted, including immediate sanctions coordinated with allies and contingency measures to bolster the EU's economic base. Papunen (2024) outlines the European Council's actions over the past 24 months, highlighting the severe energy and cost-of-living crisis that ensued, as well as the steps taken towards strategic autonomy. The briefing underscores the importance of strengthening the EU's economic base and single market in light of the new geopolitical situation.

Overall, the literature indicates that the Russia-Ukraine War has had a substantial impact on the EU's political, economic, security, and energy security landscapes. The

studies reviewed provide valuable insights into the EU's adaptive strategies and the ongoing efforts to mitigate the war's negative effects, offering a foundation for further research in this critical area of study.

### **5. Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical perspectives and key concepts that the study used are realism, economic interdependence, security dilemma and energy security. The theoretical framework is grounded in several key international relations theories and economic principles that provide a lens through which the complex dynamics of the Russia-Ukraine War and its repercussions on the EU can be understood and analysed.

Realism, particularly neorealism, emphasizes the anarchic nature of international relations and the pursuit of power and security by

sovereign states. The EU's response to the Russia-Ukraine War can be analysed through this lens, considering how the balance of power and national interests drive state behaviour in the absence of overarching authority (Waltz, 1979).

Economic Interdependence Theory, suggests that mutual economic dependencies reduce the likelihood of conflict and increase cooperation. This theory can be applied to examine how the EU's economic ties with Russia and Ukraine influence its political and economic strategies during the conflict (Keohane and Nye, 1977).

The Security Dilemma Theory, posits that states' efforts to increase their security can inadvertently threaten other states, leading to a cycle of tensions and potential conflict. This is relevant in understanding the EU's defence and military strategies in response to the war

and its broader implications for EU-Russia relations (Jervis, 1978).

Energy Security Theory, deals with the availability, affordability, and sustainability of energy. Given the EU's reliance on Russian energy, this theory is crucial for exploring the war's impact on the EU's energy policy, security, and the transition to alternative energy sources (Yergin, 2011).



## Chapter One: Historical Background

### 1. 1. Pre-Soviet Period

As part of the Pontic steppe in Eastern Europe, Ukraine played a crucial role in Eurasian cultural events. This included the spread of the Chalcolithic and Bronze Ages, Indo-European migrations, and the domestication of horses (Kubijovyc, 1963).

Starting in the 7<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE, numerous Greek colonies were founded along the northern coast of the Black Sea, the Crimean Peninsula, and the Sea of Azov. These Hellenic outposts later came under the hegemony of the Roman Empire. The steppe hinterland was occupied by various nomadic groups, including the Cimmerians, Scythians, Sarmatians, Goths, Huns, Bulgars, and Avars. Slavic tribes migrated from their primordial

homeland north of the Carpathians in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries CE (Bazhan et al., 1964).

The East Slavs settled in the forest and forest-steppe regions of western and north-central Ukraine and southern Belarus. The East Slavs engaged in agriculture, animal husbandry, cloth making, ceramics, and built fortified settlements (Kohut, Nebesio, and Yurkevich, 2005).

Despite the turmoil caused by nomadic invasions, a few Greek settlements on the Crimean Peninsula, notably Chersonesus, maintained a precarious existence with support from the Byzantine Empire (Conant, 2022)

## **1. 2. Soviet Era (1917–1991)**

After the Russian Revolution of 1917, Ukraine experienced a tumultuous period of independence movements and civil war. In 1922, Ukraine became one of the founding

republics of the Soviet Union as the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Kubicek, 2008, P. 79).

The 1930s were characterized by Joseph Stalin's brutal policies to force peasants into collective farms, leading to the Holodomor, a man-made famine causing millions of deaths. Ukraine was a significant battleground during World War II and suffered greatly under Nazi occupation (Subtelny, 2000, P. 359)

Post-war reconstruction was marked by a focus on heavy industry and a slow recovery in agriculture, with a famine in 1946–47 claiming nearly one million lives. The Sovietization of western Ukraine was particularly violent, with the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) continuing military operations against Soviet troops into the early 1950s (Kubicek, 2008, P. 56).

