Russian CHP Imports Tracker | Q3 2026

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Introduction

Export restrictions are not a new tool of economic statecraft, but the complexity inherent in their enforcement has risen considerably in recent decades due to a world of global supply chains. Nonetheless, **a coalition[1] of countries—led by the EU, US, UK, and Japan—imposed a set of such sanctions on Russia in response to its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022** that targets critical components Russia imports to fuel its war machine. Similar measures were also imposed on goods that are deemed critical for Russia's economy as a whole, seeking to **reduce Russia's ability to prosecute its war in Ukraine and the ability to reconstruct its military afterwards**. The 50 types of war-critical goods restricted by the 2022 measures were categorized into six tiers in the Common High Priority (CHP) items list, which are described in Appendix Table A1.

While there have been significant enforcement challenges, we find that the imposition of restrictions has reduced Russia's imports of critical components from sanctioning countries considerably. The extent to which overall imports of CHP goods have declined varies across data sources, however. Export statistics publicly reported by Russia's trading partners (via UN Comtrade) demonstrate a near-halving of monthly CHP imports between 2021 and 2025–26. Supplementing these data with transaction-level import data, on the other hand, suggests that CHP imports may have surpassed pre-war levels in 2023 before declining moderately thereafter. China's share of Russian CHP imports similarly depends on data sources, ranging from ~50%–80%, up from a pre-war ~30% share. The share of CHP imports from sanctions coalition countries has declined from over 50% to under 5%, which is robust to changing methodology.

In the **third edition of KSE Institute's *Russian CHP Imports Tracker***, we analyze how export restrictions have affected the **volumes** of critical components that Russia has managed to import, as well as the possibility that countries are **systematically underreporting CHP exports to Russia**. While there is little evidence that members of the coalition are underreporting theirs at a meaningful scale, jurisdictions outside of it—particularly Hong Kong—may be concealing large swaths of their exports of critical components.

Methodology

The difficulties inherent in tracking the efficacy of export restrictions against Russia are discussed in greater detail in the first edition of the *Russian CHP Imports Tracker*. These include Russia's refusal to publish product-level trade data since 2022, the incentives for trade partners to obscure their exports to Russia due to the threat of sanctions, and the inconsistent lag with which trade data are often published. For this analysis, we use trading partners' reported exports to Russia in UN Comtrade, supplemented by data from the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China ("Chinese customs") and Taiwan's Directorate General of Customs ("Taiwanese customs"). Moreover, where monthly product-level export data are unavailable but annual data are, we uniformly distribute annual statistics across months as a rough approximation of flows (examples include the UAE, Sri Lanka, and Austria). Despite a number of countries with missing or partial data, this analysis covers the vast majority (~97–98%) of Russia's total imports.

[1] The following jurisdictions have imposed export controls on Russia and are part of what we define as the "sanctions coalition" for the purpose of this analysis: Australia, Canada, European Union, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Switzerland, Singapore, Taiwan, United Kingdom, and United States. This group of countries is different from other sanctions areas, for example energy.

This edition of the *Russian CHP Imports Tracker* builds upon previous editions by cross-checking self-reported export statistics with transaction-level Russian import statistics. Each data source has inherent structural weaknesses; leveraging them together does not resolve these issues—neither is comprehensive enough—but it does paint a fuller picture of Russian imports. Because Russia stopped reporting its trade statistics to Comtrade after 2021, we are forced to rely on its trading partners' self-reported export values. For jurisdictions in the coalition, these are largely trustworthy: they align with Russia's own transaction-level import records, with only minor discrepancies. For others—and for a select group of product categories, in particular—the self-reported totals account for just a fraction of Russia's import records.

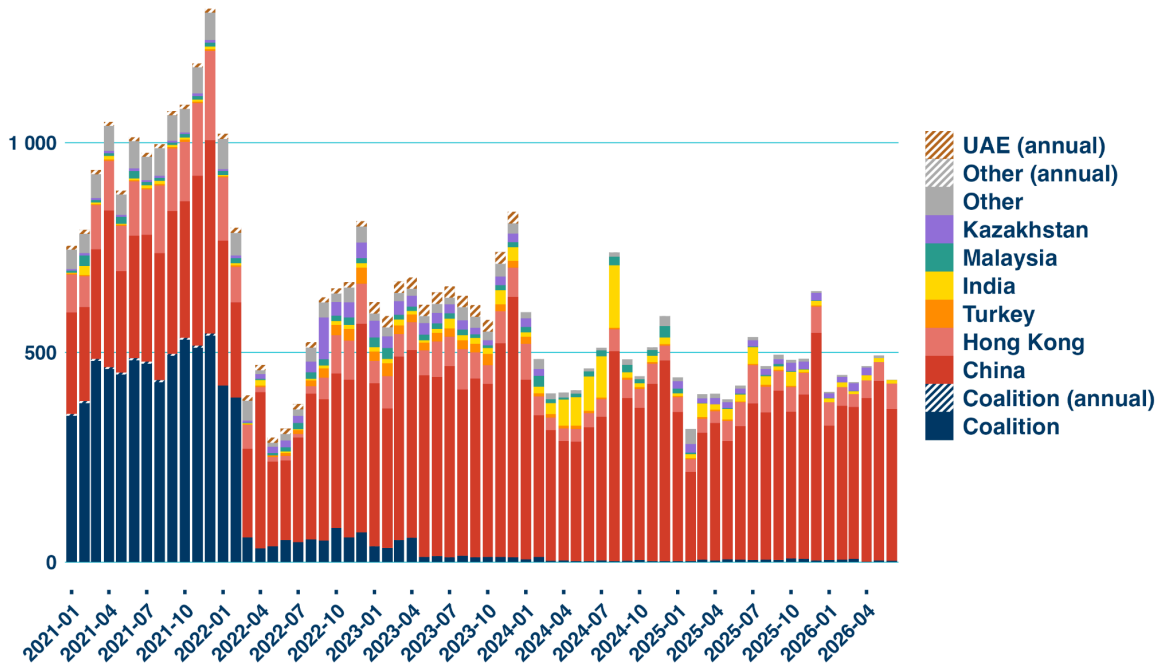
Determining the extent to which exports are underreported carries uncertainty for two reasons. *First*, transaction-level data are not comprehensive after the full-scale invasion. With the implementation of the sanctions and export controls regime, incentives to shield sanctions-circumvention supply chains led more transaction-level data to be hidden or obfuscated. *Second*, exports may be underreported to different degrees at different points in time for different exporters. To simplify our calculations and acknowledge the inherent uncertainty, we treat pre-invasion (up to and including February 2022) and post-invasion as two distinct periods; in each period, we calculate a total ratio between reported (Comtrade) and observed (transaction-level imports) values.[2] We then multiply totals reported to Comtrade by the respective period's ratio to extrapolate a rough approximation of the "true" export volume. In figures, we display estimates of these ratios alongside 25th and 75th percentile (interquartile range) confidence intervals within each period.[3] As seen in the Data Discrepancies section, Hong Kong's underreporting ratio is considerably more volatile than China's, resulting in a wider confidence interval band.

