



## **EU Economic Sanctions: Public Opinion Polling and Market Research in Russia**

**June 2024**

### **Background**

The UK, US and the EU plus other countries have imposed a range of economic sanctions against Russia. Whilst the UK, US and EU has largely aligned their sanctions there has been some divergence. One difference is the approach to public opinion polling and market research services. The EU have prohibited market research and public opinion polling exports; the UK and the US have chosen not to impose prohibitions.

**NOTE:** *The aim of this document is to provide a general overview explaining the restrictions. This document does not constitute legal advice. The sanctions regime is evolving and additional sanctions or new formal sanctions guidance from sanction authorities may supersede this advice at any time.*

### **The EU sanctions**

The formal wording of the EU Council Decision is as follows:

*Decision (CFSP) 2022/2478 extends the existing prohibition on the provision of certain services to the Russian Federation and to legal persons, entities or bodies established in Russia by banning the provision of advertising, market research and public opinion polling services, as well as product testing and technical inspection services. In line with the Central Products Classification as set out in Statistical Office of the United Nations, Statistical Papers, Series M, No 77, CPC prov., 1991, 'Market research and public opinion polling services' covers market research services and public opinion polling services.*

### **What this means for market research and public opinion polling activities in Russia**

- A ban on EU nationals from holding any posts on the governing bodies of all Russian State-owned or controlled legal persons, entities or bodies that are established in Russia.
- Prohibits the provision of certain services to the Russian Federation and to legal persons, entities or bodies established in Russia by banning the provision of market research and public opinion polling services, as well as product testing and technical inspection services.

Full text of the Council Decision is available here: [Decision - 2022/2478 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2022/2478/oj)

## Scope of the sanctions

EU sanctions apply to:

- Within the jurisdiction (territory) of the EU
- EU nationals in any location
- Companies and organisations incorporated under the law of a Member State – including branches of EU companies in third countries
- On board aircraft or vessels under Member State jurisdiction

Under the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol, EU sanctions also apply to trade in goods between Northern Ireland and Russia.

See this document for further information about scope of the EU's sanctions: [European Union sanctions | EEAS \(europa.eu\)](#)

## How the sanctions are regulated

Within the EU implementation and enforcement of EU sanctions is primarily a Member State responsibility. The competent authorities in the Member States have to assess whether there has been a breach of the legislation and take adequate steps. The European Commission is responsible for ensuring, through monitoring, that the regulations are implemented and enforced by the Member States, and for coordinating Member States' action.

The European Commission also supports individuals, businesses, humanitarian operators and Member States in their efforts to apply sanctions, by publishing [guidance](#) notes and [best practices](#), and by answering questions of interpretation raised by national competent authorities.

## Actions to consider

Below are some actions to consider in response to the EU's economic sanctions for public opinion polling and market research:

- ✓ EU market research and opinion polling businesses to follow the sanctions of the EU and any other jurisdictions involved in Russia-related contracts and assess to see if there are exceptions or other reasons that mean the EU sanctions do not apply to the business and/or to any contemplated transactions.
- ✓ If there are no exceptions which apply, EU based market research and public opinion polling providers to cease supplying these services to Russia.
- ✓ Market research and public opinion polling providers which are unaffected by specific sanctions on research services to review any projects which provide services to Russia. For any projects identified, to cease using any EU nationals on the relevant projects.
- ✓ Market research and opinion polling businesses to review research supply-chains to ensure that the EU sanction regime is being appropriately applied by others linked to their businesses (subcontractors, partners etc).

The sanctions imposed by the EU, US and the UK (and other countries) are extremely complex. Given that breaching sanctions exposes businesses and employees to the risk of committing a criminal offence, it is recommended that research providers proceed with care by checking any proposed transactions related to Russia on a transaction-by-transaction basis.