Dr Viktor Szép
Assistant Professor
Department of European and Economic Law
Faculty of Law, University of Groningen
The Netherlands

SHORT BIO

Dr Viktor Szép is Assistant Professor at the University of Groningen (RUG). His research focuses on the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), with particular emphasis on sanctions. More recently, he has developed an interest in EU economic security, including critical raw materials and the interplay between foreign policy and trade. He has published widely on the EU's CFSP, sanctions, strategic autonomy and decision-making procedures in EU external relations. He previously worked as a postdoctoral researcher in the Horizon 2020 ENGAGE project and remains actively involved in interdisciplinary research on EU external relations. Dr. Szép holds a PhD in Law (*summa cum laude*), with a dissertation examining the EU's sanctions regime against Russia.

RESEARCH AREAS
EU sanctions; EU external relations law; Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP); EU economic security; EU trade-foreign policy nexus; critical raw materials

ACADEMIC WORK EXPERIENCE

University of Groningen, Department of European and Economic Law, The Netherlands
Assistant Professor (UD1 – Senior Assistant Professor), Jan 2026 – present
Assistant Professor (UD2), Feb 2023 – Dec 2025
Postdoctoral Researcher (Horizon 2020 ENGAGE Project), Aug 2021 – Jan 2023

Centre for Social Sciences, Institute for Legal Studies, Hungary
Research Fellow, Jun 2021 – Jul 2021
Junior Research Fellow, Jul 2015 – May 2021

Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Department of International Relations and European Studies, Hungary
Assistant Professor, May 2021 – Jul 2021
Assistant Lecturer, Sept 2018 – Apr 2021
External Lecturer, Feb 2015 – Jul 2018

STUDIES

PhD in Law, 2021
University of Debrecen
PhD thesis: *The EU's 2014 sanctions regime against Russia* (*summa cum laude*)
PhD summer school on EU external relations, 2017
College of Europe, Natolin campus (10 ECTS)
MA in International Relations (EU studies track), 2015
Eötvös Loránd University
BA in Social Studies, 2013

Eötvös Loránd University

LANGUAGES

English (C1), **French** (C1), **Dutch** (B1), **Hungarian** (native)

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Journal ARTICLES

C. Damro, E. Sabatino, V. Szép & M Vandendriessche (2025): Overcoming Challenges to the EU as a Global Actor. Special Issue Editor, *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 30(3), 301-308.

V. Szép (2024). The geopoliticization of EU trade policy: Exploring the growing links between the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Commercial Policy. *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 29(4), 427–446.

V. Szép (2024). The legislative history of the EU's anti-coercion instrument. *ERA Forum*, 25, 127–139.

L. Lonardo & V. Szép (2023). The use of sanctions to achieve EU strategic autonomy: Restrictive measures, the Blocking Statute and the Anti-Coercion Instrument. *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 28(4), 363–378.

V. Szép & R. A. Wessel (2023). Balancing restrictive measures and media freedom: *RT France v. Council. Common Market Law Review*, 60(5), 1383–1396.

V. Szép (2022). Transnational parliamentary activities in EU foreign policy: The role of parliamentarians in the coming about of the EU's Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 60(6), 1741–1757.

V. Szép (2020). New intergovernmentalism meets EU sanctions policy: The European Council orchestrates the restrictive measures imposed against Russia. *Journal of European Integration*, 42(6), 855–871.

Book CHAPTERS

V. Szép (2027): The law and politics of EU sanctions. In. P. James Cardwell and M-P. Granger (Eds.), Research Handbook on the Politics of EU Law, 2nd edition, Elgar (Forthcoming)

V. Szép (2027): The international security perspective of EU critical raw materials. In. W. A. Jannsen – V. Szép (Eds.): Raw materials and EU Law: perspectives on economic integration, sustainability, trade, security and justice. Hart (Forthcoming)

P. Van Elsuwege – V. Szép (2027): Sanctions alignment and security cooperation in a wider Europe. In. C. Hillion (Ed.) Legal relations between the EU and its neighbours. (Forthcoming)

R. A. Wessel & V. Szép (2026): Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy. In J. Larik & R. A. Wessel (Eds.), *EU External Relations Law: Text, Cases and Materials*. Bloomsbury.

V. Szép (2026): EU Critical Raw Material Act. In A. Biondi & O-A. Stefan (Eds.), Edward Elgar Encyclopedia of EU law (Forthcoming).

V. Szép, R. A. Wessel & E. Zonta (2024). EU Blocking Statute and the Anti-Coercion Instrument. In S. Garben & L. Gormley (Eds.), *Oxford Encyclopedia of EU Law*. Oxford University Press.

W. Geelgoed, V. Szép & R. A. Wessel (2024). Restrictive measures. In P. Caeiro et al. (Eds.), *Elgar Encyclopedia of Crime and Criminal Justice*. Edward Elgar.

P. Van Elsuwege & V. Szép (2023). The revival of transatlantic partnership? EU–US coordination in sanctions policy. In E. Fahey (Ed.), *Routledge International Handbook on Transatlantic Relations* (pp. 81–95). Routledge.