Trade Dynamics

The combination of export restrictions and sanctions-related derisking caused CHP exports from coalition countries to Russia to plummet after February 2022. The decline was immediate, and did not subsequently rebound (see Figure 1). Coalition countries that had previously exported the largest amounts of CHP goods to Russia—Germany, the Netherlands, Czechia, and Poland—each reported steep and immediate declines in export flows (see Appendix Figure A1). While South Korea and Taiwan, global leaders in microelectronics, both continued to report meaningful CHP exports until early 2023, each eventually curbed direct flows to Russia. Among the coalition members that exported the greatest volumes of CHP goods to Russia before the imposition of sanctions, South Korea and Taiwan were the only members to continue exports at pre-war levels into 2023 (see Figure 2). Outside of the coalition, China and Hong Kong became key sources of CHP imports, with key differences that will be discussed in the Data Discrepancies section.

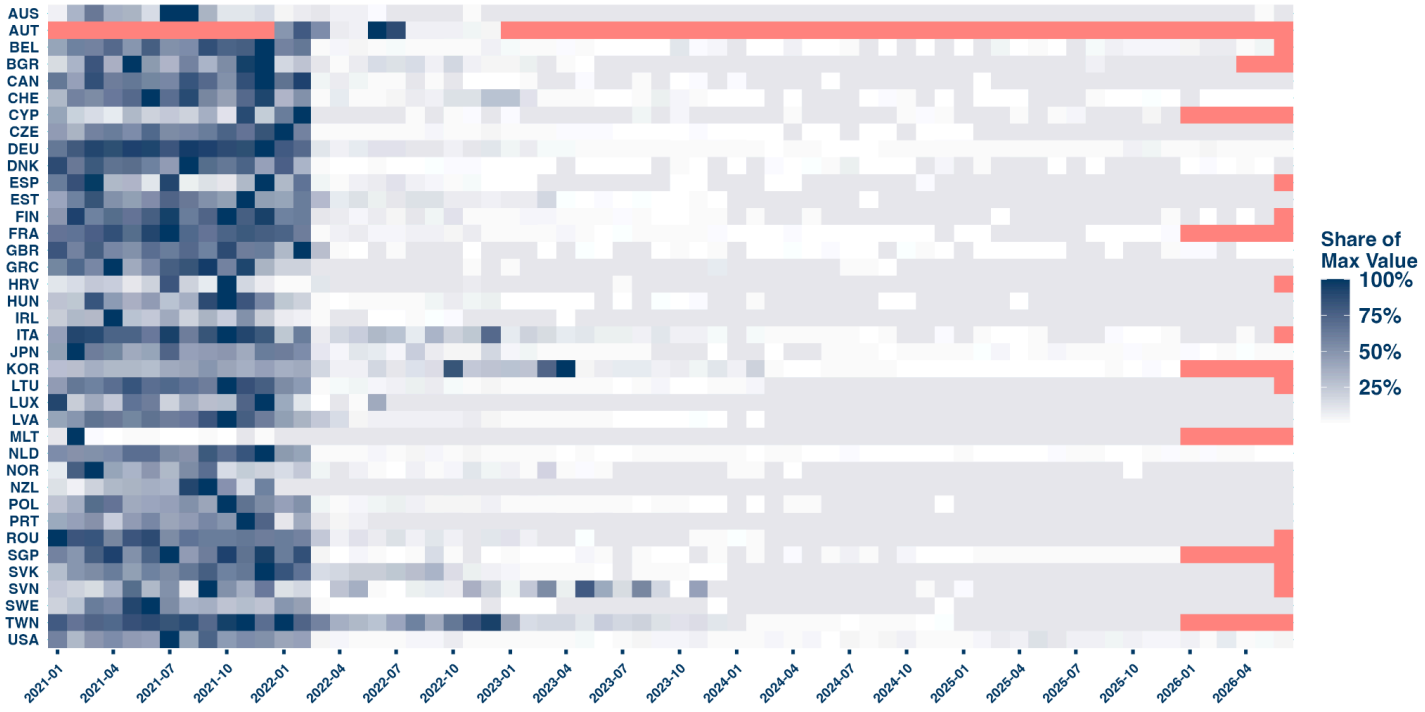
[2] Post-invasion ratios are calculated through January 2024, when the coverage of transaction-level data systematically drops.
[3] Pre-invasion interquartile ranges are substantially narrower than post-invasion, which supports our conclusion that pre-invasion exports are rarely underreported. Moreover, pre-2022 transaction-level totals closely match Russia's own reported totals that were submitted to Comtrade.

Figure 1: Monthly CHP Exports to Russia, in USD mln



Source: UN Comtrade, Chinese customs, Taiwanese customs, KSE Institute
Note: Exporters without monthly data have their annual data evenly distributed across months.

