Negative Brief: Russia Sanctions - Good

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen

***Resolved: The United States Federal Government should substantially reform its policy towards one or more countries in Europe***

The AFF plan cancels US trade sanctions on Russia. This brief shows why that's a bad idea.

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Negative: Russia Sanctions - Good

MINOR REPAIR

A/T "Sanctions harden resistance" - Don't remove them, just set clear goals & conditions for lifting them

Ben Walsh 2022 (*freelance journalist focusing on business and finance*) The unprecedented American sanctions on Russia, explained 9 March 2022 <https://www.vox.com/22968949/russia-sanctions-swift-economy-mcdonalds> (accessed 23 June 2022)

The aim of the sanctions is clear. “We are inflicting pain on Russia and supporting the people of Ukraine,” President Joe Biden said [in his State of the Union address](https://www.vox.com/2022/3/1/22956508/biden-state-of-the-union-2022). “Putin is now isolated from the world more than ever.” It’s tempting to think that such a sudden slowdown cannot be sustainable, but badly damaged economies can stagger forward in quite a diminished state for an extended period, Cornell professor and sanctions expert Nicholas Mulder [has pointed out](https://www.economist.com/by-invitation/2022/03/04/nicholas-mulder-who-studies-sanctions-declares-a-watershed-moment-in-global-economic-history). For sanctions to truly work as a means to their intended end, Western policymakers “must also promptly outline clear conditions for the removal of sanctions to encourage de-escalation and an end to this catastrophic war,” he wrote.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. A/T "Other countries bypass sanctions, trade with Russia"

US has unprecedented control over the world economy. US sanctions have "great effect"

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In Washington, DC, sanctions are sometimes wryly referred to as the “first resort of US foreign policy,” sanctions researcher Edoardo Saravalle said in an interview. “The rules of the US financial system are, to only slightly exaggerate, the rules of the global financial system,” he said. “And Washington [can] kind of weaponize this.” That uniquely American power to regulate global commerce through the US dollar system has grown stronger as the world’s economy has become more intertwined. Globalization has meant that more and more economic activity flows through an extremely small number of chokepoints, controlled by the United States and its close European allies. Over many years, the US has also built out a significant regulatory apparatus, controlled by the executive branch, to police those chokepoints very effectively. So any sanctions policy the US puts in place can be carried out quickly and with great effect.

Doesn't matter what other countries want, US sanctions still rule

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Right now, Russia is now feeling the full power of those chokepoints being turned off by the US and its allies, but sanctions’ power is so uniquely American that the US can even go against its putative allies’ wishes, as the Trump administration did with Iran after it pulled out of the nuclear deal, without leaving the rest of the world much recourse.

2. A/T "Russia evades/resists sanctions"

Russia can't evade: US sanctions have global comprehensive impact, evasion is effectively impossible

Ben Walsh 2022 (*freelance journalist focusing on business and finance*) The unprecedented American sanctions on Russia, explained 9 March 2022 <https://www.vox.com/22968949/russia-sanctions-swift-economy-mcdonalds> (accessed 23 June 2022)

Unfortunately for Russia, the sanctions put in place by the US and the West are extremely comprehensive, and working around them to avoid a sustained economic downturn will be effectively impossible. An influential [2019 academic paper](https://www.lawfareblog.com/introducing-new-paper-weaponized-interdependence) written by Henry Farrell and Abraham Newman argued that decades of economic globalization, far from weakening the power of sanctions, has actually made them an even stronger tool because “some countries—most prominently the U.S.—are able to cut businesses or even entire countries out of these global networks, with profound economic consequences.”

A/T "China helps Russia evade" - Won't work. China can't offset US and European sanctions

Ben Walsh 2022 (*freelance journalist focusing on business and finance*) The unprecedented American sanctions on Russia, explained 9 March 2022 <https://www.vox.com/22968949/russia-sanctions-swift-economy-mcdonalds> (accessed 23 June 2022)

An attempt at forging greater economic and financial ties with China is likely, and because the two countries previously had lower levels of business ties than Iran and China did when Iran was recently hit with US sanctions, such a shift may offer a real growth opportunity. But even a marked uptick in Russia-China trade cannot offset American and European sanctions.

