



PEOPLE'S NEWS

News Digest of the People's Movement

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Why so much warmongering in the EU?



Anxiety and anger about the future of the EU has been on the rise for some time now. The union has been in the grips of a deepening crisis – or rather multiple deepening crises: a cost-of-living crisis, a housing crisis, a migration crisis, a sluggish growth crisis, and above all, a political crisis. It faces a significant challenge from the right, which is surging in the polls in many EU countries, threatening to upend the fragile EU cohesion and “liberal values”. The Freedom Party won the Austrian elections with 30 percent of the vote. They may still be excluded from the government formation process, but its other European iterations are in power or propping up a government in 9 out of the 27 EU countries.

Unsurprisingly, the response of the EU political leadership to these mounting crises has been not to address their root causes, which all boil down to the destructive neoliberal policies they have happily embraced. Instead, their reaction has been to warmonger, perhaps hoping that the prospect of war can help the people of the EU to forget their grievances.

[Read more here](#)

ECJ ‘Competence creep’ removes our independence re sanctions



The European Court of Justice (ECJ) expanded its jurisdiction over sanctions enforcement under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The case concerned a Romanian company, accused of violating EU sanctions by brokering a sale of Russian-made radio stations through a Ukrainian intermediary, despite EU sanctions. Romanian customs seized the proceeds and fined the company.

The Court ruled that the ECJ has broad jurisdiction to interpret EU law on economic sanctions, even if related actions occur outside the EU. The Court ruled that any exceptions to its jurisdiction must be narrowly interpreted. Importantly, the Court confirmed that sanctions apply extraterritorially to prevent circumvention. It also upheld the confiscation of proceeds, stating that limitations on property rights are necessary to ensure compliance with sanctions. This ruling strengthens the ECJ’s role in ensuring the effectiveness of EU sanctions and clarifies its authority over national – including Irish - measures implementing such sanctions.

**PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT
GLUISEACHT AN PHOBAIL** 

The next monthly protest against EU Militarisation
will be held on **Wednesday November 20th** at Dáil Eireann,
Kildare St. commencing at 1:00pm.

No to an EU army!

Withdraw from PESCO now!

No to EU Battlegroups!

Keep the Triple Lock

Try to get along, if only for a short period.

Defend the triple lock guarantee against involvement in foreign wars!



Defence of the Triple Lock, which prevents Irish troops being sent abroad without a United Nations mandate is our only sure guarantee against involvement in foreign wars, and is the most important foreign and security policy issue facing the people of this country in the coming period.

Abolishing the Triple Lock would be a significant symbolic blow to the authority of the United

Nations, which Ireland has always supported, at a time when that authority is being challenged as never before over the carnage in Gaza and Lebanon.

[Read more here](#)

[Saving the Triple Lock: The Neutrality Hawks v. The Government of Ireland](#)

The EU Commission sees transparency as a nuisance – O'Reilly



The EU Commission's secret approach to its €700 billion post-Covid recovery fund is giving rise to conspiracy theories about potential misuse. Auditing bodies and civil society groups have complained that the Commission and member states are hiding information on how capitals are using their post-pandemic cash. This lack of transparency has triggered speculation that the money was captured by big business and criminal organisations. We don't know, because we don't have this information. If you're not transparent, there is no trust and people start to compile different stories.

The outgoing EU Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly said that the Commission sees "transparency as a nuisance, and something that stops the Commission from getting on with its business." Each member country has [published a list](#) of the top 100 beneficiaries of its recovery spending. But many capitals provided scant details on who are the final recipients of the funding, and how they'll spend the cash. You can find details of the Irish disbursement [here](#) and [here](#)

Pfizergate rumbles on – von der Leyen is tight-lipped.



Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, has remained silent for over two years regarding her text messages with Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla, which were exchanged prior to the EU's substantial COVID vaccine contract with the company. This secrecy raises significant concerns about the

negotiation process, particularly as the number of doses increased and the price per vaccine reportedly rose by 25%.

In a last attempt to defend its position over its obfuscation of the contracts, the Commission is challenging an EU court decision reached in July. The appeal will be heard in Europe's highest court, the Court of Justice, although a date has not been set. In parallel, the Court of Justice will hear details of a second case next month — the “Pfizergate” legal battle over access to alleged text messages between von der Leyen and Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla in the run-up to the EU’s Covid-19 vaccine deal.

[Read more here](#)

Poland says No!