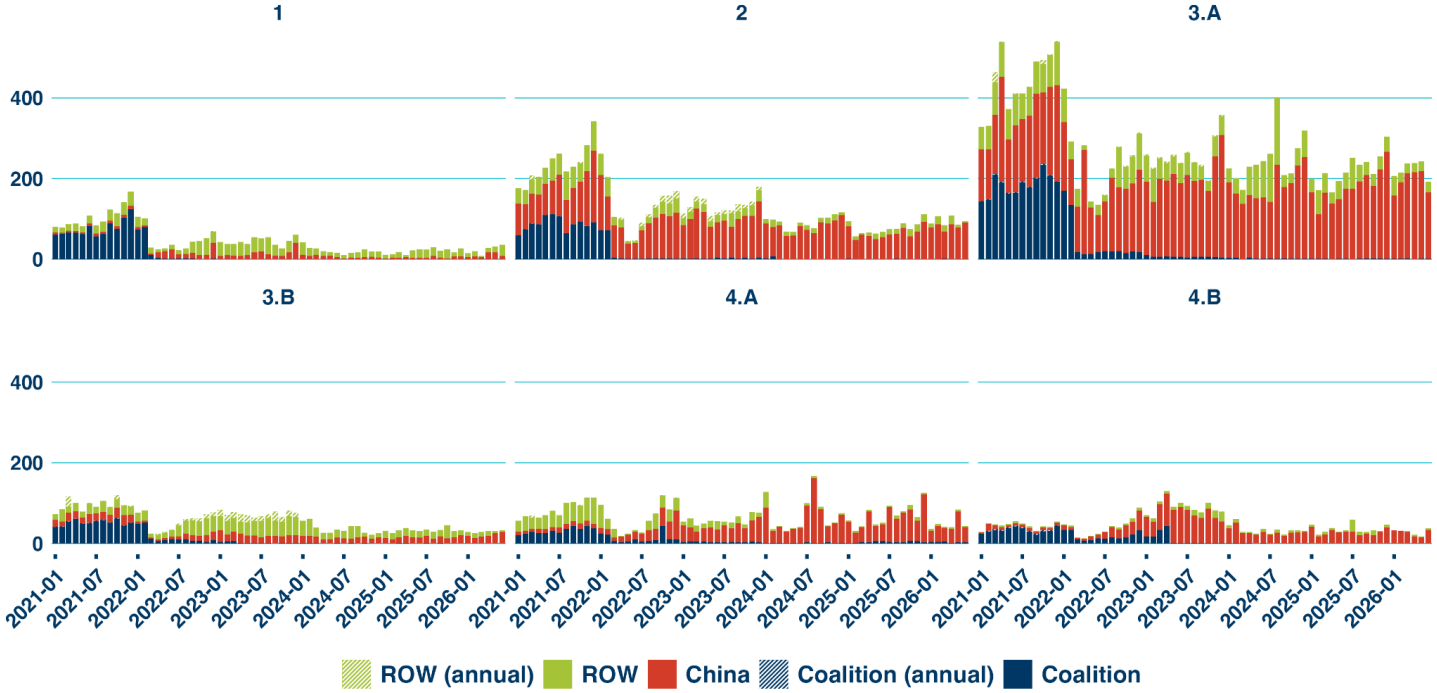
Figure 2: CHP exports to Russia reported by coalition countries, % of individual peak monthly value



Source: UN Comtrade, KSE Institute

The collapse in CHP exports to Russia from sanctions coalition countries was observed across all CHP tiers. The one tier where exports continued at a noteworthy level—tier 4.B, for CNC machines and components—saw exports continue at a reduced but non-negligible pace until Q2 2023, after which flows finally collapsed (see Figure 3). These exports came predominantly from South Korea and Taiwan. The extension of data availability into Q1–Q2 2026 continues this trend without exception: members of the sanctions coalition report very few direct CHP exports to Russia.

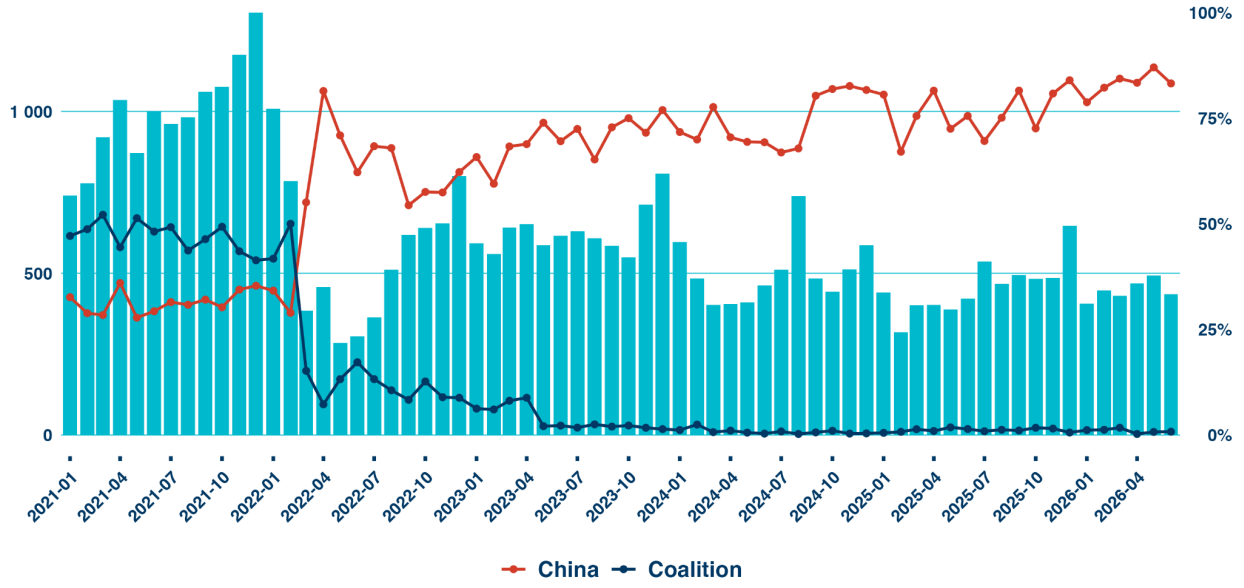
Figure 3: Source of Russian CHP imports by tier, in mln USD



Source: UN Comtrade, Chinese customs, Taiwanese customs, KSE Institute
Note: Exporters without monthly data have their annual data evenly distributed across months.