3. Contradictory AFF position

Dilemma: "Sanctions are ineffective, not doing anything" AND "Sanctions are harming innocent people"

These can't both be true at the same time, yet this is the Affirmative's position in the round. If sanctions are ineffective, then they can't be harming anyone.

4. Sanctions justified by aggression and possibility of success

We don't know whether sanction will work, but they are our best shot at ending the conflict

Prof. [Avia Pasternak](https://www.newstatesman.com/author/aviapasternak) and Prof. [Zofia Stemplowska](https://www.newstatesman.com/author/zofiastemplowska) 2022 (*Pasternak is Associate Professor in Political Theory at University College London. Stemplowska is Professor of Political Theory and Asa Briggs Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford*) 19 Apr 2022 "Are severe sanctions on Russia morally justified?" <https://www.newstatesman.com/ideas/agora/2022/04/are-severe-sanctions-on-russia-morally-justified> (accessed 1 July 2022)

To be clear, we [do not know if the sanctions will work](https://www.newstatesman.com/international-content/2022/04/russias-looming-default-is-putins-choice). The authoritarian nature of the Russian regime means it is insulated from shifts in public support. But there is a chance the sanctions will have an impact. As recently as 2018, Putin responded with concessions to popular dissatisfaction over a pension reform, and the domestic popularity of the 2014 invasion of Ukraine has probably contributed to this one. Furthermore, extensive economic sanctions may well undermine Russia’s ability to finance the war. Many agree that, short of a military intervention, they are our best shot at ending the conflict.

Western interest favors increasing sanctions to punish Putin's disastrous policies

Steven Pifer 2022 (former US ambassador to Ukraine; Nonresident Senior Fellow - [Foreign Policy](https://www.brookings.edu/program/foreign-policy/), [Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology](https://www.brookings.edu/center/center-for-security-strategy-and-technology/), [Center on the United States and Europe](https://www.brookings.edu/center/center-on-the-united-states-and-europe/), [Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Initiative](https://www.brookings.edu/project/arms-control-and-non-proliferation-initiative/), Brookings Institution) 23 May 2022 " The Russia-Ukraine war at three months" <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2022/05/23/the-russia-ukraine-war-at-three-months/> (accessed 30 June 2022)

The war has a clear victim and a clear aggressor. It is in the West’s interest that the Kremlin fail in its attempt to subjugate Ukraine and deny Ukrainians the right to determine their own course. That means continuing to provide the Ukrainians the means to defend their country and drive back the invading Russian army. That also means ratcheting up sanctions to accelerate the havoc coming to the Russian economy due to Putin’s disastrous decisions.

5. Not the entire solution

Sanctions alone are not the entire solution - but they are a critical part of the necessary policies, and we should keep them even if they have not yet forced Russia to abandon Ukraine

Prof. Taisa Markus 2022 (U. of Illinois adjunct law professor, expert in securities law, cross-border capital markets and corporate finance transactions) 20 Apr 2022 "How effective have economic sanctions been against Russia?" <https://news.illinois.edu/view/6367/739476220> (accessed 30 June 2022)

Historically, it is not the case that sanctions always achieve political objectives. The U.S. embargo on Cuba is an obvious example. However, sanctions are a necessary component of any response to the current situation and will play an important role if imposed adequately and collectively. Sanctions may be even more effective than in past cases given their scope, the interdependence of the global economy, the interconnectedness of the world and instantaneous communications and, interestingly, the self-sanctioning that many large enterprises have voluntarily undertaken.

6. A/T "Sanctions fail to change policy"

Historical sanctions were very different from what we're doing to Russia today

Prof. Taisa Markus 2022 (U. of Illinois adjunct law professor, expert in securities law, cross-border capital markets and corporate finance transactions) 20 Apr 2022 "How effective have economic sanctions been against Russia?" <https://news.illinois.edu/view/6367/739476220> (accessed 30 June 2022)

Sanctions have been commonly utilized since World War II to achieve political goals, typically with limited success. Cuba, Venezuela and Iran are examples where the sanctioning countries have not achieved political goals. The former Soviet Union was under sanctions for decades, but internal politics may have had more of an effect on regime change than sanctions. On the other hand, sanctions against South Africa arguably did play an important role in the end of apartheid. But there are many important differences between those cases and what’s happening in Russia.