Those who cheered on Donald Tusk’s victory in last year’s Polish elections as a victory for pro-EU forces must have been badly shocked when the former president of the European Council (2014–19) announced that the country would temporarily suspend the right to asylum. This precedes the

Polish government announcing its new migration strategy tomorrow.

This sets up an obvious with the EU as Art. 18 of the EU’s charter of fundamental rights guarantees the right to asylum in the EU. He has said that he will demand that the EU recognises this decision. He also intimated that Poland might not follow the new migration pact agreed last year, saying specifically:

“We will not respect or implement any European or EU ideas if we are sure that they harm our security.”

Increasing hostility to migration is a serious threat to EU integration, with Germany temporarily closing its borders, whilst the Netherlands has asked for a derogation from the EU’s migration rules. It is just another indication of the internal contradictions of the EU and the re-emergence of state sovereignty – even if we are not comfortable with some of the reasons

The effective rule of EU law is often only as effective as member states want it to be. In this instance, many of them have decided that they do not want some of the union’s basic principles to apply to them anymore. But it is hard to imagine a functional EU without the Schengen area, or a charter of fundamental rights that everyone applies.



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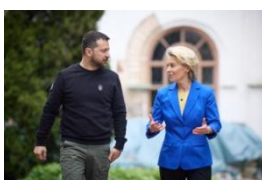
Further divisions in the EU



A more dangerous conflict for the EU is one that threatens to divide the Union. Unlike the conflict in Ukraine, which has largely kept the 27 member states on the same page, the Middle East conflict is far more polarising. The unfolding conflict in the Middle East, which led to horrendous destruction and loss of life in Gaza and southern Lebanon antagonises societies across the EU and has impacted national politics.

The divisions came to the fore immediately. When EU Commission President von der Leyen hot-footed it to Israel days after the 7 October attack, she was accused of having an unacceptable level of bias even by her staff. You can read the recent EU Council's decisions in this regard [here](#) and Read more [here](#)

Ukrainian military cooperation with the EU



In March 2024, it became known that the integration and support of Ukrainian military industries had become one of the goals of the European Defense Industrial Strategy (EDIS). Then, last month, the Ukrainian Minister of Defense and Ursula von der Leyen opened the EU Office for Defense Innovation in Kyiv. The aim is to ensure interaction between Union's start-ups and Ukraine's military industry.

The Ukrainian Minister of Defense reported; "This is a new stage in our relations with the EU in the field of defense technologies. The aim of the strategy is to strengthen the European defense technology industrial base so that the EU defense industry would be able to meet the needs of member states in a timely manner and in sufficient quantities. Our country has a huge potential in defense technologies, and I urge our European partners to invest in Ukrainian producers. Together, we can significantly strengthen the defense capabilities of not only Ukraine, but the whole of Europe."

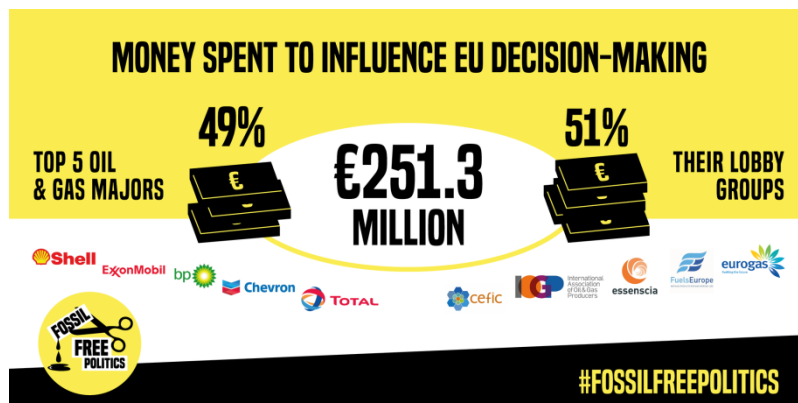
Ukraine has rapidly become a global leader in drone technology. Today, more than 500 drone manufacturers and thousands of developers create advanced solutions for combat operations. With an annual production of up to 3 million drones, Ukraine has established itself as a major producer and EU warmongers want a slice of the cake.

The EU's "irregular spending!"



The EU's spending watchdog estimated in [its annual review](#), that 5.6 percent of the EU budget in 2023 was spent in a way that broke the rules — euphemistically referred to as "irregular" spending. This marks an increase from 4.2 percent in the previous year. The president of the EU Court of Auditors, Tony Murphy warned about skyrocketing EU debt and told reporters he's not a fan of tentative Commission plans to shape the next seven-year EU budget in the image of the post-pandemic recovery pot. That model makes it "extremely difficult" to check money is being well spent! Murphy is obviously being very diplomatic!

