

The Iran nuclear deal is held up as the new model for economic sanctions. Before that, Libya's dismantling of its nuclear program in 2003 was seen as a key success. Sanctions can be slow to take effect, but the idea is to use a (non-military) combination of carrot and stick to encourage a policy re-think. Essentially, it's the international equivalent of the 'naughty corner'.

But are sanctions working against Russia? The EU, along with the US and Canada, first introduced targeted sanctions against Russia in March 2014 in the wake of the Crimea crisis. Further rounds of sanctions followed, including in July 2014 when entire sectors of Russia's economy were targeted, from the financial sector to defence and resource extraction industries.

Nobody doubts that the Russian economy has suffered; since 2014 the ruble has collapsed, investment has dried up, and consumer prices have ballooned. However, it's debatable how much of that is because of sanctions and how much because of plummeting global oil prices. Likewise, have we really seen a major change in policy from the Kremlin? Yet there is already talk of ending the sanctions regime.

Not everybody is so convinced that sanctions against Russia have been having an effect. We had a comment sent in from Alkis, who is worried that sanctions are doing nothing but harming the already fragile European economy.

To get a response, we put Alkis' comment to Toomas Hendrik Ilves, the President of Estonia. As head of state of a small country bordering Russia, did he think that Western sanctions against his neighbour were having an impact? [Watch Youtube video here](#) .

To get another reaction, we put the same comment to Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, a former NATO Secretary General (2004-2009). What would he say to Alkis? [Watch Youtube video here](#) .

We also had a comment sent in from Yuri, who was worried that sanctions would not discourage Russian aggression. But would Russia really dare to try the tactics it used in Ukraine on EU Member States such as Latvia, Lithuania or Estonia?

To get a response, we asked Jaap de Hoop Scheffer to comment: [Watch Youtube video here](#) .

Finally, we also put the same question to President Toomas Hendrik Ilves. What would he say?  
[Watch Youtube video here](#)

Want to know more about the Ukraine/Russia crisis? [We've put together a timeline of events below](#) (PNG image).

Original article on the [Debating Europe webpage](#) .