Sanctions are making it more likely Putin will lose support and be forced to end the war

Prof. [Kevin Fahey](https://theconversation.com/profiles/kevin-fahey-605600) and Dr. Douglas Atkinson 2022 (Fahey - Assistant Professor in Political Science, University of Nottingham. Atkinson - Postdoctoral University Assistant in Political Science, University of Salzburg) " **Ukraine: what will end the war? Here’s what research says"** <https://theconversation.com/ukraine-what-will-end-the-war-heres-what-research-says-178721> (accessed 1 July 2022)

Wars require the tacit approval and support of those on the home front. Regardless of a country’s government style, a leader is still dependent upon the support of a [group of people](https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/logic-political-survival), or coalition, to stay in power. Vladimir Putin depends on oligarchs, [the Russian mafia](https://bpr.berkeley.edu/2019/12/16/gangs-and-gulags-how-vladimir-putin-utilizes-organized-crime-to-power-his-mafia-state/) and the military for his survival. Although Putin attempted to build up a financial bulwark that would allow him to protect the interests of the oligarchs, the sanctions imposed by the west have undercut most of his efforts. The war has already become [very costly](https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2022/02/russian-oligarchs-start-to-speak-out-as-putin-brings-the-economy-to-the-brink-of-ruin) for the oligarchs and these costs will only increase with time. When a sufficient number of Putin’s coalition privately turn against the war, this will pressure Putin to end the war or risk his position of power.

7. A/T "Sanctions raise fuel prices / enrich Russia / pay for the war"

Russian fuel exports are impoverishing Russia, due to sanctions on the proceeds. NOT paying for the war

Prof. Mark Harrison 2022. (Emeritus Professor, Univ. of Warwick) 13 June 2022 " Western sanctions on Russia are working, an energy embargo now is a costly distraction" <https://voxeu.org/article/western-sanctions-russia-are-working-energy-embargo-now-costly-distraction> (accessed 30 June 2022)

The path to an EU embargo on Russian energy has now been agreed, but with an opt-out for Hungary. This column argues that Russia exporting one seventh of its national income to the rest of the world is weakening, not strengthening, its war effort. Rather than ‘paying for Putin’s war’, Russia’s exports are paying for the accumulation of idle balances of foreign currency. Sanctions are working, and we should not be distracted by worries about the distant financial implications of continuing to buy and pay for Russian energy for as long as we can.

Russian oil is not paying for the war - not physically possible because of where the money goes

Prof. Mark Harrison 2022. (Emeritus Professor, Univ. of Warwick) 13 June 2022 " Western sanctions on Russia are working, an energy embargo now is a costly distraction" <https://voxeu.org/article/western-sanctions-russia-are-working-energy-embargo-now-costly-distraction> (accessed 30 June 2022)

Two things follow. One, the fact that Russia is exporting one seventh of its national income to the rest of the world is weakening, not strengthening, its war effort. Two, Russia’s exports are not ‘paying for Putin’s war’. They are certainly paying for something, but not that. What they are paying for is the accumulation of idle balances of foreign currency. This currency may be held by the state (within Russia) or by private citizens abroad (in the case of capital flight). But, if they cannot be used to import resources into Russia, they are not paying for Putin’s war.

8. A/T "Innocent Russians suffer"

They're not starving, and the possibility of success justifies the level of suffering being imposed

Marco Poggio 2022 (journalist) 20 May 2022 " Sanctions On Russia Raise Complex Ethical Questions" <https://www.law360.com/articles/1481226/sanctions-on-russia-raise-complex-ethical-questions> (accessed 1 July 2022)

Richard Nephew, a senior researcher at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs who served as the lead sanctions expert for the U.S. team negotiating with Iran during the Obama administration, said that analyses of previous sanction regimes show that they have worked about one-third of the time. He thinks that's not too bad. "You can make an argument well, a third of the time, that's not very good. But then, thinking about other conflicts, can we honestly say that any other tool has worked better than a third of the time?" Nephew said. It's difficult to predict whether sanctions will work, so the ethical calculations rest on a utilitarian argument: whether there are enough expectations of success achievable through use of sanctions, versus the alternatives, that will cause the least harm to the most people. Alternatives to imposing sanctions — doing nothing or risking a war with Russia — are not ethically sustainable, he said. "Can Russians and should Russians be massively inconvenienced and find life difficult as a result of their government's invasion of another country and killing hundreds and thousands of its people?" Nephew said. "I think they can be inconvenienced. If we come to a point where sanctions are imposing starvation-level consequences, that's a different thing."   
He added, "Frankly, no one in Russia presently is impoverished, at least not as a result of sanctions."

