



PEOPLE'S NEWS

News Digest of the People's Movement

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Another nail in the coffin of neutrality!

Lieutenant
General
Seán Clancy



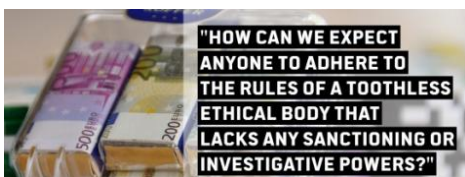
The Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces Lt Gen Sean Clancy has been appointed as chair of the EU military committee (EUMC). He will have a team of up to ten members of the Defence Forces as support staff.

The EUMC is the highest military body within the EU and was established in January 2001. The committee directs all military activity by the EU and in particular, military activities associated with the Common Security and Defence Policy.

The EUMC is composed of the chiefs of defense of EU member countries. Its role is to give advice on the planning and execution of the bloc's military missions and operations and to give military advice to the Political and Security Committee, a body made up of EU ambassadors that deals with defense and security affairs and the highest military body established in the Council.

[Read more here](#)

How typically EU!



A new EU ethics body has been established with the professed objective of curtailing scandals and keeping the EU institutions free from corruption.

"Upholding integrity and independence within all

European institutions is crucial for maintaining public trust and impartial decision making," said Vera Jourova, EU transparency commissioner. "To be truly inter institutional, this body is common and open to all EU institution and bodies," she added, noting that the body will reinforce a shared culture of ethical standards across institutions.

But years of debate and outright opposition by some have soured its initial ambitions, leaving the body without any investigative powers. The body won't cover the European Council or the activities and officials of the member state holding the EU's six month rotating presidency!

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European Defence Fund opens €1.1B calls for 2024



The European Defence Fund (EDF) has opened 2024 calls worth €1.1 billion, slightly down from €1.2 billion in 2023. Industry has until 5 November 2024 to put together consortia and submit proposals to take part in projects ranging from unmanned aircraft to secure space communications

The European Defence Fund (EDF) has opened 2024 calls worth €1.1 billion, slightly down from €1.2 billion in 2023. Industry has until 5 November 2024 to put together consortia and submit proposals. One of the largest amounts of funding is for air combat at €150 million, closely followed by ground combat at €130 million. The latter includes intelligent weaponry and ammunition systems, and a next-generation armoured infantry fighting vehicle.

The 2024 work programme also includes €225 million for the EU Defence Innovation Scheme (EUDIS), a subset of the EDF which provides support to companies in bringing their ideas to defence end users as the development of an EU military –industrial complex gathers pace. The proposed EDF budget was originally €13 billion for 2021-2027, but it was cut to €8 billion because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, an additional €1.5 billion is set to be transferred to the Commission’s proposed [European Defence Industry Programme](#).

With friends like these!



[An Irish pro-militarisation](#) group lobbying government to increase state participation in the arms trade has finally admitted to having four international arms manufacturers among its members. Lockheed Martin, Saab, KNDS and Patria are members of the Irish Defence and Security Association (IDSA), which has lobbied government nine times to discuss defence – [including an encounter that the Department of Defence failed to record](#). UCD professor Ben Tonra, Azure Forum for Contemporary Security Strategy executive director Cairtriona Heint and former Irish soldier Pat O’Connor established IDSA in September 2021.

IDSA member Lockheed Martin is among the largest weapons manufacturers in the world, with net sales of \$17.4 billion in the first quarter of 2024 alone. The Israel Defense Forces has used Lockheed Martin weaponry in its current campaign in Gaza, including [missiles](#) used to [kill children and medics](#). Military equipment produced by IDSA member Patria [has also been used in the Yemen war](#).

[Clare Daly on peace, neutrality and the militarisation of the EU](#)

Away with national boundaries!