The Greek Catholic Church in Galicia and Transcarpathia faced persecution, with leaders arrested and the church forcibly integrated into the Russian Orthodox Church. Despite the repressive environment, Ukraine developed a strong industrial base and became a crucial part of the Soviet economy (Applebaum, 2016).

The Chernobyl disaster in 1986 highlighted the flaws of the Soviet system and contributed to growing discontent. Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of Perestroika and Glasnost in the 1980s led to increased openness and eventually to the independence movement in Ukraine. Ukraine declared independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, following a referendum where the majority voted for independence (Applebaum, 2017).

## **1. 3. World War II and Its Aftermath**

The Nazi German invasion of Poland in September 1939 marked the beginning of World War II for Ukraine. Western regions like Volhynia and Galicia were initially occupied by Soviet troops and later incorporated into the Ukrainian SSR. The Soviet occupation was characterized by suppression of organizations, Sovietization of institutional life, and mass deportations (Rosenfeld, (2013)).

The German invasion of the USSR in June 1941 led to a swift occupation of Ukraine. Initially, some Ukrainians viewed the Germans as liberators, especially in Galicia, but this perception quickly changed as the Nazis implemented their oppressive regime. The Nazis perpetrated mass killings of Jews, with an estimated 1.5 million Ukrainian Jews

perishing during the Holocaust (Pietrzak, 2018, P. 9)

After the victory over the Germans at the Battle of Stalingrad in early 1943, the Soviets began a counteroffensive westward. By November 1943, the Soviets had returned Kyiv, and by the end of the war, all of Ukraine was reunited under Soviet rule (King, 2019).

The postwar period saw the reconstruction of Ukraine's infrastructure and economy, heavily focused on industrialization. The late Stalinist era was marked by continued political repression and the struggle to rebuild the nation after the devastation of war (Zajączkowski, 2014).

This period was one of the most tumultuous in Ukrainian history, with profound and lasting effects on the country's demographic, political, and cultural landscape. The experiences of World War II and the postwar

Soviet era have had a significant impact on Ukraine's national identity and its relationship with both Russia and Europe (Rachkevych, 2012).

### **1. 4. Independence and Early Sovereignty (1991–Present)**

On August 24, 1991, following the failed coup in Moscow, the Ukrainian parliament declared independence from the Soviet Union. A national referendum on December 1, 1991, confirmed this decision with over 90% support. Leonid Kravchuk was elected as the first President of independent Ukraine. Ukraine began to establish its own military and national institutions separate from Soviet structures (Subtelny, 2000, P. 576).

The transition from a planned economy to a market economy was difficult, with significant economic decline in the 1990s. Ukraine faced hyperinflation, industrial

output decline, and energy shortages. Ukraine inherited the world's third-largest nuclear arsenal and committed to disarmament under the Budapest Memorandum in 1994 (Subtelny, 2000, P. 579).

Ukraine navigated complex relations with Russia, particularly regarding energy dependence and the status of the Black Sea Fleet. At the same time, Ukraine sought to establish closer ties with Western institutions, including the European Union and NATO (Karatnycky, 2005, p. 25-35).

The country experienced a series of political crises, including the Orange Revolution in 2004, which brought attention to issues of corruption and electoral fraud. Despite challenges, Ukraine made strides in democratic development and civil society engagement (Karatnycky, 2005, p. 35–52).



## **1. 5. Orange Revolution (2004-2005)**

The Orange Revolution was a pivotal moment in Ukrainian political history, characterized by nationwide protests in response to the presidential elections that were marred by massive corruption, voter intimidation, and direct electoral fraud (Hamilton, 2019, P. 35). The revolution began after the results of the second round of the 2004 presidential election were disputed. The public outcry was directed against the incumbent President Leonid Kuchma and his chosen successor, Viktor Yanukovich. The protests were largely peaceful and featured civil disobedience, civil resistance, and strike actions (Khodunov, 2022, P. 515).