Duty to stop funding the war outweighs risk of harm to Russian people

Prof. [Avia Pasternak](https://www.newstatesman.com/author/aviapasternak) and Prof. [Zofia Stemplowska](https://www.newstatesman.com/author/zofiastemplowska) 2022 (*Pasternak is Associate Professor in Political Theory at University College London. Stemplowska is Professor of Political Theory and Asa Briggs Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford*) 19 Apr 2022 "Are severe sanctions on Russia morally justified?" <https://www.newstatesman.com/ideas/agora/2022/04/are-severe-sanctions-on-russia-morally-justified> (accessed 1 July 2022)

Citizens, investors and governments who continue to trade as usual with Russia run the risk that their contributions to the Russian economy will facilitate various atrocities, even if they do not wish for this to be the case. As a result, people have a duty to cease economic co-operation with Russian businesses through the imposition of trade sanctions. Such a duty is stringent in cases of grave harm, and this suggests that even very high burdens on Russian citizens, including risks of unemployment and hardship, cannot be invoked as a reason to continue economic cooperation with Russia.

Moral duty to not participate in funding the war with our trade outweighs other considerations

Prof. [Avia Pasternak](https://www.newstatesman.com/author/aviapasternak) and Prof. [Zofia Stemplowska](https://www.newstatesman.com/author/zofiastemplowska) 2022 (*Pasternak is Associate Professor in Political Theory at University College London. Stemplowska is Professor of Political Theory and Asa Briggs Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford*) 19 Apr 2022 "Are severe sanctions on Russia morally justified?" <https://www.newstatesman.com/ideas/agora/2022/04/are-severe-sanctions-on-russia-morally-justified> (accessed 1 July 2022)

To see this, consider the following case: you discover to your horror that the owner of your local corner shop invests what he earns into violent crime. Clearly, you are not to blame for the shopkeeper’s nefarious investments and for the harm you just learnt about. Nevertheless, you have a duty to stop using his business if you can. Being implicated in grave harm to others is a terrible thing, even if we did not intend it. So, we each have a stringent duty to try and avoid being in that position when we are aware of such harm. In the corner shop case, this means you have a duty to stop shopping there, even if shopping elsewhere is burdensome and even if shifting your business means someone in the shop loses their job.

Russian people are supporting the war, so yes - they do deserve to suffer from sanctions

Prof. [Avia Pasternak](https://www.newstatesman.com/author/aviapasternak) and Prof. [Zofia Stemplowska](https://www.newstatesman.com/author/zofiastemplowska) 2022 (*Pasternak is Associate Professor in Political Theory at University College London. Stemplowska is Professor of Political Theory and Asa Briggs Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford*) 19 Apr 2022 "Are severe sanctions on Russia morally justified?" <https://www.newstatesman.com/ideas/agora/2022/04/are-severe-sanctions-on-russia-morally-justified> (accessed 1 July 2022)

Our analysis points to one final justification for sanctions: the extent to which ordinary Russians play a part in Russia’s war effort. After all, it is Russian families who support the soldiers attacking Ukraine, Russian taxpayers who fund some of the tanks, and Russian citizens’ everyday actions that make the Russian state function. Many of those involved cannot help but act as they do: few can emigrate, and protest is costly. Nevertheless, they are implicitly helping the war effort. So perhaps they too can be expected to incur some harm if such harm could stop the war.