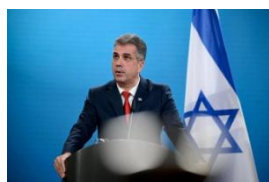


EU member states formally established the [European Union Diplomatic Academy](#) (EUDA) last week. This will train diplomats and officials to develop a true EU diplomatic corps that thinks

beyond national boundaries and promotes federalism. The academy “should ultimately contribute to the creation of a critical mass of European diplomats with a deeper understanding of the Union’s global role ... able to perform effectively when posted in Brussels, Union Delegations or in their national structures.”

And [here's](#) what Micheál Martin thinks of sovereignty

Has this Commission any commitment to combating racism?



Why did the EU Commission invite Israeli foreign minister Israel Katz to give a keynote speech at [the EU's conference on combating racism, antisemitism and xenophobia](#)? This is the same Katz who threatened us last week: "Today I am sending a strong message to Ireland and Norway that Israel will not silently ignore this issue" - recognition of a Palestinian state.

He is a racist and xenophobe, whose rhetoric was [cited](#) by judges in The Hague to justify their assessment that Gazans were plausibly threatened with genocide by Israel.

[Read more here](#)

Is Macron the last hope for those who are opposed to Mercosur?



The free trade deal between the European Union and the South American trade bloc Mercosur would be the world's largest such agreement, affecting a total of 780 million people. But in late March, French President Emmanuel Macron not only described it as "a very bad agreement," he even suggested it should be "left behind" and called for "a new agreement."

The agreement between the EU and Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela, which was actually finalised five years ago, **remains on hold**. History is repeating itself: France also blocked the agreement in 2019. Back then, it was in response to the far-right Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro and his controversial policies in the Amazon rainforest.

[Read more here](#)

The European Investment Bank to finance military industry

European Investment Bank will soon finance military industry



The EU's lending arm has changed its long-standing policy on not investing in military products, by waiving restrictions on dual-use investments.

The board of directors of the European Investment Bank (EIB) approved an "updated definition of dual-use goods and infrastructure eligible for EIB Group financing," scrapping its minimum threshold for expected revenues from civilian applications or share of civilian users within any defence-related investment, they said in **their statement**.

Until now, its dual-use lending criteria restricted the bank's investment into defence-related projects to those civilian applications that exceed their military use. EU finance ministers, including Pascal Donohue, who serve as EIB's directors, agreed to "facilitate financing" for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) involved in military activities, "by opening up dedicated intermediated financing."

The move would expand its ability to invest in products and technologies used only by the armed forces, including cybersecurity, radars, satellite technology, infrastructure, and equipment – to the extent they do not imply lethal risk. The EIB already had financing of €6 billion under the Strategic European Security Strategy. Ireland's paid –in capital to the EIB stands at € 146,220,406.

Do you recognise this man? Should we be concerned?



The EU Commission is intending to fund 54 additional European Defence Fund (EDF) projects worth €1 billion, which will bring the total EU budgetary investments to more than €3 billion in collaborative military R&D projects since the start of the EDF Regulation in May 2021.

Irish firms were successful in tendering for two projects. The man on the left is currently the only shareholder and director of Applied Intelligence Analytics, one of the successful companies, a board member of Sport Ireland; a member of the Anti Doping Committee and a governor of the Cork Institute of Technology.

[Read more here](#)



Is Ursula von der Leyen complicit in genocide?



The International Criminal Court [has been officially called on](#) by the Geneva International Peace Research Institute to investigate Ursula von der Leyen for complicity.

It maintains that reasonable grounds exist to believe that the unconditional support of the President of the European Commission to Israel – military, economic, diplomatic and political – has enabled war crimes and the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

The communication documents in detail the fact that Mrs. Ursula von der Leyen personally is criminally responsible and liable for punishment for some of the war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide having been committed (and still being committed) by the Israeli armed forces in Gaza, to the extent that she has aided, abetted and otherwise assisted in the commission or attempted commission of such crimes, including providing the means for its commission, in the meaning of Article 25(3)(c) of the Rome Statute of the ICC. Mrs. von der Leyen enjoys no functional immunity before the ICC by virtue of article 27 of the Rome Statute.