The Supreme Court of Ukraine ultimately ordered a revote, which resulted in Viktor Yushchenko being declared the winner. The Orange Revolution had a significant impact

on Ukrainian society, leading to anti-oligarch and anti-corruption measures (Karpyak, 2013).

This period is significant as it marked a turning point towards democratic development and highlighted the power of civil society in Ukraine. It set the stage for future political events and the ongoing struggle for a transparent and accountable government (York, 2007).

### **1. 6. Euromaidan Protests and Annexation of Crimea (2013-2014)**

The Euromaidan protests began on November 21, 2013, after the Ukrainian government suspended preparations for signing an Association Agreement with the European Union. The protests were initially focused on closer European integration, but they expanded into a broader movement against

corruption and the government of President Viktor Yanukovych (Oleinikova, 2018)

The movement, also known as the Revolution of Dignity, led to significant political changes in Ukraine. The protests culminated in February 2014 with the removal of President Yanukovych from office and the establishment of a new government (Minakov, 2018).

In the wake of the Euromaidan protests, Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014, marking the first time since World War II that a European state annexed the territory of another. The annexation was widely condemned by the international community and led to a series of sanctions against Russia (Masters, 2022).

The events of Euromaidan and the annexation of Crimea had profound implications for Ukraine's national identity and its

relationship with both Russia and the European Union. These events also marked the beginning of heightened tensions between Russia and the West, significantly impacting European security and politics (Masters, 2022).

### **1. 7. War in Donbas (2014-2022)**

The conflict began on April 12, 2014, when pro-Russian separatists seized government buildings in the Donbas region, declaring independence from Ukraine. The Ukrainian military launched operations to regain control, leading to a full-scale conflict (Mitrokhin, 2021, P. 115).

The international community, including the European Union and the United States, imposed sanctions on Russia for its role in the conflict. The Minsk I and II agreements were attempts to halt the fighting and establish a political solution, but they failed to bring

lasting peace. The war has resulted in thousands of deaths and injuries among military personnel and civilians. It has also caused a significant humanitarian crisis, with millions of people displaced within Ukraine and abroad (Tsvetkova, 2015).

Despite multiple ceasefires, the conflict saw frequent escalations and violations, with significant battles such as the Battle of Donetsk Airport and the Battle of Debaltseve. The War in Donbas continued until it was subsumed by the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022 (Kofman et al, 2017, P. 44).

### **1. 8. Full-Scale Invasion (2022-Present)**

On February 24, 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, escalating the conflict that began in 2014. The invasion became the largest military attack on a

European country since World War II. The war has caused tens of thousands of civilian casualties and hundreds of thousands of military casualties (Taylor and Francis, 2022, P. 20).

Approximately 8 million Ukrainians have been internally displaced, and over 8.2 million have fled the country, creating Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II by June 2022, Russian troops occupied about 20% of Ukrainian territory. The war has caused extensive environmental damage, contributing to food crises worldwide (Greenspan, 2023).

Russia's stated goals were to "demilitarize and denazify" Ukraine, with claims to support Russian-backed breakaway republics of Donetsk and Luhansk. Ukraine enacted martial law, ordered a general mobilization, and severed diplomatic relations with Russia.

The invasion has been widely condemned by the international community, leading to a series of sanctions against Russia (Plokyh, 2023).

Despite initial retreats, Russia captured key cities like Kherson and Mariupol and launched a renewed offensive in the Donbas. The conflict continues with significant global ramifications, including impacts on energy security and political dynamics within the European Union (Messinis, 2024).

## **Chapter Two: Political, Economic, Security and Energy Security Effects**

### **2. 1. Political Effects**

The conflict has substantially reshaped the European Union's security and defence policy. Previously centred on "low-intensity" crisis management beyond Europe, the focus has now shifted to a prominent role in European politics, emphasizing deterrence and territorial defence. The EU faces the challenge of enhancing its capabilities in this domain, acknowledging NATO's primary role while also seeking meaningful contributions to European security.

The Ukraine war, viewed as a geopolitical conflict between Russia and the West, has profoundly affected their complex relations. The implementation of punitive and restrictive measures has resulted in



consequences for the involved parties. Additionally, the conflict in Ukraine has prompted the European Union to reevaluate its approach, policies, and multilateral relations with Russia and other partners (Majeed, 2023).

