

EU and Russia Shrink Planned Summit to Short Meeting

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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BRUSSELS — A long-planned summit between President Vladimir Putin and the European Union leadership has been reduced to a short meeting in the wake of their confrontation over Ukraine's future.

The summit was initially meant to feature a joint dinner and to last until the following afternoon, but now the meeting with European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and others in Brussels on Jan. 28 will only last about 2 1/2 hours, according to the EU.

The format has been changed "in light of the recent developments," and participants will have an "in-depth reflection" about the EU-Russia relationship rather than a discussion about specific issues, Commission spokeswoman Maja Kocijancic said.

Russia in November last year lured Ukraine with financial incentives, including a \$15 billion bailout loan, to snub the 28-nation bloc and seek closer cooperation with Moscow instead.

The Ukrainian leadership's last-minute decision to side with Russia sparked weeks-long anti-government protests in Kiev and elsewhere in the country. The protests drew hundreds of thousands in the early weeks, and most recently still drew more than 20,000 into the streets on Sunday.

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