Big oil's influence on EU climate policy



You might think the EU's climate policies are focused on cutting emissions and going green – but Big Oil has other plans. Behind the scenes, big oil and gas companies have been meeting with top EU officials, quietly shifting the European Green Deal in their favour. The result is a

climate strategy that's starting to look a lot more like an industrial boost for fossil fuels.

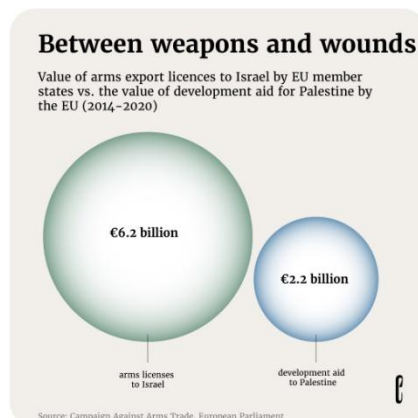
Big Oil's influence over EU climate policy surged massively during Ursula von der Leyen's last Commission term, with over 900 meetings between fossil fuel companies such as Shell and BP on one hand, and high-level EU officials on the other, since 2019. The consequences are evident: through intensive lobbying, Big Oil shifted the European Green Deal from its original decarbonisation focus, turning it into an industrial strategy that increasingly favours fossil fuel interests.

Technologies like carbon capture and hydrogen, heavily promoted by the fossil fuel industry, are now central to the EU's energy transition narrative. And though they're marketed as climate solutions, they still enable continued reliance on fossil fuels, delaying the complete phase-out that scientists deem critical for meeting the EU's climate goals.

Irish taxpayers will be funding EU weapons companies



The [Irish Times reports](#) that Irish taxpayers will be funding EU weapons companies, many of which supply Israel to the tune of about €12 million as part of a €1 billion European Union initiative to “replenish ammunition and missile stockpiles of member states.” The Act in Support of Ammunition Production (Asap) was drafted last year as an urgent measure to increase munitions production in Europe by offering incentives to arms manufacturers. It's an example of the coalition's "neutrality normal"



Weapons up, welfare down – an old story



Switzerland's finances are in the red. The country faces a CHF 3 billion (€ 3.2 billion) annual deficit over the coming years, driven by increased spending on the military and state pensions. The government's response? Give more money to the army and less to social welfare programs. Last month, the Swiss government approved an additional € 4.3 billion for the army's 2025–2028 budgets. Meanwhile, the Federal Council has announced measures to reduce spending by € 3.8 billion annually from 2027.

The most extensive cuts will affect contributions to childcare, refugee integration and climate protection. Switzerland's defence budget increase aligns with a broader European trend. In 2021, only six met NATO's defence spending benchmark of 2% of GDP. By mid-2024, this number had surged to twenty-three, with Poland leading the way, aiming to allocate 5% of GDP to its defence by 2025.

Giants Rheinmetall, Leonardo to launch EU military – industrial complex



Italy's Leonardo and Germany's Rheinmetall have launched a joint venture to develop and manufacture military combat vehicles, in a key step for consolidation in the EU military sector. "This initiative is part of the European game to be stronger in the framework of the Atlantic Alliance (NATO), the Leonardo CEO said.

The deal comes at a time when EU defence companies, benefiting from higher military budgets, appear set for a new wave of large mergers after decades of smaller acquisitions. "We are creating a new heavyweight in European tank production... we are joining forces to carry out ambitious projects," Rheinmetall's CEO said. He added that as countries move to renew thousands of ageing vehicles and replenish military stock, the newly-formed partnership could capitalise on an EU market worth more than 50 billion euros in the coming years alone.

A surprise judgement



Campaigners from Western Sahara have welcomed a ruling by the EU Court of Justice (ECJ) declaring that a trade deal between the European Union and Morocco over fishing rights breached their right to self-determination. The sustainable fisheries partnership agreement concluded between the EU and Morocco entered into force on 18 July 2019 and covers territory in the Western Sahara.

