

**Brussels, 18 December 2025
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NOTE

From: President of the European Council
To: Delegations
Subject: European Council meeting (18 December 2025)
- Ukraine

The European Council discussed the latest developments as regards Ukraine. The text set out in this document was firmly supported by 25 Heads of State or Government.

UKRAINE

1. The European Council held an exchange of views with Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine.
2. The European Council reaffirms its continued and unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. The European Union will continue to provide, in coordination with like-minded partners and allies, comprehensive political, financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support to Ukraine and its people. The European Council commends the determination and resilience of the Ukrainian people and its leadership in resisting Russian aggression, which have prevented Russia from achieving its military objectives.
3. The European Council reaffirms the EU's steadfast support for Ukraine's path towards EU membership, and welcomes the significant progress Ukraine has achieved so far under the most challenging circumstances. The European Union will continue to work closely with Ukraine and support it in its efforts to fully meet all conditions, in line with the merit-based approach. The European Union will continue to support Ukraine in building a peaceful and prosperous future within the European Union.
4. The European Union supports a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine based on the principles of the UN Charter and international law. Recalling the principles it set out on 6 March 2025, the European Council welcomes the ongoing diplomatic efforts to put an end to the war and urges Russia to agree to a full, unconditional and immediate ceasefire, to which Ukraine continues to be committed, and to engage in meaningful negotiations towards a just and lasting peace. For peace to be just and lasting, borders must not be changed by force and any future agreement must respect Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and guarantee Ukraine's long-term security and ability to defend itself.

5. The European Union and its Member States will continue to actively participate in peace efforts, in accordance with the European Union's aim to promote peace, as enshrined in the Treaties. The path to peace in Ukraine cannot be decided without Ukraine. The European Union will decide on matters of its competence or affecting its security.
6. The European Union and Member States are ready to contribute to robust and credible security guarantees for Ukraine, notably through the Coalition of the Willing and in cooperation with the United States. This will include supporting Ukraine's ability to deter aggression and defend itself effectively. The contribution of the European Union and Member States will be based on their respective competences and capabilities and in line with international law.
7. The European Council underlines the critical need to ensure that Ukraine remains resilient and has the budgetary and military means to continue to exercise its inherent right of self-defence and counter and deter Russia's aggression, also over the long term.
8. Recalling the commitment of October 2025 to address Ukraine's pressing financial needs for 2026-2027, including for its military and defence efforts, the European Council took stock of ongoing work to deliver on that commitment.

In line with the European Council's previous conclusions which underline that, subject to EU law, Russia's assets should remain immobilised until Russia ceases its war of aggression against Ukraine and compensates it for the damage caused by its war, the European Union, given the unprecedented situation, adopted on the basis of Article 122 TFEU exceptional, temporary and duly justified emergency measures immobilising such assets on a more sustained basis. The European Council takes note of the statement of the Commission made at the time of adoption of that act.

Following the Commission and the High Representative's recent proposals, the European Council calls on the Council and the European Parliament to continue working on the technical and legal aspects of the instruments establishing a Reparations Loan based on the cash balances associated with Russia's immobilised assets.

In the meantime, with a view to ensuring the necessary financial support for Ukraine as from the second quarter of 2026, including its military needs, the European Council agrees to provide a loan to Ukraine of EUR 90 billion for the years 2026-2027 based on EU borrowing on the capital markets backed by the EU budget headroom. By means of enhanced cooperation (Article 20 TEU) in respect of the instrument based on Article 212 TFEU, any mobilisation of resources of the Union's budget as a guarantee for this loan will not have an impact on the financial obligations of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. This loan would be repaid by Ukraine only once reparations are received. Until then, these assets will remain immobilised and the Union reserves its right to make use of them to repay the loan, in full accordance with EU and international law.

The European Council underlines the importance of the following elements in relation to the loan to be provided to Ukraine:

- a) strengthening of the European and Ukrainian defence industries;
- b) Ukraine continuing to uphold the rule of law, including the fight against corruption;
- c) the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States and the security and defence interests of all Member States.

9. The European Council underlines the importance of Member States stepping up efforts to address Ukraine's pressing military and defence needs, in particular air defence and anti-drone systems and large-calibre ammunition. In this context, further support for, development of and investment in Ukraine's defence industry remains crucial, including through the establishment of Ukrainian defence production in Member States. It is also important to further strengthen cooperation and integration between Ukraine's defence industry and the European defence industry, drawing on Ukraine's unique experience and know-how. In this context, the European Council welcomes the inclusion of cooperation with Ukraine in the defence industry investment plans of Member States in the framework of the Security Action for Europe (SAFE) instrument.
10. All military support as well as security guarantees for Ukraine will be provided in full respect of the security and defence policy of certain Member States and taking into account the security and defence interests of all Member States.
11. The European Union remains determined to maintain and increase pressure on Russia to stop its brutal war of aggression and engage in meaningful negotiations towards peace. In this context, the European Council calls on the Council to continue working on a new sanctions package, with the aim of adopting it as soon as possible after its presentation in early 2026. It also stresses the importance of further coordination with G7 and other like-minded partners on sanctions, and of further reinforcing the anti-circumvention measures.
12. The European Council took stock of efforts to curb Russia's shadow fleet operations, which have effectively decreased Russian energy revenues, and welcomes the recent adoption of new sanctions to this end. It calls for further coordinated action by Member States and cooperation with G7 partners, also in relation to port and coastal states and vis-à-vis third-country flag states and all actors involved in the shadow fleet ecosystem, to further decrease Russian energy revenues and to continue to address the significant risks the shadow fleet poses.

13. The European Council strongly condemns support by third countries, and actors and entities therein, which enable Russia to sustain its war of aggression against Ukraine. In particular, it condemns the continued military support provided by Iran, Belarus and the DPRK, among others. The European Council urges all countries to immediately cease any assistance to Russia in its war of aggression against Ukraine, whether direct or indirect, notably through the provision of dual-use goods or components.
14. The European Council strongly condemns Russia's continued large-scale attacks on civilians and on civilian targets in Ukraine, including on infrastructure, hospitals, medical facilities and the energy system. It calls for the immediate cessation of all military activities near Ukraine's nuclear facilities, which pose a serious threat to their safety and security. The European Council also calls for the mobilisation of all efforts to help support Ukraine in repairing, rebuilding and strengthening the resilience of its energy system. The European Union and its Member States, in cooperation with partners, will intensify the provision of humanitarian and civil protection assistance, as well as of energy and relevant equipment, to Ukraine.
15. The European Council reiterates its urgent call on Russia and Belarus to immediately ensure the safe and unconditional return to Ukraine of all unlawfully deported and transferred Ukrainian children and other civilians. Other humanitarian relief efforts and confidence-building measures, notably the exchange of prisoners of war, must be part of the pathway to peace.
16. The European Union remains strongly committed to ensuring full accountability for war crimes and the other most serious crimes committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. In this context, the European Council calls for sustained efforts towards the operationalisation of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine, within the framework of the Council of Europe. It also welcomes the signing of the Council of Europe Convention establishing an International Claims Commission for Ukraine and calls for work to continue.
17. The European Council will revert to this issue at its next meeting.