The most important post-invasion trend in Russia's CHP imports has been the increasingly dominant position that China has taken, made possible by the departure of Western firms from the Russian import market. Pre-invasion, more than half of all of Russia's CHP imports came from countries in the sanctions coalition, compared to 25–30% from China. Immediately following the imposition of export controls, flows went in starkly different directions: China's reported share jumped to over 75%, while the coalition's share plummeted (see Figure 4). In H1 2022, the increase in China's share was primarily due to the exit of other exporters, rather than a change in the absolute value of Chinese CHP exports—in other words, the fact that China did not immediately pull back from the Russian market was enough to more than double its market share. In H2 2022, China reported monthly CHP exports that were up 150% from trough to peak, settling at ~$450 mln per month through 2023.

Figure 4: Reported CHP exports to Russia (lhs, in mln USD) and share from partners (rhs, in %)



Source: UN Comtrade, Chinese customs, Taiwanese customs, KSE Institute

Data Discrepancies

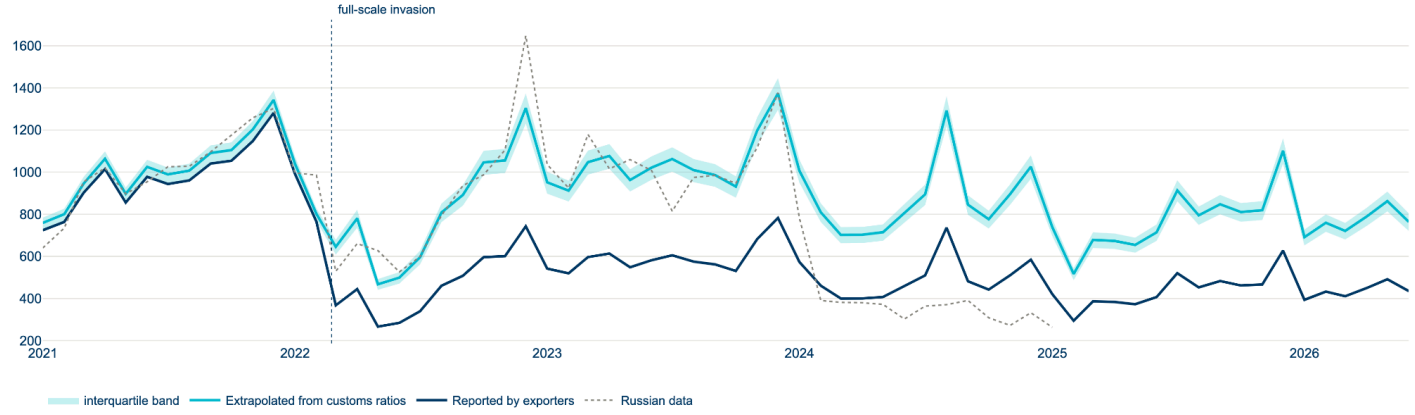
New in this edition of the *Russian CHP Imports Tracker*, **we augment publicly reported export data** (what states report to UN Comtrade) **with transaction-level Russian import data**. The approach—although it is given credibility by its performance in the pre-sanctions period—carries considerable uncertainty and should not be construed as claiming that specific values of exports have been hidden. Rather, it is meant to illustrate directionality: certain trading partners and CHP tiers exhibit clear signs of underreporting, while others do not.

Extrapolating from Comtrade and transaction-level data, Russia may have imported CHP items at volumes equal to or greater than pre-war levels in 2023. By 2024, imports appear to have slumped, though not to the same extent that Comtrade data alone would suggest (see Figure 5). Moreover, rather than peaking in late 2021, CHP imports likely peaked in either late 2022 or late 2023.[4]

Hong Kong is the most consequential source of potential underreported CHP exports. While its officially reported exports to Russia more than halved post-invasion, its extrapolated exports as much as doubled (see Figure 6 and Appendix Figure A3). This is particularly consequential for the sanctions coalition, as Hong Kong is a major re-export hub for Western electronics companies operating in East Asia (including via contract manufacturing arrangements). By volume, the potentially underreported CHP exports predominantly come from CHP Tiers 1, 2, and 3.A, where transaction-level data suggested 3–4x higher exports than those reported to Comtrade; these tiers roughly equate to integrated circuits, wireless communications components, and discrete electronics components (see Appendix Table A1).

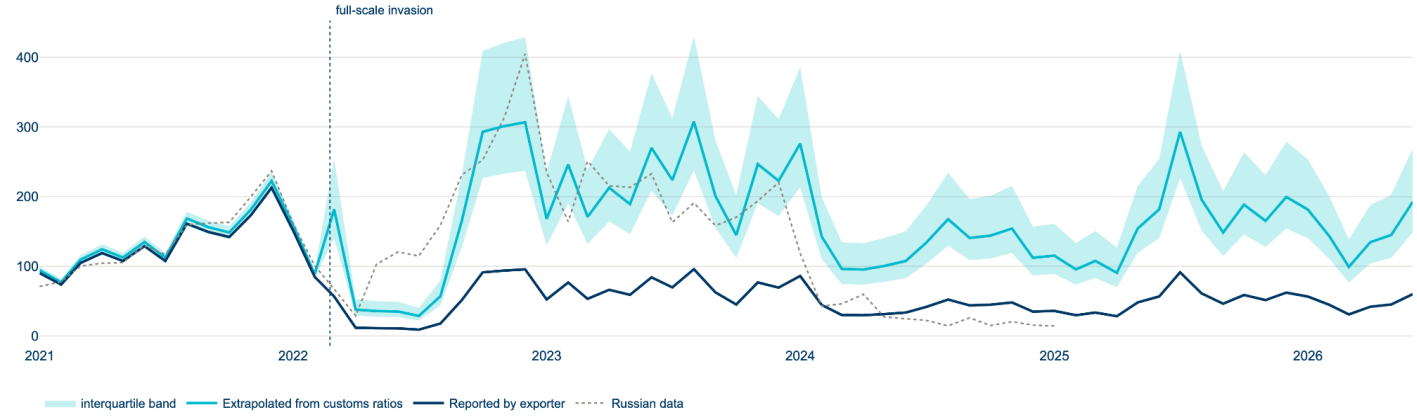
[4] It is worth noting that the Comtrade figures (dark blue) and extrapolated figures (light blue) rely on different Incoterms—the former using Free on Board (FOB) and the latter using Cost, Insurance, Freight (CIF)—that are not subtracted out, but that the differences are far larger than any standard correction.

