# International Relations · GS - II

**“Economic sanctions are an important instrument of foreign policy, but their effectiveness depends on geopolitical circumstances and economic interdependence.” Discuss with reference to Western sanctions against Russia.**

| EXAM YEAR | PAPER | SUBJECT |
|---|---|---|
| DAILY PRACTICE 16/10/2026 | GS - II | International Relations |

| MARKS | WORD LIMIT |
|---|---|
| 10 | ~150 words |

## Answer Hint

**Economic sanctions, Russia–Ukraine conflict, European Union, Germany's energy security, economic interdependence, diplomatic engagement, sanctions effectiveness, geopolitical rivalry, multilateralism.**

## Model Answer

### Introduction

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Western countries imposed extensive economic and financial sanctions on Moscow. However, disagreements within Europe over their effectiveness, economic costs and diplomatic alternatives continue to shape the debate.

### Main Body

**Significance and limitations of sanctions**

1. Political pressure: Sanctions aim to restrict financial resources, access to technology and economic capacity, thereby influencing state behaviour.
2. Economic costs: Restrictions can disrupt trade, raise energy costs and affect industries in sanctioning countries.
3. Mixed effectiveness: Sanctions may constrain particular sectors but do not necessarily compel an immediate change in foreign policy.
4. Geopolitical divisions: Germany's Alternative for Germany (AfD) has advocated diplomatic engagement with Moscow and opposed further sanctions, citing economic and energy-security concerns.

**Way forward**

1. Coordinate sanctions with allies to reduce opportunities for circumvention.
2. Assess their humanitarian and economic consequences.
3. Combine economic pressure with diplomatic engagement and conflict-resolution efforts.

## Conclusion

Western sanctions against Russia demonstrate that economic pressure alone may not resolve complex geopolitical conflicts. A balanced approach combining coordinated measures, strategic resilience and diplomacy is essential for protecting national interests while pursuing a sustainable resolution to the Ukraine conflict.

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