Under the radar

Among the issues that may sway voters during the upcoming EU parliamentary elections is the Union's public embrace of war politics, which has been at the forefront of events in Brussels during the previous five-year cycle. Far from public view, however, the EU has, in fact, been driving a war agenda for decades. For the past twenty years, the



EU has been deploying military-mandated missions overseas – many of which Ireland participated in - that have gone virtually under the radar and generally evaded public scrutiny. The TNI's new report '[Under the Radar: Twenty years of EU military missions](#)' sheds light on these missions.

Brig Gen Ger Aherne was general officer commanding the Western Brigade who completed an EU-backed training programme for the Somalian military in 2013. Here he is seen at left above greeting Somali soldiers as they return from a training mission in Uganda.

Exporting banned Chemicals



The EU Commission pledged to address one of the most unethical trading practices in the EU: the export of banned chemicals to third countries. [CEO'S new report](#) outlines the main arguments put forward by the chemical and pesticides industry lobby to keep this deadly trade flowing and block the proposal to ban the export of forbidden chemicals.

“Pfizergate” haunts von der Leyen

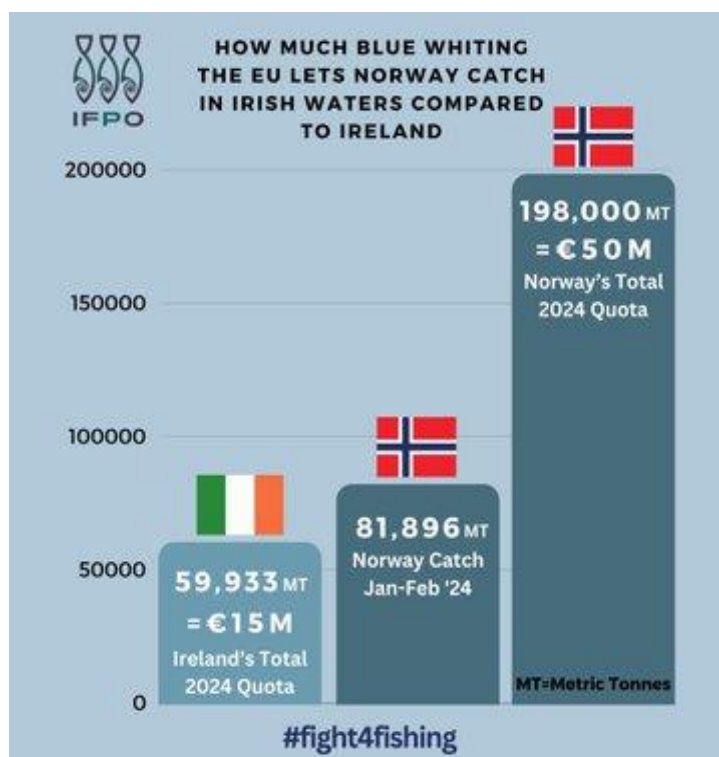


The walls may finally be closing in on EU Commission President von der Leyen even as the EU begins to mobilise its mass censorship regime for the upcoming EU elections. There was always a risk that von der Leyen’s candidacy for re-election would be over-shadowed by the multiple lawsuits she faces over the “Pfizergate” scandal.

Politico reports that EU prosecutors have taken over a Belgian criminal probe into alleged wrong-doing in connection with vaccine negotiations between von der Leyen and the CEO of Pfizer, Albert Bourla. The probe was originally opened by Belgian judicial authorities in early 2023 following a criminal complaint lodged by local lobbyist. His complaint centered on an alleged exchange of text messages between von der Leyen and Pfizer boss Albert Bourla in the run-up to the EU’s mega vaccine deal, which had an estimated value of over €20 billion, at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.” *POLITICO* revealed that there was at least €4 billion worth of wasted doses.

