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German Support for Sanctions Against Russia Rises

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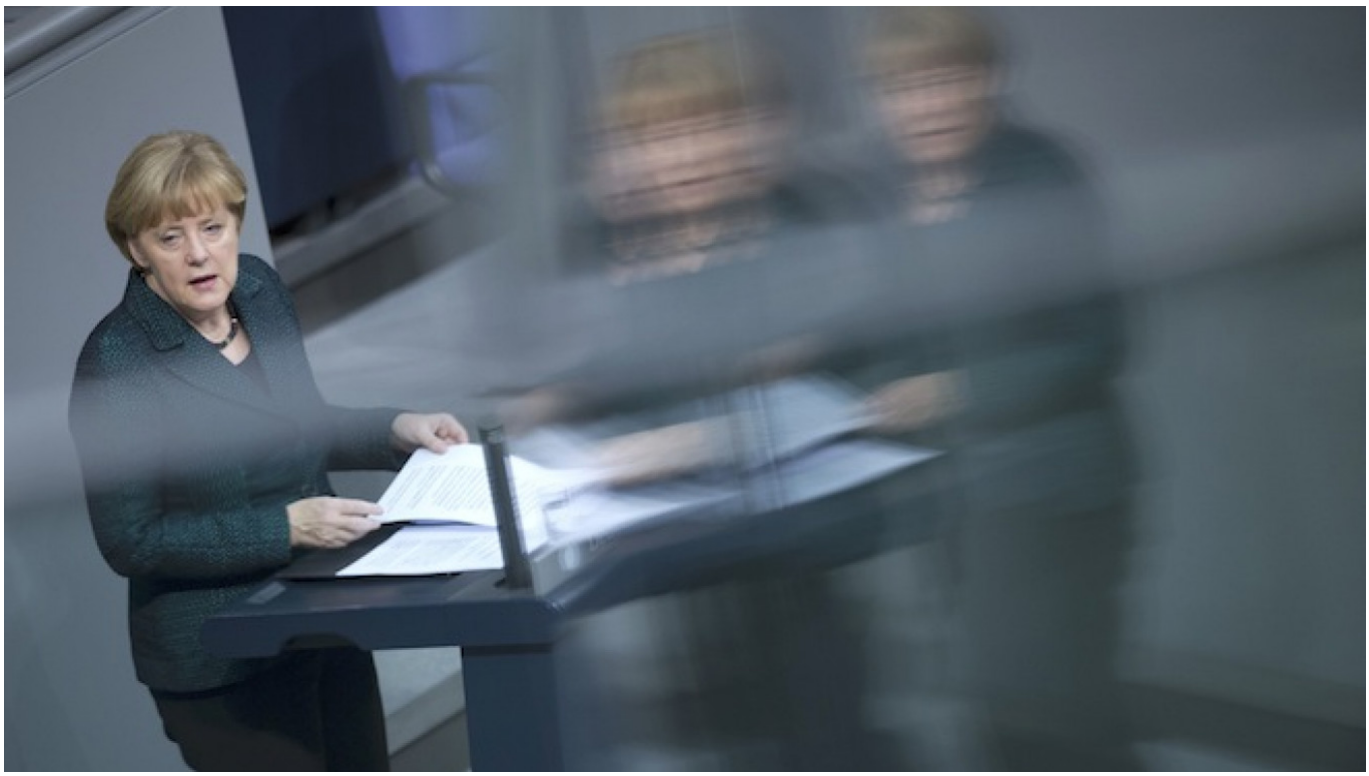

German Chancellor Angela Merkel is reflected in a glass barrier as she holds a speech during a debate at the lower house of parliament Bundestag in Berlin on Nov. 26, 2014.

The number of Germans supporting European Union economic sanctions against Russia over the Ukraine crisis has risen in the last month and a large majority supports Chancellor Angela Merkel's toughening stance, a poll on Friday found.

The Politbarometer poll for ZDF television found 58 percent back the EU sanctions even if they damage the German economy, up from 52 percent a month ago.

The poll also found that 76 percent backed the sharper tone of Merkel's recent criticisms of President Vladimir Putin's policies.

Putin gave a 30-minute prime-time interview to German public broadcaster ARD on Nov. 16 in which he appealed to the hearts and minds of German viewers by saying German-Russian relations had never been better.

In an unusually tough speech a day later, Merkel accused him of trampling on "the peaceful order in Europe."

Polls have so far shown Germans to be wary of sanctions and German industry has warned that they could cost jobs.

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