Figure 5: Total CHP Exports to Russia by Data Source, in USD mln



Source: UN Comtrade, Chinese customs, Taiwanese customs, KSE Institute

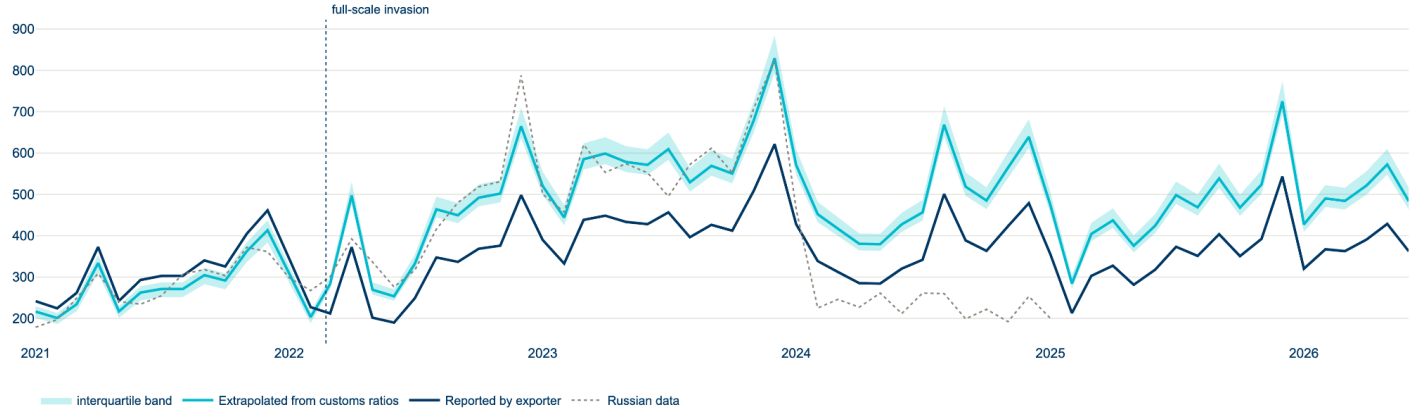
Figure 6: Total Hong Kong CHP Exports by Data Source, in USD mln



Source: UN Comtrade, KSE Institute

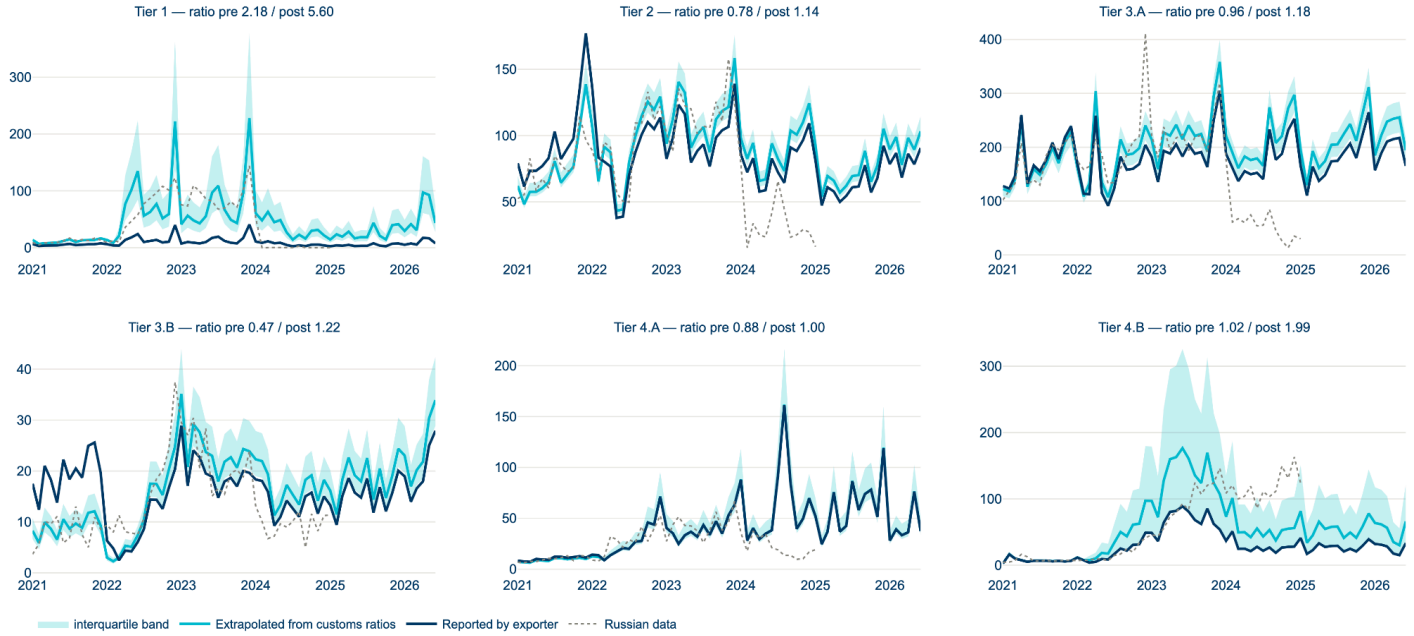
Potentially underreported CHP exports from China are more modest, and are highly concentrated in Tier 1 of the CHP list. Because China is Russia's largest single source of CHP imports, even smaller underreporting ratios create large gaps. For context, the potential gap created by Hong Kong is estimated to be between $5–6 bln, while China's is estimated to be between $6–7 bln and the sanctions coalition's comes in at under $1 bln. As mentioned above, specific numbers are less instructive than the directionality: China has reported more than 7x the total CHP exports from Hong Kong, yet it only has a marginally larger underreported estimate (see Figure 7). In contrast to Hong Kong, China's potential underreported exports are almost entirely concentrated in Tier 1 (see Figure 8). This is particularly interesting given that China's official Tier 1 exports to Russia are quite modest (see Figure 3). When measuring China's share of Russia's CHP imports using extrapolated data, we find that China has still accounted for more than half of Russian imports in every month since the full-scale invasion, but instead of accounting for more than 75% of imports, it likely accounts for between 50–70%, depending on the month (see Appendix Figure A2).