Harms to ordinary Russians currently don't yet outweigh benefit of sanctions. In fact, Russian atrocities justify increasing sanctions

Prof. [Avia Pasternak](https://www.newstatesman.com/author/aviapasternak) and Prof. [Zofia Stemplowska](https://www.newstatesman.com/author/zofiastemplowska) 2022 (*Pasternak is Associate Professor in Political Theory at University College London. Stemplowska is Professor of Political Theory and Asa Briggs Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford*) 19 Apr 2022 "Are severe sanctions on Russia morally justified?" <https://www.newstatesman.com/ideas/agora/2022/04/are-severe-sanctions-on-russia-morally-justified> (accessed 1 July 2022)

Of course, our analysis does not lead to the conclusion that any magnitude of harm is acceptable or that innocent Russians are not entitled to assistance if in dire need. At some point, the economic sanctions on Russia may have such devastating effects, economic and political, that they would need to be scrapped. But we are still far from that point. In fact, the recent reports of Russian atrocities in Ukraine suggest that [further economic restrictions](https://www.newstatesman.com/business/2022/03/stop-financing-the-aggressor-ukraines-former-finance-minister-natalie-jaresko-on-how-to-stop-putin) ought to be imposed. Those living outside of Russia can help Ukrainians by pressuring their governments to take this line.

Economic sanctions are the most ethically sound response to the Russia/Ukraine war

Marco Poggio 2022 (journalist) 20 May 2022 " Sanctions On Russia Raise Complex Ethical Questions" <https://www.law360.com/articles/1481226/sanctions-on-russia-raise-complex-ethical-questions> (accessed 1 July 2022)

But unlike Iraq, Libya, Serbia and other countries where the U.S. intervened militarily, Russia has an ability to use weapons of mass destruction. The risks involved in a military confrontation that could quickly turn nuclear raise moral red flags. In the end, sanctions are seen as "the lesser of two evils," said Govsdev, who is also a professor of national security affairs at the [U.S. Naval War College](https://www.law360.com/companies/u-s-naval-war-college). Another option — doing nothing — is also viewed as ethically unacceptable given the death and destruction brought on Ukraine without provocation, he said. "We begin to track back towards sanctions as being, of a set of bad options, the least bad ethically in terms of doing something that may have an impact, but also limiting the risk of escalation," Gvosdev said.

Sanctions' ethical problem is nothing compared to the ethical failure of Russia's destruction of Ukraine

Marco Poggio 2022 (journalist) 20 May 2022 " Sanctions On Russia Raise Complex Ethical Questions" <https://www.law360.com/articles/1481226/sanctions-on-russia-raise-complex-ethical-questions> (accessed 1 July 2022)

Julian Cardenas Garcia, a professor and researcher at [University of Houston Law Center](https://www.law360.com/companies/university-of-houston), said the consequences sanctions have on trade and access to goods will affect the middle class and then lower classes, although not immediately. But he pointed out that the Russian people are already made poorer by their leaders' mismanagement and corruption. While they may be extreme on the trade side, economic sanctions are not comparable to the use of force and are legitimate actions by sovereign nations, Cardenas said.   
Sanctions do have an effect of forcing populations into poverty. Cuba, which has been under U.S. sanctions for six decades, is an example, according to Cardenas. But hardship cannot compare to the suffering of war, he said.   
"You take a picture of Havana or Matanzas — there are people living there," he said. "Check the pictures of Mariupol these days."

DISADVANTAGES

1. Aiding Russian aggression

US sanctions block exporting anything to the Russian military

Ben Walsh 2022 (*freelance journalist focusing on business and finance*) The unprecedented American sanctions on Russia, explained 9 March 2022 <https://www.vox.com/22968949/russia-sanctions-swift-economy-mcdonalds> (accessed 23 June 2022)

Those US export controls are intended to hurt Russia’s ability to get its hands on the kinds of manufactured goods it needs to wage a lengthy war, but they are also intended to hobble high-value manufacturing and other domestic economic activity that is not strictly related to the war effort, such as commercial aviation, which will not find it very hard to source replacement parts for its planes. There is also an almost total embargo against US companies exporting anything to the Russian military.

Sanctions weaken Russia's military by denying critical resources

Prof. Mark Harrison 2022. (Emeritus Professor, Univ. of Warwick) 13 June 2022 " Western sanctions on Russia are working, an energy embargo now is a costly distraction" <https://voxeu.org/article/western-sanctions-russia-are-working-energy-embargo-now-costly-distraction> (accessed 30 June 2022)

These calculations concern only the volume of resources. The quality of resources matters too. Despite attempts at import substitution, Russia remains dependent on a wide range of imported microchips and machine and vehicle components and maintenance services (Shagina 2020). Russia needs these now to re-arm after its early military equipment losses. Using an energy embargo to stop Russia from getting them is like pushing on a piece of string. The more direct way, which is already working, is to sanction Russia’s trade credit and imports, coupled with self-sanctioning by Western companies that no longer want to do business with or in Russia.

