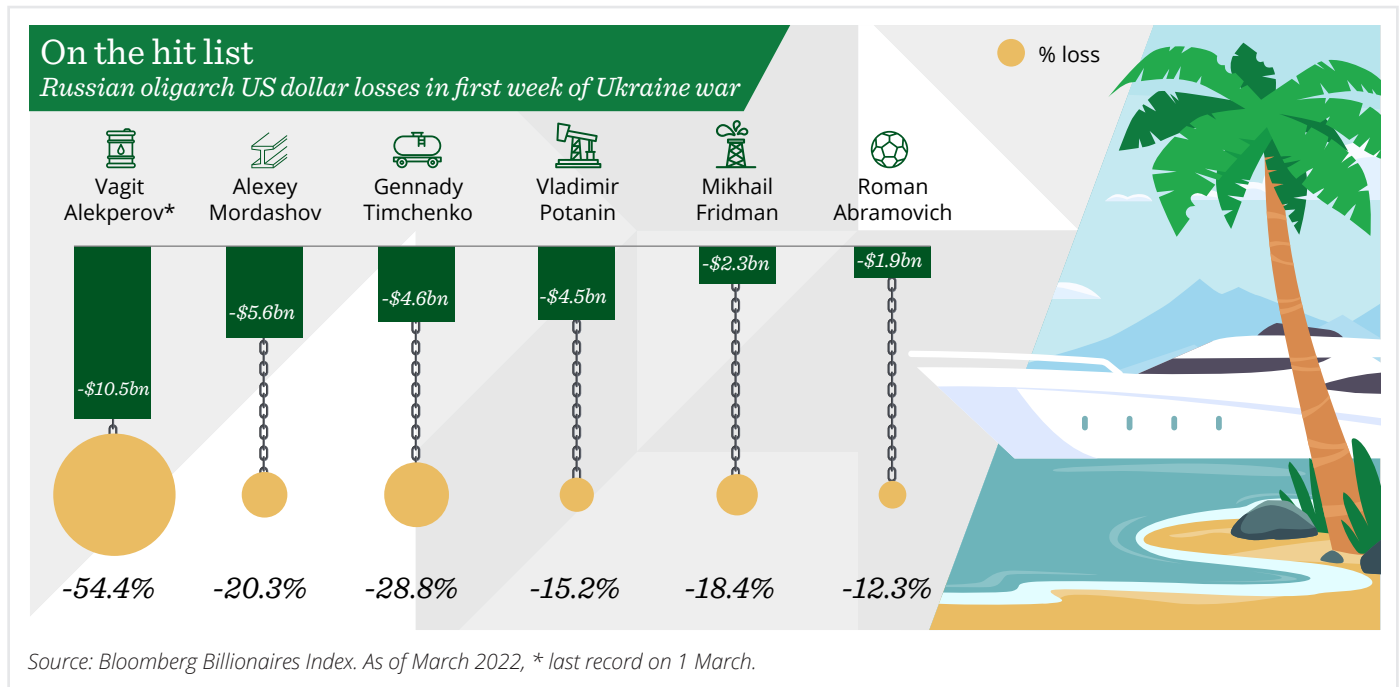


# Between the lines

## Week 10

### Russia's billionaire class hit by sanctions

Within a week of the invasion of Ukraine, the Russians listed on the *Bloomberg Billionaires Index* had, on paper, suffered combined losses of \$88bn. Meanwhile, thanks to the US 'Kleptocapture Taskforce', oligarch superyachts have been seized in France, Italy and Germany and are now queuing up in the US extradition-free waters of the Maldives.



### Ukraine war pushes up gas prices

Wholesale prices of natural gas in Europe saw their largest intraday spike on record on Monday (7 Mar) at one point surging by 80% as buyers panicked over potential US sanctions on Russian oil and gas exports – an area noticeably avoided so far. This was closely followed by Russia's threat to cut natural gas supplies to Europe via the Nord Stream 1 pipeline.

The potential move would form part of Russia's threatened response to sanctions imposed over the invasion of Ukraine. With Russia supplying around a third of Europe's gas, any significant disruption could unleash still higher inflation, triggering a recession in Europe and prolonging the energy crisis into next winter.

On Sunday (6 Mar) crude oil prices briefly hit their highest since July 2008 before retreating. Meanwhile, the prices of industrial metals are also surging. The London Metal Exchange was forced to close on Tuesday (8 Mar) when the price of nickel doubled after rising 75% the previous day.

In response, leading stock market indices in Germany, France and Italy moved into 'bear market' territory this week – 20% down from the start of the year.



### Taste the feeling: Coke and fast-food giants sanction Russia

Last weekend, Coca-Cola and McDonald's were at the centre of a bitter social media furor over their refusal to either speak out against the invasion of Ukraine or sanction their business activities in Russia with calls to boycott both trending on Twitter.

At the time, other major Western firms such as KFC, PepsiCo, Starbucks and Burger King had likewise refused to close their Russian outlets.

However, by Tuesday (8 Mar) both Coca-Cola and McDonald's along with PepsiCo and Starbucks announced they were ceasing the sale of their best-known products in Russia. This left only KFC and Burger King sitting on the fence.

Meanwhile, a tidal wave of major global companies and sports bodies has announced sanctions against Russia including: Airbnb, Airbus, Alcoa, Alphabet (*Google* and *YouTube*), Amazon, Apple, Boeing, BP, Daimler, Equinor, ExxonMobil, FIFA, Ford, Grant Thornton, H&M, Hermes, Ikea, Jaguar Land Rover, Levi's, Maersk, Mastercard, Meta (*Facebook*), Netflix, Norway's sovereign wealth fund, PayPal, Samsung, Shell, TikTok, Visa, Volkswagen, UEFA, Under Armour and Zara.

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*222-0043/SK18218*