Figure 7: Total Chinese CHP Exports by Data Source, in USD mln



Source: UN Comtrade, Chinese customs, KSE Institute

Figure 8: Total Chinese CHP Exports by CHP Tier and Data Source, in USD mln

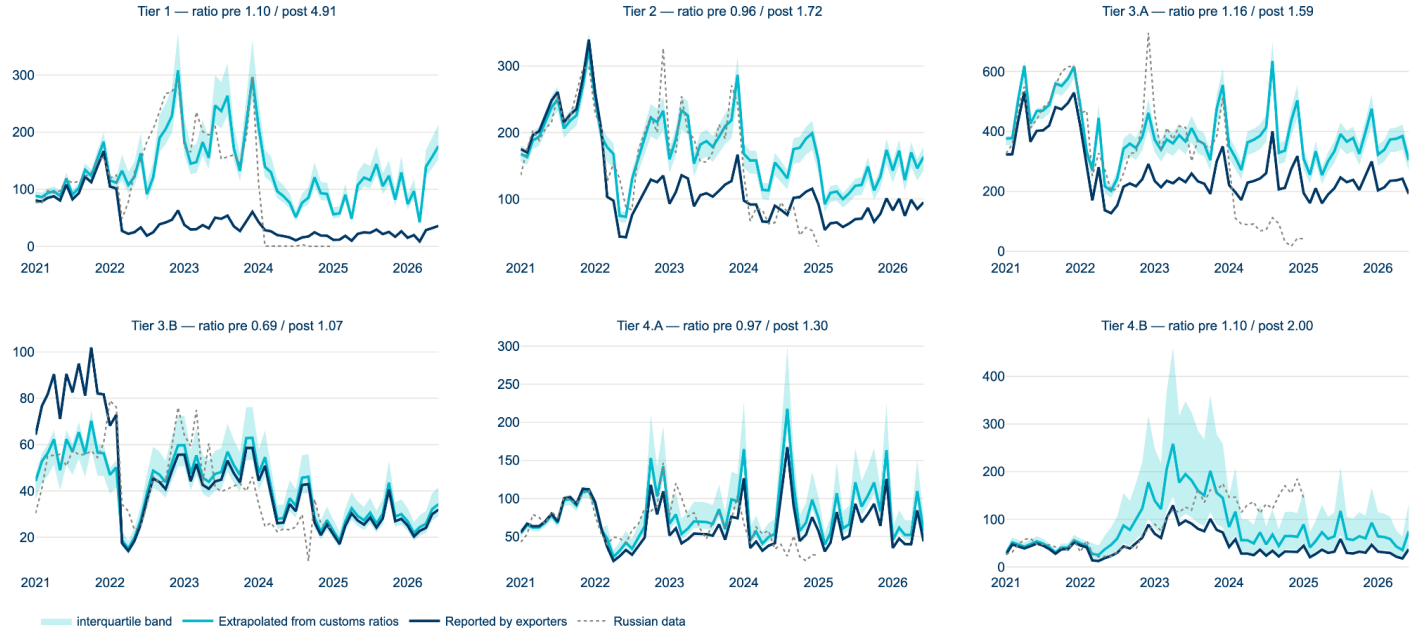


Source: UN Comtrade, Chinese customs, KSE Institute

The underreporting of CHP Tier 1 exports to Russia is far from unique to China: it is, by far, the most underreported category of CHP goods, which reflects its critical importance and high sensitivity. Tier 1, which includes integrated circuits (also referred to as microelectronics), is also the only tier where extrapolated exports were consistently higher than pre-invasion totals (see Figure 9).

There is a clear and notable exception to the underreporting trend: the sanctions coalition (see Appendix Figure A4). While this is certainly an encouraging finding, it is diminished by the assumption that a substantial portion of Hong Kong's CHP exports (underreported or otherwise) are ultimately sourced from companies in the sanctions coalition.

Figure 9: Total CHP Exports by CHP Tier and Data Source, in USD mln



Source: UN Comtrade, Chinese customs, Taiwanese customs, KSE Institute

Conclusions and Next Steps

Export controls have drastically reduced Russia's access to war-critical goods, but they have not entirely curtailed it. Previously reliant on the sanctions coalition for more than half of its CHP imports, Russia now imports at least half—and as much as 75%—of these goods from China. In this edition of the Tracker, we introduced a new methodology designed to find underreported export totals. We examined two jurisdictions, Hong Kong and China, as well as total imports by CHP Tier. We found that Hong Kong has likely severely underreported its CHP exports to Russia since the full-scale invasion, whereas China's potential underreporting has been concentrated in CHP Tier 1 goods (microelectronics).

Even with data extrapolation, it remains the case that direct export flows from sanctions coalition countries to Russia have plummeted since early 2022 and, despite the increased need for CHP goods to feed the war economy, total CHP imports have not recovered to pre-war levels as a result. Nonetheless, Ukrainian authorities regularly discover export-controlled components from Western companies in Russian weapons, indicating that reduced aggregate imports are not the end of the story.[5]

In subsequent editions, we will expand on our investigation into underreported CHP exports, as well as return to the price premium calculations that were introduced in the Q2 edition.

