

Seven EU Countries Support Lifting Sanctions on Russia

By [ITAR-TASS](#)

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Seven EU countries support the lifting of Western sanctions on Russia, a diplomatic source in Brussels told TASS on Thursday.

“The sanctions’ lifting has been supported by Austria, Hungary, Italy, Cyprus, Slovakia, France and the Czech Republic,” he said.

A European diplomatic source close to the EU Council told TASS previously that foreign ministers of 28 EU member countries would not make any decisions on sanctions against Russia at their first meeting this year in Brussels on January 19. “Russia, of course, will be on the agenda of the Council (EU Council on Foreign Relations), but the specific issue of the sanctions – whether they should be cancelled, softened, renewed or not – will not be raised. The decision on sanctions should be taken in March,” he said.

According to another source, although no concrete decisions on sanctions are expected at the upcoming ministerial meeting, “the tone of this issue discussion should be softened.” “Ministers will most likely be preparing the ground for softening the sanctions regime. Perhaps the time has come,” said the diplomat.

The Wall Street Journal previously reported with reference to a document prepared by the EU foreign policy service that became available to WSJ reporters that the European Union was ready to soften the anti-Russian sanctions and for partial normalisation of relations with Russia if Moscow changes its stance on the situation in Ukraine. The newspaper says this document should be considered by the participants in the meeting of the EU foreign ministers in Brussels on January 19. The document will be presented in the next few days to the EU member states’ foreign ministers.

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