Occupied by Morocco since 1975, the territory has been claimed by the native Sahrawis, while the Algeria-backed Polisario Front has fought against the Moroccan state for independence for decades. Hundreds of thousands of Sahrawi refugees live across the border in camps in Algeria, while independence campaigners in Western Sahara have faced repeated repression by Moroccan authorities. **Read more [here](#)**

EU, Ireland and Ukraine



EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Josep Borrell has said that the EU will extend the mandate of the EU Training Mission (EUMAM) for the Ukrainian military for the next two years. EUMAM is a programme established by the EU in October 2022 to provide training for Ukrainian military personnel. The mission primarily operates in Poland and Germany, offering instruction to Ukrainian servicemen. Borrell emphasised the pressing need for this extension, saying that the “Ukrainian Armed Forces are under great pressure along the entire front line,” which has expanded compared to early summer.

Separately, Volodimir Zelenskyy and Simon Harris signed an Agreement on Support for Ukraine and Cooperation between the two countries. Ireland has provided humanitarian and non-lethal military aid, totalling €380 million. This year, Ireland has provided an additional €128 million in non-lethal support - up to 30 Irish personnel - and at least €40 million in humanitarian aid. It will also supply mine clearance systems and explosive disposal equipment. Additionally, Ireland will explore other potential support within the capability coalitions of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, such as the IT Coalition and ensure ongoing training of the Ukrainian Army through EUMAM.

Plan to merge CAP and cohesion funds – another Brussels power grab



A proposal from the European Commission to create a mega-fund by merging cohesion policy and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in the next EU budget (2028-2034), has triggered strong reactions from several member states.

According to a source. “It is a risky game and almost certainly death to the EU’s regional policy. “Centralising EU funds would give “an awful amount of power to a limited group of people,” cutting the direct link between regions and Brussels. According to the plan, member states would need to fulfil certain conditions in order to access the funds, such as “promoting organic farming” to get the CAP’s direct payments.

Potential terrorists



A “potential terrorist” is somebody “who has disseminated to the public or shared any terrorist content” according to one of the definitions proposed by the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security of the Council of the EU. On the face of it, any videos from Hezbollah or Hamas could qualify.

Member states are being encouraged to enter details of these “terrorists” in an EU databases without any evidence. One of these is the Schengen Information System and the other the Europol Information System. Ireland has been integrated into the former since 2021.

We tried unsuccessfully to access the proceedings of the meeting that made these decisions and have now made a request to the Council for full information. So, we’ll return to the subject, though Statewatch has it covered [here](#)

A sweetener for accepting Mercosur



Politico reports that the EU Commission is working on a new budget fund to compensate farmers for any negative impact from the EU-Mercosur agreement, hoping it will help overcome French resistance to the trade deal. The plan comes as the EU aims to finalise the agreement at the G20 leaders' summit in Rio de Janeiro Nov. 18-19.

Crucially, the compensation fund is already being welcomed by France, the biggest opponent of the Mercosur deal although France likely lacks the power to block the Mercosur agreement in a vote among EU countries, officials stress they want to avoid having to impose the trade deal against the will of the EU's second-largest economy — which could fuel Euroscepticism.

The Mercosur compensation fund could also placate concerns in other skeptical EU countries like Ireland or Austria though the IFA has demanded that new Irish MEPs must treat Mercosur as a 'red line issue.' A similar compensation fund for the Mercosur deal was already floated by former Commissioner Big Phil Hogan in 2019. It's unclear, though, whether the fund would ultimately be needed, as the deal on the table already seeks to address the concerns of farmers, for example by setting a quota on beef imports. Instead it could help placate concerns about the agreement, similar to the €5.4billion Brexit adjustment reserve in 2021, which was ultimately little used

Another Brussels power grab on the road to a federal EU



The EU Commission is floating plans to link money disbursed from its next long-term budget, which runs from 2028-2034, to how well countries implement key economic reforms, von der Leyen is laying out how she plans to pressure countries to implement key economic reforms if they want to access the EU's €1.2 trillion seven-year cash pot. Brussels would impose far more stringent conditions than in previous budgets.

Some 530 programs currently in place for each EU country will be lumped into a single national cash pot, which will determine spending in sectors ranging from farm subsidies to social housing, according to the text. The document states that countries will have to address the gender gap to receive money for social housing or promote organic farming to access agricultural funding — a move that is likely to stir dissent among farmers who rely on EU subsidies. EU countries will have to unanimously approve the new budget before the end of 2027 and dissent is already building.

Freedom of conscience



Connect Trade Union passed the following resolution at its recent Biennial Delegate Conference in Athlone: "That Connect, in concert with like-minded unions seek and support immediate legislation to insert a clause in the 1990 Act providing for conscientious objection to cooperation in the movement of weaponry, munitions, troops destined for warzones or any activities that might support the execution of war crimes or genocide."

