



EUROPEAN UNION ~FACTSHEET~

EU-RUSSIA SUMMIT

(Brussels, 20/21 December 2012)

The European Union and Russia are not only neighbours, but also strategic partners. The 30th EU-Russia summit bears witness to the importance both sides attach to this strategic partnership.

The EU will be represented by Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, and by José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission. Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Energy Commissioner Günther Oettinger and Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht will also take part. Russia will be represented by Vladimir Putin, President of Russia, accompanied by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Minister for Energy Alexander Novak and Minister for the Economy Andrei Belousov.

The summit will begin with a dinner on Thursday 20 December and continue with a plenary session in the morning of 21 December, followed by a working lunch and a press conference.

During the working dinner, leaders are expected to debate the situation in Russia and the EU, including the economy, and the Eurasian integration process. During the plenary, leaders will address:

- The political and economic situation in Russia and the EU, as well as Russia's G20 presidency.
- EU-Russia relations, including the new EU-Russia agreement, the implementation of Russia's WTO commitments, energy and aviation issues, human rights as well as visa and mobility.
- Regional and international issues, including developments in Syria, the Middle East and Iran and the Western Balkans.

Leaders will welcome progress in deepening EU-Russia cooperation in several areas:

The year 2014 can become the EU-Russia Year of Science. This reflects the importance of research cooperation between the EU and Russia: The Russian Federation has been by far the most important third country partner in the seventh research framework programme. There are currently 440 Russian participants in 264 signed grant agreements, receiving an EU contribution of €60 million. The EU-Russia Year of Science would feature a series of high-level EU-Russia conferences in several areas of the next framework programme, Horizon 2020.

P R E S S

Negotiations on a drug precursors agreement have been concluded. This agreement aims to fight illicit drug production by preventing the diversion of drug precursors and chemical substances frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs. It provides for co-operation in trade monitoring, exchange of information as well as technical and scientific co-operation. The agreement is due to be signed in 2013.

Cooperation on counter-terrorism will be strengthened. The summit will welcome the outcome of the counter-terrorism political dialogue meeting, which took place in Moscow in November. The EU and Russia will build upon this successful meeting to give further impetus to counter-terrorism cooperation and strengthen cooperation on the prevention of terrorism, in particular radicalisation, the promotion of criminal justice and rule of law, combating of terrorist financing as well as bilateral cooperation in multilateral fora such as the UN and the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF).

A dialogue on consumer policy will also be established, through a memorandum of understanding between the Commission and the Russian consumer enforcement agency Rospotrebnadzor. The arrangement is designed to promote mutual understanding and strengthen the exchange of information on the consumer policies of both partners.

Finally, a new administrative arrangement on **cooperation on civil protection** has been prepared. It will broaden the scope of cooperation on civil protection to cover not only cooperation during emergencies, but also prevention and preparedness.

A growing economic relationship

Economic ties between Russia and the EU have grown substantially over the last years and Russia's WTO accession in August 2012 will further increase business opportunities. Russia remains the EU's third most important trading partner (after the US and China), with 108 billion EUR in exports to Russia (7 % of all EU exports, 4th place after US, China, Switzerland) and 199 billion EUR in imports in 2011 (11.8 % of all EU imports, 2nd place after China). The EU is thus by far the largest market for Russian goods, accounting for roughly half of Russian exports in 2011. The EU is also the main supplier for Russia, with a 43 % market share, followed by China and Ukraine.

In 2011, both imports and exports rose by around 25 % and have continued to increase in the first nine months of 2012. More specifically, Russia is the EU's most important single supplier of energy products, accounting for 29 % of EU consumption of oil and gas. In turn, Russia's economy remains highly dependent on the export of energy raw materials, with the EU as its most important destination. In 2011, 79 % of Russia's exports to the EU consisted of crude oil, oil products and natural gas.

In 2010, EU stocks of foreign investment in Russia were estimated at 120 billion EUR. This is more than EU foreign investment stocks in China and India combined.

Citizens' mobility

Negotiations on an upgraded visa facilitation agreement are close to conclusion. The updated agreement would extend the categories of beneficiaries of visa facilitations among others to representatives of civil society organisations and a broader spectrum of family members. Long-term multiple-entry visas would be foreseen in more cases than under the present agreement and wider groups of visa applicants would benefit from visa fee waivers. The present visa facilitation agreement entered into force in 2007. It provides EU and Russian citizens with a lower visa fee, wider issuance of multiple-entry visas as well as simplified supporting documents.

The implementation of the "Common Steps towards visa-free short-term travel", launched at the Summit in December 2011, is well underway. They concern actions revolving around document security, for example the introduction of biometric passports; combating illegal immigration and border management; public order, security and judicial cooperation, including the fight against transnational organized crime, terrorism and corruption as well as human rights. Once the Common Steps are fully implemented, a decision on the launch of negotiations on a visa waiver agreement can be taken.

In addition, a bilateral local border traffic agreement between Poland and Russia entered into force in July 2012. This agreement which now includes certain parts of the Polish border area and the entire Kaliningrad region is a significant improvement for citizens on both sides of the borders.

Financial cooperation

Financial cooperation with Russia began in the early 1990s, under the TACIS programme. To help smooth Russia's transition towards a market economy, a total of around €2.8 billion of assistance has been provided since 1991.

Financial cooperation has evolved in line with overall economic developments and is now supporting the EU-Russia common spaces and the Partnership for Modernisation. Projects and programmes are largely co-financed by both the EU and Russia. Emphasis is on cross-border cooperation, the Northern Dimension partnership, and higher education with Erasmus Mundus and Tempus supporting mobility of students and teaching staff.

EU-Russia relations - background

The legal basis for EU relations with Russia is the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) which came into force on 1 December 1997 for an initial duration of 10 years, and which has been automatically extended beyond 2007 on an annual basis. It sets the principal common objectives, establishes the institutional framework for bilateral contacts, and calls for activities and dialogue in a number of areas.

The EU is currently working with Russia on a new agreement to replace the PCA. Both the EU and Russia have experienced many political, economic and social changes since the entry into force of the PCA in 1997. The new agreement must reflect these changes as well as the new challenges linked to globalisation.

Since 2005, the EU and Russia have held regular, six-monthly human rights consultations. They have provided for a substantial dialogue on human rights issues in Russia and the EU and on EU-Russian cooperation on human rights issues in international fora.

The last meeting took place on 7 December 2012. The EU raised issues including the rule of law and the situation of civil society in Russia - notably in light of the laws on NGOs - media freedom and the harassment of human rights defenders and opposition leaders. It also deplored the lack of investigation into several criminal cases. For more details, see [press release](#).

The Partnership for Modernisation was launched at the June 2010 summit when priority areas for cooperation were identified. They are set out in work plans, which are now being implemented. These priorities include investment, trade, promoting SMEs, alignment of technical regulations and standards, research and development, promoting the effective functioning of the judiciary and strengthening the fight against corruption as well as the dialogue with civil society.

At the St. Petersburg summit in May 2003, the EU and Russia agreed to reinforce their cooperation by creating four "common spaces":

- the Common Economic Space aiming to make the EU and Russia's economies more compatible to boost investment and trade;
 - the Common Space on Freedom, Security and Justice covering justice, home affairs, the rule of law and human rights;
 - the Common Space on External Security aiming to enhance cooperation on foreign policy and security issues; and
 - the Common Space on Research, Education and Culture designed to promote scientific, educational and cultural cooperation.
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