

World Press Freedom Day: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU



At a time when independent and free media reporting is more essential than ever, press freedom continues to be under threat. Journalists continue to experience harsh working conditions with increasing financial and political pressure, surveillance, arbitrary prison sentences or violence for doing their work. According to the UNESCO Observatory, 76 journalists were killed since 2020, while many more were arrested, harassed or threatened worldwide. Of particular concern is gender-based violence targeting women journalists.

Press freedom is a fundamental value for the European Union underpinned by many recent initiatives. Media freedom and the safety of journalists are key priorities of the new Human Rights and Democracy Action Plan and of the European Democracy Action Plan. In 2020, more than 400 journalists benefited from the EU mechanism for protection of Human Rights Defenders, while the EU took important actions to support journalists, independent media and the fight against disinformation in the context of the pandemic in many regions.

In the past year the EU condemned on several occasions the intimidation and harassment that independent journalists suffer in countries around the world. The EU, including through its Special Representative for Human Rights, has continued to engage with persecuted independent journalists and intervened in support of detained journalists and bloggers.

EU Delegations are the voice of the EU on the ground. They have closely monitored court proceedings against journalists, spoken out against the repression of human rights defenders and media workers and raised concerns with national authorities over the proposed communication, media, information and broadcasting legislation.

The EU is **determined to do more**, in Europe and abroad. The EU will continue coordinating with international organisations and mechanisms and pioneer new approaches. One example is the European Commission's proposal for a Digital Services Act aimed at holding the major platforms accountable to make their systems fairer, safer and more transparent. We will also continue our action to counter disinformation and seek with all partners effective means to support sustainable business models for independent media.

Freedom of information and free speech must be promoted and protected everywhere. This is in everyone's interest. The EU will continue speaking up against any restriction on freedom of expression and censorship, both online and offline, in violation of international human rights law. Freedom of the press is a cornerstone of democratic societies, which can thrive only if citizens have access to reliable information and can make informed choices.

Press freedom means security for all.

Russia: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the imposition of restrictive measures against eight EU nationals



The European Union condemns the decision of the Russian authorities to ban eight European Union nationals from entering the territory of the Russian Federation.

This entry ban includes the President of the European Parliament David Sassoli, Vice President of the European Commission Věra Jourová, as well as six EU Member States' officials from Estonia, France, Germany, Latvia and Sweden. The European Union stands in solidarity with all of these individuals. Russia's actions will not deter the European Union from continuing to stand up for human rights, democracy and international law, nor from holding those responsible for violations and abuses of human rights to account.

This decision, which directly targets the European Union and its Member States, is unacceptable, devoid of any legal justification and baseless. It serves to underline that the Russian Federation has so far chosen the path of confrontation instead of seeking to reverse the negative trajectory of EU-Russia relations.

Russia: Joint Statement by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the President of the European Parliament on the imposition of

restrictive measures against eight EU nationals



We condemn in the strongest possible terms today's decision of the Russian authorities to ban eight European Union nationals from entering the Russian territory. This includes the President of the European Parliament David Sassoli, Vice President of the European Commission Věra Jourová, as well as six EU Member States' officials. This action is unacceptable, lacks any legal justification and is entirely groundless. It targets the European Union directly, not only the individuals concerned.

This decision is the latest, striking demonstration of how the Russian Federation has chosen confrontation with the EU instead of agreeing to redress the negative trajectory of our bilateral relations.

The EU reserves the right to take appropriate measures in response to the Russian authorities' decision.

ESMA publishes data for the systematic internaliser calculations for equity, equity-like instruments, bonds and other non-equity instruments

ESMA has published today, on a voluntary basis, the total number of trades and total volume over the period October 2020-March 2021 for the purpose of the systematic internaliser (SI) calculations under MiFID II for:

- 22,409 equity and equity-like instruments;
- 105,011 bonds; and
- 7,934 sub-classes of derivatives (including equity derivatives, interest rate derivatives, commodity derivatives, C10 derivatives, emission allowance and derivatives thereof and contracts for difference (CFDs)).

The SI test shall be performed by 15 May 2021.

The data is made available through the [SI register in excel files](#) and for equity, equity-like instruments and bonds also through FITRS in the XML files with publication date 30 April 2021 ([see here](#)).

The results for equity and equity-like instruments and bonds are published

only for instruments for which trading venues submitted data for at least 95% of all trading days over the 6-month observation period. The data publications also incorporate OTC trading to the extent it has been reported to ESMA. The publication includes data for instruments traded or available for trading during the reference period considered.

In consequence of Brexit, from 30 April 2021 the publication files for bonds and equity instruments, do not contain ISINs admitted to trading or traded only on UK trading venues. However, ISINs admitted to trading or traded both on EEA and UK trading venues are included. Last but not least, as communicated in the [Public Statement on the Use of UK data in ESMA databases and performance of MiFID II calculations following the end of the UK transition period on 31 December 2020](#), the UK data reported before Brexit is used to perform the calculations.

ESMA publishes results of the annual transparency calculations for non-equity instruments

The European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA), the EU's securities markets regulator, has today made available the results of the annual transparency calculations for non-equity instruments, which will apply from 1 June 2021. These calculations include the liquidity assessment and the determination of the pre- and post-trade size specific to the instruments and large in scale thresholds.

The results for the liquid sub-classes have been published in Excel format in the [Annual transparency calculations for non-equity instruments register](#). The file does not contain the results for a number of asset-classes and sub-classes given the impossibility to correctly apply the segmentation criteria, as defined in Annex III of RTS 2 due to data quality problems or the absence of reporting standards for the applicable reference data. As a result, the transparency calculations for, among others, credit derivatives and options, futures and FRAs (forward rate agreements) on interest rates are not available.

ESMA will provide the annual transparency calculations for non-equity instruments at instrument (ISIN) basis, both liquid and illiquid ones, as of 30 April 2021. This information will be made available through the Financial Instruments Transparency System (FITRS) both by publishing XML files ([here](#)) and through the Register web interface ([here](#)).

As communicated in the [Public Statement on the Use of UK data in ESMA databases and performance of MiFID II calculations following the end of the](#)

[UK transition period on 31 December 2020](#), the UK data reported before Brexit is used to perform the calculations.

Recommendations for market participants:

Next steps

The transparency requirements based on the results of the annual transparency calculations for non-equity instruments shall apply from 1 June 2021 until 31 May 2022. From 1 June 2022, the results of the next annual transparency calculations for non-equity instruments, to be published by 30 April 2022, will become applicable.