

EU Lifts Belarus-Related Sanctions on Russian Billionaire Gutseriev – RFE/RL

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Mikhail Gutseriev. **Arseniy Neskhodimov (CC BY-SA 4.0)**

The European Union has removed Russian billionaire Mikhail Gutseriev and Belarusian businessman Viktor Shevtsov from its Belarus sanctions list following successful court challenges, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Belarusian service [reported](#) Wednesday.

Both men had been sanctioned over alleged support for President Alexander Lukashenko's government. Their removal follows rulings that the EU Council had failed to provide sufficient evidence to justify keeping the restrictions in place.

Gutseriev remains subject to separate EU sanctions linked to Russia's war in Ukraine. He was added to that list on July 23, with the EU Council citing his involvement in industries that generate substantial revenue for the Russian government and investment projects that support it.

Shevtsov is not subject to any other EU sanctions, RFE/RL reported.

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Gutseriev initially failed to overturn the Belarus sanctions. The EU's General Court rejected his challenge in September 2023, and the Court of Justice dismissed his appeal in May 2025.

But the General Court annulled his 2024 sanctions renewals in October 2025, followed by the February 2025 renewal on May 13 this year.

The court found that the EU Council had not provided sufficient evidence that Gutseriev continued to support Lukashenko's government or benefit from his ties to it.

The EU first sanctioned Gutseriev on June 21, 2021, describing him as a longtime friend of Lukashenko. It cited his investments in Belarus, including the Nezhinsky mining and processing complex, and his attendance at Lukashenko's September 2020 inauguration.

Gutseriev founded the Safmar group, whose interests span oil production, coal, real estate, retail and media. Forbes [estimates](#) his net worth at \$7.7 billion.

The decision follows the EU's removal of Russian billionaires Alisher Usmanov and Mikhail Fridman from its sanctions list in September after pressure from France and Luxembourg.

Bloomberg [reported](#) that Luxembourg pushed for Fridman's removal after he filed a \$16 billion arbitration claim over frozen assets. France sought to lift sanctions on Usmanov as part of negotiations with Azerbaijan to secure the release of French nationals held there.

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