The Russia-Ukraine War has precipitated a series of political repercussions within the European Union (EU), challenging its unity and testing its foreign policy resolve. The EU's response to the conflict has been multifaceted, ranging from diplomatic efforts to economic sanctions. High Representative Josep Borrell (2022) highlighted the war's impact as a "third asymmetric shock in 15 years," necessitating a bolstered European economic resilience and a radical reduction in energy imports from Russia.

The conflict has raised serious legal and political implications, with allegations of war

crimes and violations of international law by Russian forces. This has led to investigations by international bodies like the International Criminal Court and has put pressure on the EU to respond to these violations effectively. The EU's actions and stances in this regard could have long-term implications for international law and the EU's own legal frameworks (Baker, 2022).

The EU's sanctions on Russia aim to weaken its war efforts and economy. However, these sanctions also have a political dimension, as they reflect the EU's stance on the war and its commitment to supporting Ukraine. The effectiveness and long-term impact of these sanctions are subjects of ongoing analysis and debate. Furthermore, the EU's commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity has been steadfast, with leaders repeatedly condemning Russia's military aggression and

annexation of Ukrainian territories (Archick, 2024, P. 2).

In the wake of the war, the EU has also seen a significant shift in its defence policies. The establishment of a dedicated Ukraine Assistance Fund, with an increased financial ceiling under the European Peace Facility, reflects the EU's strategic pivot towards providing military support for Ukraine (Archick, 2024). This move signifies a departure from the EU's traditionally cautious stance on military matters, underscoring the war's profound political impact on the Union's security paradigm.

The war has also underscored the necessity for EU solidarity, especially in supporting member states most affected by the conflict. The influx of refugees and heavy reliance on Russian gas have disproportionately impacted neighbouring countries, prompting calls for a

unified approach to manage the crisis (European External Action Service, 2022).

The war's effects are not uniform across the EU, with some member states more affected than others. This has led to discussions on how the EU can ensure solidarity and support for those member states, particularly in terms of managing refugee flows and mitigating economic impacts. The Russia-Ukraine War has had profound political effects on the European Union, catalysing a revaluation of its defence strategies, reinforcing the need for economic resilience, and underscoring the importance of EU solidarity in times of crisis (Simón, 2023).

### **2. 2. Economic Effects**

The war has had a profound impact on the EU's economic growth. The European Commission's 2021 Autumn Forecast predicted a 4.3% growth in GDP for the EU

for 2022, and 2.5% for 2023. However, the actual growth registered at 3.5% for 2022 and an estimated 0.5% for 2023. The war has slowed the economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to a severe energy and cost-of-living crisis (Papunen, 2024, p. 5).

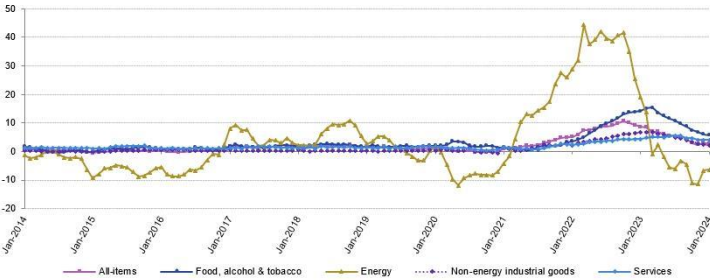
In 2021, the inflation rate began its upward trajectory, but it was in 2022 that a particularly steep increase was observed, largely attributed to the energy crisis, which presented significant challenges for European residents and enterprises. In reaction to this, the European Central Bank's Governing Council initiated a sequence of rate hikes. Figure 1 shows that these 10 successive rate adjustments, implemented incrementally over the span of a year, elevated the principal interest rates to unprecedented heights, steering inflation back towards the 2%

objective. As of January 2024, the inflation rate within the eurozone stood at 2.8%, based on projections (Papunen, 2024, p. 8).

