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# Zelensky accuses Germany of putting economy before Ukraine



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Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky addressing the Bundestag virtually on March 17. Photo: Hannibal Hanschke/Getty Images

Ukraine, telling the lawmakers their support "came too late to stop war," according to the [BBC](#).

**Why it matters:** Germany, which is heavily reliant on Russian petroleum products and imports in general, was hesitant to raise harsh sanctions on Russia for fear it could hurt the economy.

- So far, Germany has not banned Russian oil and gas imports but Chancellor Olaf Scholz did cancel the [Nord Stream 2](#) natural gas pipeline, which was opposed by Ukraine and others because they believed it would damage European security.
- Germany also reversed its restrictive European arms export policy in response to Russia's invasion by [supplying Ukrainian forces](#) with anti-tank and air-defense weapons.

**What they're saying:** "We could see your willingness to continue to do business with Russia and now we're in the middle of the ... war," Zelensky told German lawmakers, referring to the country's business interests in Russia before the invasion, according to the BBC.

- "And again this is something you have failed to see. You're still protecting yourself behind a wall that does not make it possible for you to see what we are going through," he said.
- "Why does 'never again' not apply? What is Germany's historic responsibility towards Ukraine today?"
- "Peace is more important than income," he added.

**The big picture:** A potential German recession partly caused by economic sanctions on Russia could damage Berlin's resolve to further support Ukrainian forces.

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**Go deeper:** [The latest on the Russian invasion of Ukraine](#)



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