The New York Times, which first revealed that the exchange has launched a parallel lawsuit against the Commission after it refused to disclose the content of the messages. The latest development comes at a delicate moment for the EU’s chief, as she navigates the transition to what may be a second term at the head of the EU.

The last time she faced a criminal investigation, she was promoted to EU Commission President. As such, even if she does lose her current job or is prevented from being reappointed for a second term, she will probably land a new one that is at least as good, if not better — such as, say, NATO chief. She has already amply shown she has a taste for war and is blissfully beholden to US interests.



Migrant pacts and the EU



The Lighthouse Reports on the EU's migration pact highlights human rights abuses in African countries that it has deals with. They remind us that those pacts not only fly in the face of the EU's own stated values, they also don't solve the problem.

In a year-long investigation in collaboration with Der Spiegel, El Pais and Le Monde, they found evidence that the EU is funding, and in some cases contributing directly, to systematic racial profiling, detention, and expulsion of black communities across at least three North African countries. In Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia, refugees and workers are reportedly apprehended and loaded on buses to be left with nothing to drink or eat in arid desert areas.

They also found EU involvement extending to the provision of equipment, intelligence and security personnel. Human rights are not assessed as part of 'migration management' projects abroad, the Commission confirmed – with officials in Brussels reportedly stating it is "impossible" to account for how funding is used.

Yet the EU presented Mauritania with additional funds last year and, as recently as February, unveiled a further €210 million to Tunisia. Meanwhile, other migration deals are in place with third countries such as Egypt, Türkiye, and Lebanon. Following the EU's Pact on Migration and Asylum, member states are now calling for further partnerships.

Monthly protest against EU Militarisation

There will be no protest in June as the Dáil will be in recess and a number of regular attendees will be away. The next protest will be on July 17th. Please note change of venue. We will return to the Dáil when it reconvenes.

PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT
GLUISEACHT AN PHOBAIL



No to EU Militarisation and an EU Army!

Neutrality is our best defence.

The Peoples Movement will hold its monthly protest on

Wednesday 17th July 2024 at 1:00pm

Outside EU Commission Offices,

12-14 Lower Mount Street.

You can find a map here: https://ireland.representation.ec.europa.eu/about-us/contact-us_en

Please try to get along – it is important!

Placards and posters will be provided.

The “common sense” language of austerity



As the EU’s new fiscal rules begin to bite and increased resources are diverted to the EU armaments industries we will hear again the term “austerity;” stirring up memories of ward closures etc. There are many examples, such as “labor flexibility” or “reducing wages” or economic “rationality,” or when the people

are asked to “tighten their belts.”

So, it is worth considering the word “austerity,” which in everyday discourse is used in opposition to “waste,” as something good, a virtue to be practiced. It would follow from this statement that governments should be austere in their management of collective resources, just as families are when they manage their own budget. With that same common sense, applied to the management of public accounts, it’s assumed that income and expenses should tend to balance, that a good government shouldn’t spend more than it is able to collect, and that, in line with this statement, a central objective of economic policy should be to reduce levels of debt and public deficits.

[Read more here](#)

Von der Leyen in bed with the chemical industry



In recent years, the EU has tried to set up rules to protect the climate and the environment in many powerful industries, sometimes with success. However, the chemical industry is almost completely exempt from this - it has fought with all its might against restrictions on the production and sale of highly problematic chemicals and pesticides.

The outrage is all the greater that the chemical industry is now allowed to hold an exclusive summit with the President of the Commission von der Leyen, the Belgian Prime Minister De Croo and high-ranking business representatives - organised by the current Belgian Council Presidency at the BASF site in Antwerp. It is reminiscent of the much-criticised car summit in Germany, at which the German government was accused of being one-sided and too close.

[Read more here](#)