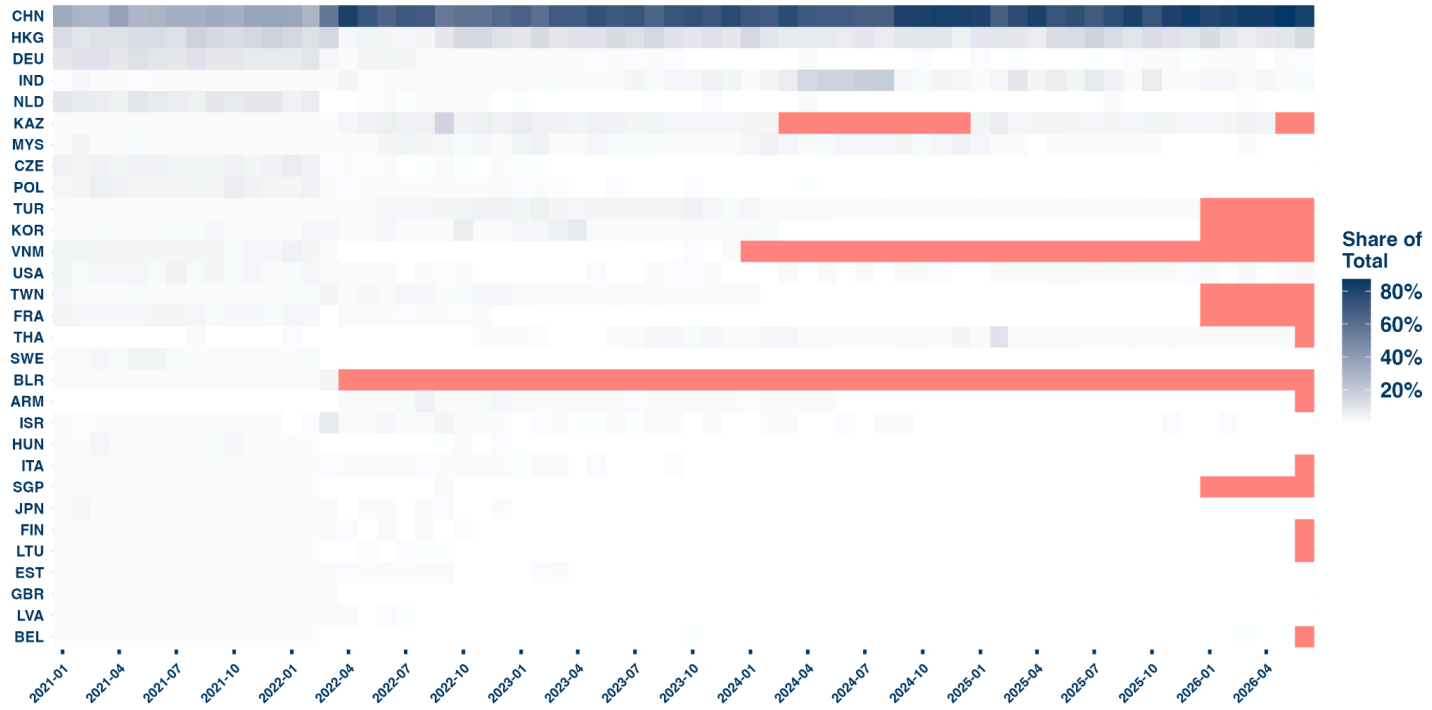
[5] See War & Sanctions

Appendix

Table A1: Common high priority (CHP) items list[6]

Tier	*Description*
1	Items of the highest concern—integrated circuits—due to their critical role in the production of advanced Russian precision-guided weapons systems, Russia's lack of domestic production, and limited global manufacturers.
2	Additional electronics items for which Russia may have some domestic production capability but a preference to source from the sanctions coalition. Includes items related to wireless communications, satellite-based radio-navigation, and passive electronic components.
3.A	Further electronic components used in Russian weapons systems, with a broader range of suppliers. Includes discrete electronic components, navigation equipment, and digital cameras.
3.B	Mechanical and other components utilized in Russian weapons systems, including bearings and optical components.
4.A	Manufacturing, production, and quality testing equipment for electric components, circuit boards and modules.
4.B	Computer Numerically Controlled (CNC) machine tools and components.

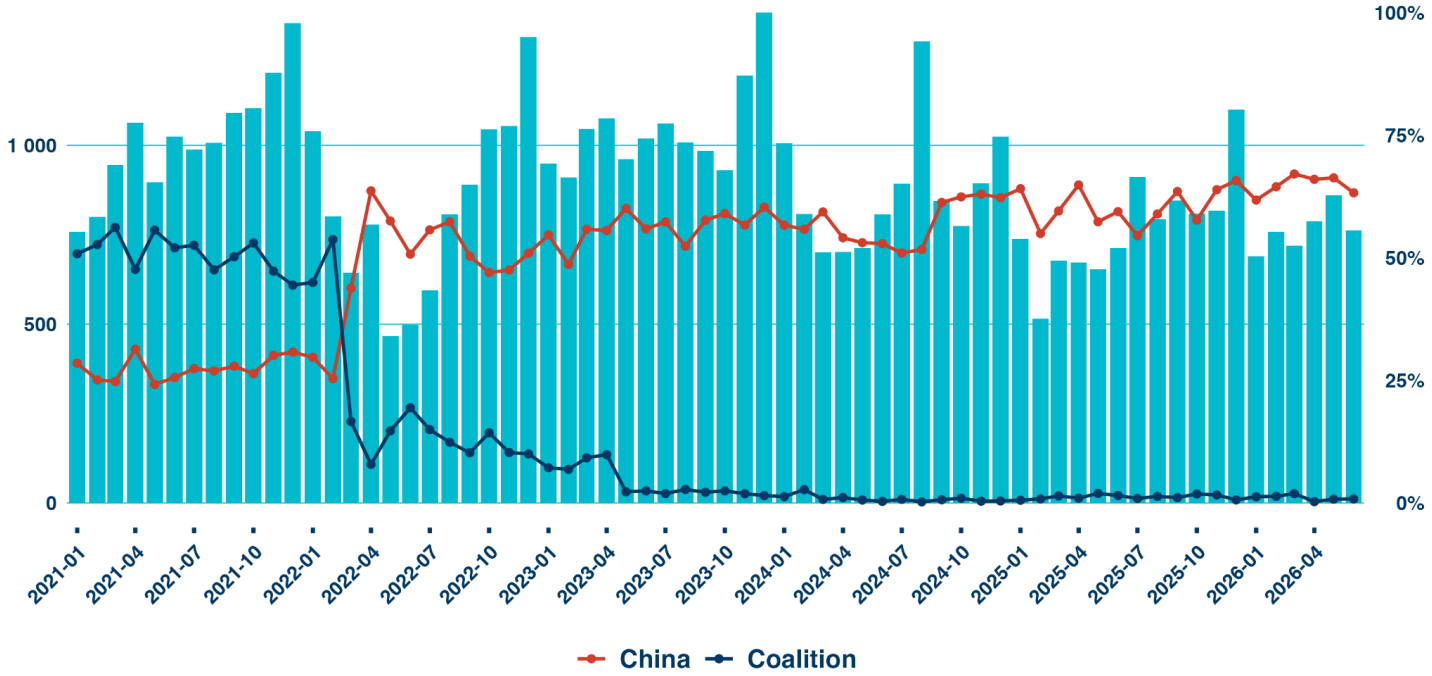
Figure A1: Share of reported monthly Russian CHP imports by exporting country