V. Szép & P. Van Elsuwege (2020). EU sanctions policy and the alignment of third countries: Relevant experiences for the UK? In J. S. Vara, R. A. Wessel & P. R. Polak (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of the International Dimension of Brexit* (pp. 226–240). Routledge.

V. Szép (2019). Foreign policy without unilateral alternatives? EU Member State interests and the imposition of economic sanctions. In M. Varju (Ed.), *Between Compliance and Particularism: Member State Interests and European Union Law* (pp. 321–338). Springer.

EDITED BOOKS & MONOGRAPH(S)

W. A. Jannsen – V. Szép (Eds., 2027): Raw materials and EU Law: perspectives on economic integration, sustainability, trade, security and justice. Hart (forthcoming).

V. Szép (2021). The framework for collective decision-making in EU foreign policy: The case of the sanctions imposed against Russia. Budapest: Centre for Social Sciences.

WORKING PAPERS AND REPORTS

V. Szép & R. A. Wessel (2023). Assessing current CFSP structures and processes and formulating recommendations. *ENGAGE Working Paper* Series.

V. Szép et al. (2023). Case studies of the EU's CFSP activity. *ENGAGE Working Paper Series*.

R. A. Wessel – V. Szép (2022): The implementation of Article 31 of the Treaty on European Union and the use of qualified majority voting. Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, European Parliament.

V. Szép & E. Sabatino & R. A. Wessel (2022). Developing assessment criteria for security and intelligence cooperation in the EU. *ENGAGE Working Paper Series*.

V. Szép & R. A. Wessel (2022). The current legal basis and governance structures of the EU's external action. *ENGAGE Working Paper Series*.

V. Szép & R. A. Wessel (2021). Mapping the current legal basis and governance structures of the EU's CFSP. *ENGAGE Working Paper Series*.

To see the full list of my publication, please check my official RUG profile.

TEAM LEADERSHIP

- **Academic lead, Interdisciplinary Sanctions Research Group (2022 – 2025)**
  Led a cross-faculty research group of around 10 scholars from law, international relations and economics. Coordinated interdisciplinary collaboration through workshops and conference panels (including the 2025 *Politicologenetmaal*); co-organised an international workshop in Groningen with Francesco Giumelli (IR), Tristan Kohl (economics) and Ramses A. Wessel (law) and thematic webinars (e.g. on EU sanctions against Russia); discussed the interdisciplinary PhD projects of our members and produced some joint publications.
- **Research Programme Lead on EU economic security and critical raw materials (Honours Programme, University of Groningen) (October 2025 – June 2026)**
  Designed and supervised a nine-month research programme for 3 research students in the University of Groningen Honours programme (an extracurricular programme worth 30 EC). Assigned thematic research tasks and coordinated the students' contributions to the project's literature review and analytical framework. The programme, among others, resulted in contributions to an encyclopaedia article on EU critical raw materials.

PHD SUPERVISION

1. **Primary PhD supervisor** of Anna Sebestyén, Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), 2022-2026. PhD project on EU sanctions and the suspension of aids.
2. **Co-PhD supervision** of Till Stadtbäumer, University of Groningen (RUG), 2026-2030 (with Prof. Dr. Ramses A. Wessel and Dr. Jonas Bornemann). PhD project on the external dimension of EU migration policy.
3. **Member of the PhD doctoral guidance committee** of Iana Ovsianniakova (Ghent University, Faculty of Law and Criminology). PhD project on the alignment with EU sanctions.

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- **University Teaching Qualification (UTQ)**, by Experience trajectory, March 2025. UTQ is proof of didactic competence for lecturers in academic education and is recognised by all universities in the Netherlands

THIRD-PARTY FUNDING, CONSULTANCY AND CONTRACT RESEARCH

- Incentive fund for an interdisciplinary project, University of Groningen: EU Sanctions Network, 2022 - €4,000.
- **R. A. Wessel – V. Szép** (2022): The implementation of Article 31 of the Treaty on European Union and the use of qualified majority voting. Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, European Parliament.
  - In its report of 1 June 2023 on the implementation of the passerelle clauses, the European Parliament cited our report as evidence.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Participant at Experts Workshop on EU Decision-Making organised by **Egmont – The Royal Institute for International Relations** in the presence of representatives of the Council Secretariat General and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 16 February 2024.
- Practitioner-oriented presentation on EU sanctions at the **European Law Academy**, Trier, Germany, 28 April 2023
- Public hearing at the **European Parliament's Committee on Constitutional Affairs** (AFCO) on the potential improvement of EU foreign policy and the wider use of qualified majority voting, 28 February 2023 (with Prof. Ramses A. Wessel)

