

# After the European elections: EU summit intensifies war against Russia

Peter Schwarz  
30 June 2024

Following their devastating defeats in the European elections, European governments are stepping up their pro-war policy. The EU summit on 27 June was dominated by the further escalation of the war in Ukraine against Russia. The more widespread the rejection of the war among the population, the more ruthlessly those in power are pushing ahead with it.

Especially in the two largest EU member states, Germany and France, those in power received a drubbing. In Germany, Chancellor Scholz's Social Democrats (SPD) saw their worst national election result in 127 years. The two other governing parties, the Greens and the Liberal Democrats (FDP), also suffered massive losses. In France, President Macron's electoral alliance received less than 15 percent, not even half the vote received by the far-right Rassemblement National (National Rally—RN).

The rejection of the war in Ukraine played an important part in these election defeats. Far-right parties were able to capitalise on the fact that many of the supposedly “left-wing” parties supported the war.

The EU summit took a series of decisions to ensure that the war against Russia continues, despite its unpopularity and the political crisis in the US, even if this involves enormous costs, the deployment of EU member state troops and the risk of a nuclear escalation.

The most important topic at the summit was the appointment of EU leaders for the next five years. The heads of state and government agreed on this with only a few dissenting votes.

Ursula von der Leyen, the Conservatives' lead candidate in the European elections, is to remain commission president for a further term of office. The German politician has campaigned for the EU's military buildup and the strengthening of the European

defence industry and played a key role in the EU and its members becoming the leading donors and military supporters of Ukraine, ahead of the US.

The former Portuguese Prime Minister António da Costa is to replace the Belgian Charles Michel as president of the European Council. Political observers assume that the Social Democrat Costa will work “in partnership” with von der Leyen and not, like Michel, compete with her.

The most important personnel decision was the nomination of Estonian head of government Kaja Kallas as the new EU foreign policy chief. The daughter of a Stalinist functionary who became a protagonist of economic liberalisation after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Kallas is an ardent opponent of Russia. Estonia, a country with just 1.3 million inhabitants—a third of whom have Russian roots—is thus recognised as having an extraordinary influence on European foreign policy and decisions on war and peace.

The three nominees still have to be confirmed by the European Parliament, where the Conservatives, Social Democrats and Liberals, who agreed on the personnel proposal, have a narrow majority. This is not guaranteed, as there is no mechanism to enforce votes along party lines in the European Parliament and is not possible due to competing national interests.

It is therefore remarkable that the Italian head of government, the fascist Giorgia Meloni, abstained from voting in favour of von der Leyen's nomination, while she voted against the other two candidates. Von der Leyen and the leader of the conservative parliamentary group, Manfred Weber, have long endeavoured to work more closely with the Italian neo-fascists. It is suspected that von der Leyen has promised Meloni's Fratelli d'Italia (Brothers of Italy) an important post in

the EU Commission if it helps her gain a majority in the parliament.

Another important personnel decision was made the day before the EU summit. Mark Rutte, the Netherlands' head of government for 14 years, was officially appointed NATO secretary general. He will replace the Norwegian Jens Stoltenberg at the beginning of October. Rutte is one of the most active warmongers against Russia. Hungary, the only EU member state that still maintains close relations with Russia, had blocked Rutte's appointment for months.

The escalation of the war in Ukraine also played a central role at the EU summit, which President Zelensky attended in person. The EU signed a security agreement with Ukraine the likes of which had previously only been concluded by individual states. In it, the EU undertakes to continue to provide Ukraine with "all necessary political, financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support" for "as long and as intensively as necessary."

Official EU accession negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova also began at the start of the week. The pace is extraordinary. Normally, a country has to fulfill a long catalogue of conditions for years before such negotiations can start.

However, an EU representative has declared that Ukraine has "made enormous progress in the area of the rule of law, the fight against corruption and also freedom of the press." This is despite the fact that Zelensky's term of office has now expired and he refuses to hold new elections, rules under a state of emergency, suppresses opposition media, and imprisons political opponents such as the socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk.

The presidential debate in the US burst into the EU summit, demonstrating to the whole world that the battle for the most powerful office in the world is being fought between a brutal fascist and a senile warmonger. The repulsive spectacle on CNN was a blow to the mendacious propaganda that the US and its allies are defending "democracy" and "Western values" in Ukraine and on other battlefields around the world.

The EU summit was a crisis summit. Heads of government like Macron and Scholz, who stand on the brink of the political abyss and have lost all connection to the reality of people's lives, are responding with war and dictatorship.

The summit shows once again that the threat of war cannot be stopped by putting pressure on those in power and the establishment parties. What is needed is an independent offensive by the international working class against the bankrupt capitalist system.



To contact the WSWS and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**