

# Leaders of 27 EU states instructed Borrell to prepare options for sanctions against Russia

Leaders of 27 EU member states instructed the EU foreign policy service led by Josep Borrell to explore the possibilities for dialogue with Russia on certain topics of interest to the EU, as well as options for introducing new anti-Russian sanctions, including economic ones, to counteract possible future activities of Russia, which they regard as harmful.

According to the final statement on relations with Russia, adopted on Friday, the EU leaders could not agree on the initiative of Germany and France to hold an EU-Russia summit meeting, it is not mentioned in the final document.

The European Council noted its openness to electoral dialogue with Russia on issues of interest to the EU. The Council has instructed the European Commission and EU's High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy Josep Borrell to develop concrete opportunities for this to be discussed with the Council on topics such as climate and environmental protection, health, selected foreign and security policy issues, including relations with Iran, Syria, and Libya, the document says.

In addition, EU leaders reiterated their call for Russia to implement the Minsk agreements and announced their readiness to support civil society, human rights organizations, and independent media in Russia. They announced that they will deepen political dialogue and association with the countries of the Eastern Partnership program, in particular with Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova, and develop cooperation with the states of Central Asia. The summit welcomed the introduction by the EU Council on Thursday of economic sanctions against Belarus, called for an end to the persecution of the opposition in this country, and the release of all detained oppositionists.

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