MEDIA COMMENTARY ON EU FOREIGN POLICY AND SANCTIONS

- Interview by Deutsche Welle (dw.com) on whether Hungary can win its case against the EU's Russian gas ban? February 2026
- Interview by ATV (Hungarian TV channel) on the EU's proposal to ban Russian gas, December 2025
- Podcast interview on EU foreign policy decision-making procedures by Clio ('Coffee Break at Harmo'), study association for the International Relations & International Organisation programme, Groningen, 12 March 2025
- Interview by ATV (Hungarian TV channel) on Hungarian veto threats in EU, January 2025
- Quoted in Yomiuri Shimbun, Japan's largest and most influential newspaper, on the use of qualified majority voting in EU foreign policy, June 2023
- Interview by Euronews on extra-territorial sanctions, 11 May 2023
- Quoted by *VálaszOnline* on the use of qualified majority voting in EU foreign policy, 1 March 2023
- Interview by *Rezervátum* YouTube channel on the use of qualified majority voting in EU foreign policy, 5 February 2023
- Quoted by *napi.hu* on EU sanctions against Russia, 12 October 2022
- Quoted by *G7.hu* on EU sanctions against Russia, 14 May 2022
- Interview on the EU's sanctions against Russia at Dutch public television ('Nieuwsuur'), 4 March 2022
- Interview on the enforcement of EU values (Article 7 TEU) at Tilos Radio, 25 November 2019

COURSES

Current courses at the University of Groningen

- **as course coordinator**: Intr. to International and European Law & European Law
- **as member of the teaching group**: Law of the European Union, Research Seminar, EU external relations law

Past courses at ELTE University

- **as course coordinator**: the law & politics of Brexit, EU integration history
- **as course co-coordinator**: EU external relations; EU policy areas; EU and Hungary
- **as member of the teaching group**: EU institutions and decision-making procedures, academic writing

REVIEWER

Journal referee for: Journal of Common Market Studies (JCMS); Cambridge Yearbook of European Legal Studies; European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research; Irish Journal for European Law Humanities and Social Sciences Communications; European Foreign Affairs Review; International Journal of Parliamentary Studies; Central European Journal of International and Security Studies; Politics & Governance; Europe and the World: A law review; Intersections; Revista CIDOB d'Aders Internacionals, Európai Tükör

Book manuscript reviewer for: Hart publishing

SELECTED ACADEMIC CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

Selected conference presentations (out of 40+ since 2016).

"The Role of the European Parliament in the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy" (with Anna Sebestyén), Centre for the Law of EU External Relations (CLEER) & Asser Institute, The Hague, 2025
Panel presentation: **"EU Sanctions on Russia: Trading Under Pressure – National Security, International Trade, and Questions of Effectiveness"**, World Economy Research Institute, Warsaw School of Economics (online), 2025
Expert roundtable on sanctions and intellectual property rights, **Comparative Law in Action**, IE Law School, Madrid, 2025
Discussant on sanctions-related papers, **Politicologenetmaal 2025**, Groningen, 2025
Discussant, **Utrecht Trade and Investment Law Workshop – "Questioning Economic Security"**, Utrecht, 2024
Discussant, **CLEER Workshop – The Legal Implications of the EU's Geopolitical Awakening (Part II)**, T.M.C. Asser Institute, The Hague, 2024
Participant, **Kick-off Meeting of the Multidisciplinary International Network on Sanctions (MINOS)**, Ghent, 2024
Presentation: **"Strategising EU Decision-Making in the Face of New Challenges: Mainstreaming Qualified Majority Voting in the CFSP"**, European Union in International Affairs (EUIA) Conference, Brussels, 2023
Member of organising team and panel chair, **"The European Union in a Globalising World: Multidisciplinary Perspectives"**, University of Groningen, 2023
Presentation: **"Transatlantic Sanctions Coordination"** (with Peter Van Elsuwege), **European Union Studies Association (EUSA) 17th Biennial Conference**, Miami, 2022
Presentation: **"Legal and Strategic Autonomy in the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy"**, **European Union Studies Association (EUSA) 17th Biennial Conference**, Miami, 2022
Presentation: **"International Sanctions against Russia"**, City Law School, City, University of London, 2022
Presentation: **"The Future of EU Foreign, Security and Defence Policy: Assessing Legal Options for Improvement"**, **UACES 51st Annual Conference**, 2021
Presentation: **"EU Sanctions Policy and the Alignment of Third Countries: Relevant Experiences for the UK?"** (with Peter Van Elsuwege), University of Salamanca & CLEER Workshop, 2019
Presentation: **"Achieving Unity with Diversity: The EU's Sanctions Imposed against Russia"**, **ECPR Standing Group on the European Union Conference**, Sciences Po Paris, 2018

MEMBERSHIP IN ORGANISATIONS

- Member of the interdisciplinary Sanctions Group at the Rudolf Agricola School for Sustainable Development, Groningen
- Member of the MINOS group (Multidisciplinary International Network on Sanctions).

AWARDS

- Annual Publication Award – the "Best International Publication of the Year" in the Institute for Legal Studies, awarded by the Centre of Social Sciences, Budapest, 2020 Publication: V. Szép (2020). New intergovernmentalism meets EU sanctions policy: The European Council orchestrates the restrictive measures imposed against Russia. *Journal of European Integration*, 42(6), 855–871.

OTHER FORMS OF MENTORSHIP

- Writing a review for the 37th national student research conference, Hungary (2025)
- Supporting the RUG team in the European Law Moot Court (2023)
- Mentor of a high school student at the International School of Groningen to write an extended essay on an issue relating to current global affairs (2026)

CV last updated: March 2026