**Figure 1**

The European Central Bank’s Governing Council has temporarily halted its series of interest rate hikes, with market predictions suggesting a potential decline in rates beginning as soon as April 2024. Nonetheless,

**Euro area annual inflation and its main components, January 2014 - January 2024 (estimated)**  
(%)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: prc\_hicp\_manr)

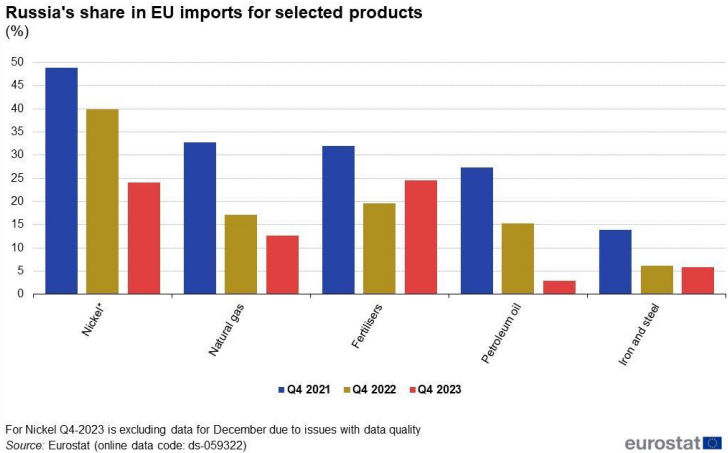
eurostat 

during the Euro Summit in October 2023, conducted in an inclusive format, European Union leaders emphasized that inflation is still a significant issue and underscored the importance of continuing the disinflationary

trend. By January 2024, statements from one member of the ECB Governing Council indicated that a reduction in rates before the summer seemed improbable, while another member remarked that it was premature to consider rate reductions. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, EU leaders are concentrating their efforts on restoring the EU economies to a robust and sustainable path of growth, reaffirming their unified commitment to bolstering the resilience and competitive edge of their economies (Papunen, 2024, p. 8).

## **Figure 2**

When looking at the changes in Russia's



shares in extra-EU trade, both exports and imports dropped considerably below the levels prior to Russia's invasion. Figure 2 shows that Russia's share in the extra-EU exports fell from 3.8 % in February 2022 to 1.4 % in December 2023. Over the same period, the share of extra-EU imports from Russia fell from 9.5 % to 1.9 % (Eurostat, 2024).

The EU experienced a severe energy crisis in 2022, with ripple effects still being felt. The crisis has prompted the EU to take steps



towards encouraging open strategic autonomy, aimed at allowing the EU to stand on its own two feet in the new and rapidly changing geopolitical situation (Papunen, 2024, p. 11).

The World Bank estimated that the cost of rebuilding Ukraine would be about \$349 billion, larger than Ukraine's pre-invasion GDP. This number is three-times greater than all the military, humanitarian, and financial assistance commitments to Ukraine since the start of the war and is likely much higher now (Jenkins, 2023).

As of June 2022, the allies had seized \$30 billion in assets owned by the Russian elite and frozen \$300 billion owned by the Russian central bank. Whether Ukraine and its Western allies will ever be able to compel Russia to pay reparations will depend on the outcome of the war (Jenkins, 2023).

The war has affected the EU's wealth, particularly in countries dependent on Russian imports of gross available energy. The effects of the war on economic output have been significant, with increasing inflation rates, defence expenditures, energy dependency, and trade disruptions.

### **2.3. Security Effects**

Europe's securitization has been greatly impacted by the war in Ukraine and the geopolitical confrontation between Russia and the EU. Concerns have grown as a result of the situation in Ukraine, particularly in Eastern European nations including Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia. Stronger NATO, particularly the US military forces stationed on its western border, is one of the comprehensive measures put in place to safeguard and preserve European security in

the event of Russian assault (Majeed, 2023, P. 202).

The war has significantly shifted the EU's approach to security and defence. The traditional emphasis on low-intensity crisis management has been replaced by a focus on deterrence and territorial defence. This change underscores NATO's importance, but it also raises questions about the EU's role in collective defence and its strategic relevance (Simón, 2023).