Russian imports from outside fund the war effort (not their exports)

Prof. Mark Harrison 2022. (Emeritus Professor, Univ. of Warwick) 13 June 2022 " Western sanctions on Russia are working, an energy embargo now is a costly distraction" <https://voxeu.org/article/western-sanctions-russia-are-working-energy-embargo-now-costly-distraction> (accessed 30 June 2022)

A reality check is available. In two World Wars, the Allies blockaded Germany to prevent the import – not export – of resources. In both wars, Germany responded by confiscating resources from the countries it occupied, just as Russia today is accused of stealing grain and other valuables from Ukraine. In fact, in WWII Germany’s plan of overland occupation of the Eastern territories was designed in the expectation of an Allied blockade of German overseas trade. It has been calculated that net imports from Germany’s wartime empire paid for more than one quarter of Germany’s war effort (Klemann 2019). Net *imports*, not net exports!

2. Lost deterrence

Even if sanctions don't force Russia to drop the invasion, they discourage other aggressors from doing the same thing later

Leila Fadel (journalist) interviewing Dr. Ian Bremmer (founder of the Eurasia Group) 2022. (E.Group is a political risk consultancy firm; Bremmer - PhD from Stanford on Russian ethnicity in Ukraine) "Breaking down the effectiveness of the latest sanctions on Russia" 6 June 2022 (accessed 30 June 2022) https://www.npr.org/2022/06/06/1103270266/breaking-down-the-effectiveness-of-the-latest-sanctions-on-russia

FADEL: Right. And they're looking elsewhere to make up for the eventual Europe loss, namely China and India. You talked about punishing Russia. In the few seconds we have left, the long-term goal - punishing Russia on the global stage. What does that accomplish?   
BREMMER: The long-term goal is that a - an invasion of a democratic country to forcibly change their borders and wipe them off the map is not going to be tolerated by the United States and its global allies, either in NATO or in Asia. And I think that that sends a message not just to Russia but to other countries that consider further invasions in the future.

Sanctions on Russia deter other countries, like China, from aggression

Gary C. Hufbauer and Megan Hogan 2022 (Hufbauer - Senior Resesarch Staff, Peterson Institute for International Economics. Hogan - Research Analyst, PIIE) 16 Mar 2022 "How effective are sanctions against Russia?" <https://www.piie.com/blogs/realtime-economic-issues-watch/how-effective-are-sanctions-against-russia> (accessed 1 July 2022)

Although deterrence clearly failed to stop Russia's aggression, the sanctions imposed after the Russian invasion of Ukraine could still deter other countries like China from undermining the sanctions. The sanctions may also deter China from carrying out its own aggressive acts against Taiwan. As for effectiveness, the sanctions have proven among the most powerful in modern history, largely because so many countries have gone along with them.

Sanctions deter Russia from any more future aggression as well as China

Gary C. Hufbauer and Megan Hogan 2022 (Hufbauer - Senior Resesarch Staff, Peterson Institute for International Economics. Hogan - Research Analyst, PIIE) 16 Mar 2022 "How effective are sanctions against Russia?" <https://www.piie.com/blogs/realtime-economic-issues-watch/how-effective-are-sanctions-against-russia> (accessed 1 July 2022) (brackets in original)

Despite their failure in deterring the invasion, current sanctions may serve future deterrence: Putin might, for example, desist from threatening Moldova, Finland, and Sweden (not members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO]) in his quest for a grander Russian empire. As well, Beijing might draw a sobering lesson from the worldwide condemnation of Russia and reconsider military plans for eventual unification with Taiwan. China is more integrated with the world economy than Russia: Two-way Chinese trade was [36 percent](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NE.TRD.GNFS.ZS?end=2019&name_desc=false&start=1960) of GDP in 2019 while two-way Russian trade, excluding oil and gas exports, was [25 percent](https://oec.world/en/profile/country/rus/). The prospect of Russia-style sanctions on China would entail a drastic fall in living standards.