

Tens of thousands at Barcelona music festival cheer Fontaines D.C.: “Free Palestine ... Israel is committing genocide”

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17 June 2025

The Irish post-punk band Fontaines D.C. [Dublin City] played June 14 before an estimated 75,000 people at a music festival in Spain. They closed their set by projecting “Israel is committing genocide” in huge letters, to general enthusiasm. Meanwhile, another Irish band, Kneecap, well known by now for its opposition to Zionist crimes, appeared at a festival in the Netherlands, shouting “Free Palestine” to the cheers of some 30,000 fans.

These and other expressions of mass global opposition occur as the crimes of the Israeli regime in Gaza, the West Bank and now Iran continue unabated, financed and supported by the Trump administration. The Netanyahu government is undoubtedly the most hated in the world, with the hostility and outrage mounting on an almost daily basis. A vast political and moral divide has opened up worldwide, with destabilizing and threatening implications for the powers that be.

A recent survey conducted in Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy and Spain revealed public support and sympathy for the Zionist state and its murderous policies have reached historic lows. The YouGov EuroTrack survey found net favorability toward Israel—calculated by subtracting the percentage of people who disapprove of a person or thing from the percentage that approve—to be -44 in Germany, -48 in France, -54 in Denmark, -52 in Italy and -55 in Spain.

According to the pollsters,

Net favourability towards Israel in key Western European countries is at or near its lowest level since we started asking in 2016. Overall, only 13-21% in any country have a favourable opinion of Israel, compared to 63-70% who have an unfavourable view. Few Western Europeans

approve of Israel’s conduct in Gaza. Only between 6% and 16% in our six EuroTrack countries believe that “Israel were right to send troops into Gaza and have generally responded in a proportionate way to the Hamas attacks” – down slightly from the prior survey in October last year.

The weekend of June 14-15, marked by the largest single-day nationwide protest in US history, witnessed massive demonstrations in several European cities against the ongoing genocide in Gaza. Some 150,000 people, many dressed in red, participated in a march in the streets of The Hague in the Netherlands on Saturday. They were responding to a call for forming what organizers termed a “red line” of protest. A protest in Brussels the same day drew an estimated 110,000 people.

Opposition to Israel’s genocide is especially powerful, one might say overwhelming, among the young. This is registered in poll numbers, but it is more pointedly and dramatically expressed in the response of audiences of tens of thousands to those musicians and performers principled enough to say what is.

The Primavera Sound music festival is held annually at the Parc del Fòrum in Barcelona in late May and early June. It was founded in 2001. Primavera is one of the largest music festivals in Europe, attracting hundreds of thousands of spectators, half of them from outside Spain and many from Britain.

The Saturday night performance by Fontaines D.C. was capped by the projection of “Free Palestine” and, as noted, “Israel is committing genocide—Use your voice” in 50-foot-high letters, while a giant Palestinian flag lit up the stage. As the *Jerusalem Post* was obliged to admit, the message “met with resounding applause and cheers from

the tens of thousands of fans gathered at one of Europe's largest music festivals."

Last November, accepting a Rolling Stones UK award in London, the band's Carlos O'Connell told the audience at the "star-studded ceremony,"

I just think there's only a couple of words to say here. It's kinda weird, it's the first time it's been said all night but I'm just gonna say: free Palestine. Free Palestine, free Palestine. F**k Netanyahu and f**k Zionism. Free Palestine."

The English band Idles also played at Primavera, on June 5. According to *Billboard*, "frontman Joe Talbot used the band's set ... to offer full-throated support for Palestine."

The lead singer shouted "Viva Palestina!" from the stage at Barcelona's Parc del Fòrum and led the crowd in a minutes-long chant of the Spanish phrase. At one point in between songs, Talbot asked the crowd: "*Dónde está las Palestinas?*" (which translates to "Where are the Palestinians?" in English). He also dedicated the group's set to Palestine.

Kneecap, whose members have been relentless in their opposition to the Gaza genocide and contemptuous of the efforts to silence them, appeared in the Netherlands at the Best Kept Secret music festival the same day as the mass protest in The Hague. The tens of thousands cheered their appeal for a "Free Palestine." Best Kept Secret is a three-day festival launched in 2013 and held near the Dutch city of Eindhoven.

The day before their June 14 show, the band wrote on social media:

We'll see you tomorrow night and heads up we've been moved to Main Stage at 8.30pm due to the size of the crowd expected

On June 7, English singer-songwriter Sam Fender provided, in the words of one account, a "Powerful Pro-

Palestine Speech" at a show at London Stadium, before a crowd of 82,500. Commentator Valeriy Bagrintsev observed that as the performance drew to a close,

Fender performed "Hypersonic Missiles," the title track from his 2019 debut album. This song, which references the bombing of civilians in Gaza, served as a backdrop for his compelling pro-Palestine speech.

"It breaks my heart, and it's probably more relevant now than it was then," Fender shared, introducing the track.

Fender continued with a "call to action," saying:

"They've [the Gazans] been subjected to a genocide. It has to stop, and we need to do everything that we can. Free Palestine."

Masses of young people are being radicalized by world events.

As WSWs international editorial board chairman David North commented in December 2023:

The ongoing war, for all its horrors, has made one significant political contribution. It has awakened the youth. It has opened the eyes of the world. It has exposed the Zionist regime and its imperialist accomplices for the criminals they are. It has set into motion a tidal wave of outrage that is sweeping across the world and will sweep across those responsible for this genocide.



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