Source: UN Comtrade, Chinese customs, Taiwanese customs, KSE Institute

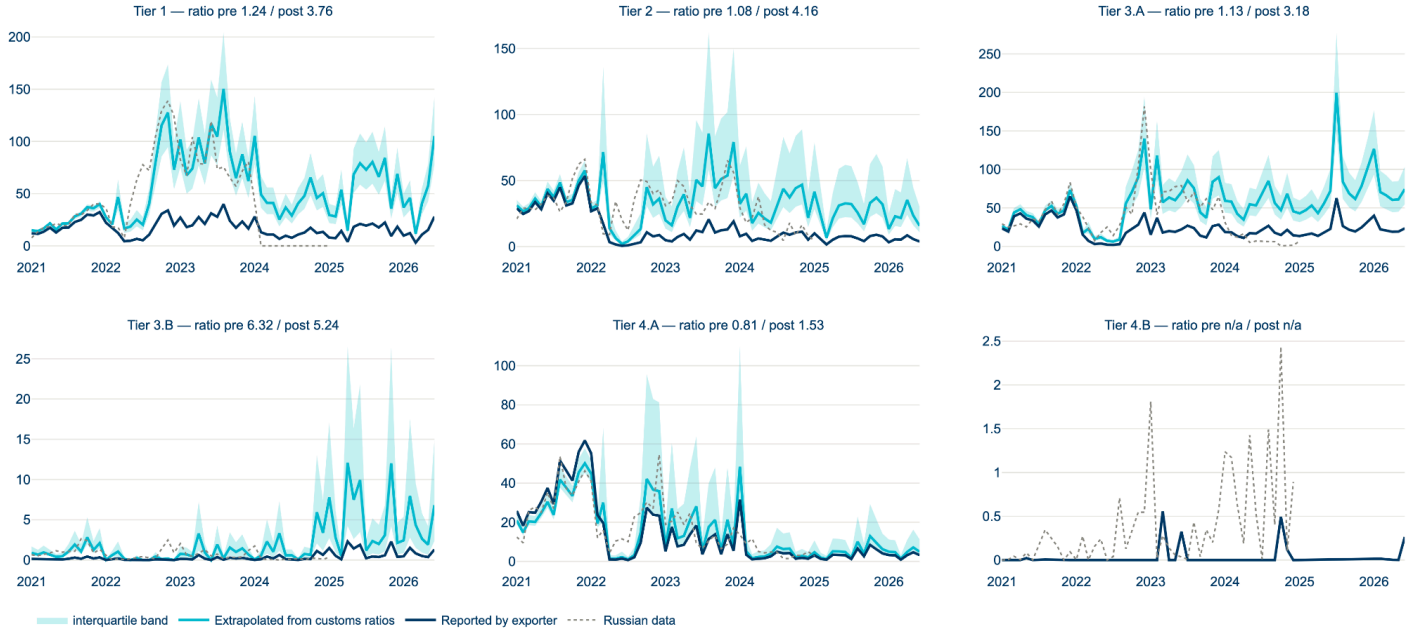
[6] Adapted from the US Bureau of Industry and Security and European Commission. The list is harmonized between the EU, US, UK, and Japan.

Figure A2: Extrapolated CHP exports to Russia (lhs, in mln USD) and share from partners (rhs, in %)



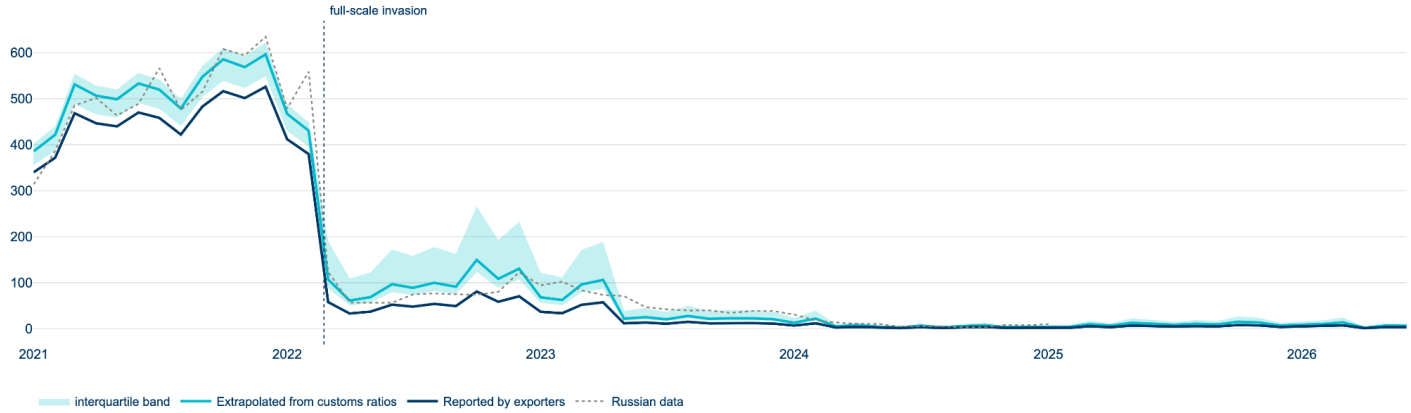
Source: UN Comtrade, Chinese customs, Taiwanese customs, KSE Institute

Figure A3: Total Hong Kong CHP Exports by CHP Tier and Data Source, in USD mln



Source: UN Comtrade, KSE Institute

Figure A4: Total Sanctions Coalition CHP Exports by CHP Tier and Data Source, in USD mln



Source: UN Comtrade, Taiwanese customs, KSE Institute