The EU's security and defence experience are relatively recent compared to NATO's established capabilities. The war has highlighted NATO's role as the primary organization for deterrence and defence in Europe, especially against a nuclear-capable great power like Russia. However, the EU can still contribute indirectly by supporting NATO through industrial and technological

innovation and the development of military capabilities (Nouwens et al., 2022).

Following the reviews, on 21 March 2022 the EU Security Strategic Direction for defence it approved until There, the Ukraine war as a threat it was considered direct and long-term for European security. War, called a challenge, this needs to be addressed by strengthening the immune system for that purpose several security measures were decided, including expanding capabilities for intelligence analysis, creating teams and toolboxes for detection and countermeasures mixed source threat, further development of cyber defence policy, formulation space strategy for security and defence, as well as capacity building for acting as maritime security actors. On the other hand, member states intend achieving their common goal, which is to fill tangible capacity gaps the

European military and defence industry have agreed to increase their defence spending significantly (Council of the European Union, 2022, P. 3-7).

The war impact Europe's cohesion prospects as they risk further accelerating existing disparities between places and people. Looking towards the future, trends and their possible territorial implications point to increasing instability and insecurity. In short, cohesion has suffered from the pandemic, suffers furthermore from the war in Ukraine and will not be helped by future trends which bring more instability (Böhme et al., 2022).

Russia's invasion has caused economic shocks, particularly in the energy sector, affecting the EU's energy security and economic stability. The EU is working to reduce its dependency on Russian energy and find alternative sources. This shift is critical

for the EU's long-term energy security and economic resilience. The invasion has disrupted the security architecture in Europe, challenging international commitments and trust built over decades. The EU faces the task of rebuilding this architecture and adapting to new security realities (Pszczel, 2022).

The war in Ukraine has altered European citizens' perceptions of their nations' security, in spite of the defence measures of their respective governments. Positive opinions of NATO, for instance, will increase from 59% in Germany in 2021 to 70% in March 2022, and from 66% in the UK to 74% in the UK. In the weeks prior to the war in April, the percentage of Swedish citizens who did not belong to the coalition who had a good impression increased to 27% (Gramlich, 2023).

It turns out that the war in Ukraine has been a major reason for policy reviews; it has been the European Union's and its member states' means of defence and has given them a security characteristic. While the union is currently on the defensive, arming oneself and fortifying one's defences may backfire in the long run. Geopolitics can alter in tandem with the course of events and shared concerns, resulting in a shifting balance of power and the form of relations between states (Majeed, 2023).

## **2. 4. Energy Security Effects**

The EU has been actively seeking to diversify its energy supplies away from Russian fossil fuels. This includes filling gas storage facilities and finding additional gas supplies from other countries. The increased shipments of liquefied natural gas (LNG)

have helped to buffer the reduction of supplies from Russia (Boehm and Wilson, 2023).

The urgency to expand liquefied natural gas (LNG) capacities highlighted disparities in LNG import terminals and their potential across Europe. While Spain boasts the highest capacity, limited interconnection to France poses challenges for supplying other EU countries via pipelines. Import capacity is predominantly concentrated in north-western Europe. In response to these infrastructure limitations, several EU nations aimed to enhance their LNG capacity in 2022, approving the construction of LNG terminals and smaller floating gas storage and regasification units (FSRUs). Notably, Germany, which historically lacked LNG capacity, opened multiple FSRUs in 2022 and inaugurated its second LNG terminal in January 2023 (Boehm and Wilson, 2023).

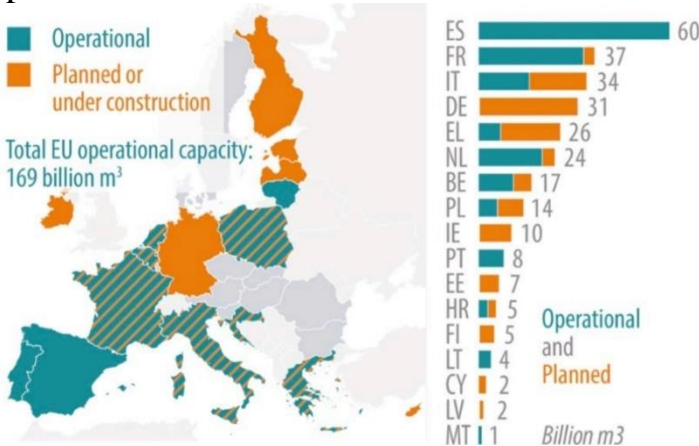


Figure 3

LNG capacity per Member State (billion m3, October 2022)

SOURCE: GAS INFRASTRUCTURE EUROPE.

During 2022, the European Union (EU) achieved significant success in diversifying its fossil fuel supply away from Russia, redirecting it toward other third-country providers. Eurostat data reveals that Russia’s



share of EU energy imports declined by over 10 percentage points between the first and third quarters of 2022, dropping from 25.5%

to 15.1%. This ongoing effort to reduce the EU's dependence on Russian fossil fuels



remains subject to the influence of new EU sanctions policies (Boehm and Wilson, 2023).

**Figure 4**

**EU dependency on energy imports from Russia (million tonnes of mineral fuels – Oil, gas and solid fossil fuels**

SOURCE: EUROSTAT (FROM COMEXT DATABASE).

Efforts to save energy have resulted in lower gas demand than in previous years. The EU has managed to fare better than initially feared during the winter of 2022/2023, partly due to warmer weather and lower LNG demand in China because of COVID-related restrictions. The EU's focus has shifted from immediate crisis response to a long-term vision of managing energy security. This includes promoting renewable energy sources and improving energy efficiency. However, high inflation and the growing cost of capital could challenge new renewable investments.

The EU remains dependent on outside suppliers for its energy security. The policy outlook includes the supply of raw materials, renewables manufacturing, increased interconnections, and the future of joint energy purchasing. Support measures are also

in place to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The war has led to surging energy prices in the EU, affecting the overall economy. Gas prices have increased significantly, which has implications for both consumers and businesses across the Union (Grajewski, 2022).

## Conclusions

The Russia-Ukraine War has had profound and far-reaching impacts on the European Union, reshaping its political landscape, economic stability, security posture, and energy security framework. Politically, the EU has demonstrated a renewed commitment to collective defence and solidarity, reinforcing its support for Ukraine while confronting the geopolitical challenges posed by Russia. Economically, the war has accelerated the EU's efforts to diversify its trade partnerships and reduce reliance on external entities, fostering a greater emphasis on economic resilience.

The security implications of the conflict have led to an unprecedented consolidation of defence initiatives, including increased military spending and the development of strategic autonomy. Energy security has

perhaps been the most immediate concern, with the EU aggressively pursuing alternative energy sources and investing in renewable energy infrastructure, thereby catalyzing a significant shift towards a more sustainable and self-sufficient energy model.

The war's Impact has not only tested the EU's resolve but has also acted as a catalyst for change, prompting a revaluation of policies and priorities. As the EU continues to navigate these turbulent times, the lessons learned from the Russia-Ukraine War will undoubtedly shape its path forward, ensuring a more robust, unified, and resilient Union in the face of future challenges.

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This bachelor's thesis examines the multifaceted impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on the European Union (EU), with a focus on the political, economic, security, and energy security effects. The war, which began in 2022, has significantly altered the EU's internal and external dynamics, necessitating a comprehensive analysis. Politically, the EU has faced challenges in maintaining unity while supporting Ukraine and imposing sanctions on Russia. Economically, the conflict has disrupted trade, increased inflation, and strained financial systems. Security-wise, the EU has been prompted to strengthen its defence capabilities and reassess its strategic posture. In terms of energy security, the war has exposed the EU's reliance on Russian energy, accelerating the shift towards alternative sources and energy independence. This study employs a qualitative approach, analysing policy documents, economic data, and security strategies to assess the war's ongoing impact on the EU. The findings suggest that the war has been a catalyst for significant changes within the EU, pushing it towards greater integration and autonomy.