



Report of the 7 online workshops

EUROPEAN FORUM Brussels

ONLINE WORKSHOP

FAR RIGHT: HOW TO STOP THEM IN EUROPE?

15 NOVEMBER 2021 // 14:00 - 16:00 (UTC+1)
Interpretation: EN, FR, RU // Register on europeanforum.eu

Co-organised with: Communist Party of Ukraine, International Federation of Resistance Fighters and Friends of Humanity

With the financial support of **EuropeanLEFT** Together with other partners **European Parliament**

EUROPEAN FORUM Brussels

ONLINE WORKSHOP

"FOR ANOTHER AGENDA": HOW TO TAKE BACK THE POWER OF KNOWLEDGE FROM THE POWERFUL FOR THE PEOPLE (PATENTS, FINANCE, SOCIETY)

17 NOVEMBER 2021 // 17:00 - 19:00 (UTC+1)
Interpretation: EN, FR // Register on europeanforum.eu

Co-organised with: Rifondazione, transform! italia, Agora of the inhabitants of the earth and Move Up

With the financial support of **EuropeanLEFT** Together with other partners **European Parliament**

EUROPEAN FORUM Brussels

ONLINE WORKSHOP

FIGHTING THE PANDEMIC, FIGHTING FOR EQUALITY: ACCESS FOR ALL TO VACCINES AND TREATMENT TO FIGHT COVID-19

17 NOVEMBER 2021 // 19:00 - 21:00 (UTC+1)
Interpretation: EN, FR, ES // Register on europeanforum.eu

Co-organised with: The Left in the European Parliament

With the financial support of **THE LEFT** IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

EUROPEAN FORUM Brussels

ONLINE WORKSHOP

LEFT PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

18 NOVEMBER 2021 // 18.00 - 20.00, (UTC+1)
Interpretation: EN, FR // Register on europeanforum.eu

Co-organised with: The Left in the European Parliament

With the financial support of **THE LEFT** IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

EUROPEAN FORUM Brussels

ONLINE WORKSHOP

EU MONEY FOR DECENT JOBS: USING THE RECOVERY FUND TO ACHIEVE A SOCIAL PROGRESS PROTOCOL

23 NOVEMBER 2021 // 15:00 - 17:00 (UTC+1)
Register on europeanforum.eu

Co-organised with: European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

With the financial support of **THE SYNDICAT EUROPEEN OF TRADE UNION**

EUROPEAN FORUM Brussels

ONLINE WORKSHOP

HUNDRED SHADES OF EU: MAPPING THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF EURO PERIPHERIES

24 NOVEMBER 2021 // 14:00 - 15:30 (UTC+1)
Interpretation: EN, FR // Register on europeanforum.eu

Co-organised with: Transform! europe

With the financial support of **transform! europe**

EUROPEAN FORUM Brussels

ONLINE WORKSHOP

MIGRATION AND REFUGEE EU POLICIES - A DARK STAIN IN THE EUROPEAN NARRATIVE. ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS FOR A SUSTAINABLE AND CREATIVE COEXISTENCE

24 NOVEMBER 2021 // 18.00 - 20.00, (UTC+1)
Interpretation: EN, FR // Register on europeanforum.eu

Co-organised with: EL migration working group and Solidarity for All (Network)

With the financial support of **EuropeanLEFT** Together with other partners **European Parliament**

15th of November 2021 - Far right: how to stop them in Europe?

Petro Symonenko (First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine). The ultra-right is always a weapon in the hands of capitalism. The tactic of the capitalists is always following translate the economic war into a real one, split the society and direct the anger of people to an external enemy. In Ukraine, after the collapse of the USSR, official neo-Nazi parties began to appear. Also, the authorities began to make heroes of Nazi collaborators, fascists, and anti-Semites. They began to use the resource of the state, entered government and parliamentary structures. I personally warned the EU representative about the danger of a civil war in Ukraine. But neither Europe nor the United States listened. I now call on the European community to form an anti-Nazi front to fight together the threat of fascism and Nazism.

Ulrich Schneider (Secretary General of International Federation of Resistance Fighters, FIR). There is also a danger of an increase in the number of ultra-right parties in the European Parliament. Because their populism attracts people to vote for them. In European countries, we also see the popularity of ultra-right rhetoric. Coming to power, these parties acquire great opportunities, access to resources to promote their ideas. The ultra-right also has a great ability to unite. They organize a lot of common events. For example, recently in April in Budapest such a congress was held with the participation of Marine le Pen, representatives of the Northern League (Lega Nord) party and others. Also worth noting is the rise in extreme right-wing violence. We see this in the example of their actions on the east of Germany. And in Italy, where they attacked the headquarters of the All-Italian Confederation of Labor (CGIL).

Algirdas Paleckis (Socialist Front of Lithuania). In Lithuania, the politics of memory is a means by which corrections and the ultra-conservative government cover up their failed policy, the worsening of the situation of the people and the economy. For that the authorities patronize the ultra-right and neo-Nazis, glorify Nazi criminals and collaborators. Any attempts to study the past not from the point of view of official ideology are harshly suppressed by the authorities. For example, I have been convicted for the second time for trying to find out the circumstances of the shooting in January 1991 in Vilnius during the Bloody Sunday. Tomorrow I will have my next court hearing. And before that, I was secretly arrested and kept in prison for almost a year, without presenting charges, forbidding me to see my family and journalists. This time they are trying to accuse me of spying for Russia. All subsequent sessions were held behind closed doors.

Elena Yanchuk (Communist Party of Russian Federation, deputy of Moscow Parliament). For capitalism, war is one of the means. And modern social problems stem from the politics of the capitalists. For instance, the ultra-right is actively talking about the problem of migrants. But migrants are fleeing their countries destroyed by war. It is very important for the left now to resist the influence of the ultra-right on society. We need to convey to people that the left project is valuable and credible. It is good for the left to fight discrimination, to protect minorities. But it is equally important to get ordinary workers to listen. After all, they constitute the main electorate of the left. In my opinion, it is worth turning to the Marxist's classics, better get acquainted with the works of the communists, Lenin and others.

Conny Kerth (Chairwoman of VVN-BdA, Germany). Our organization is not left-wing, and I do not believe that liberalism and capitalism influence the growth of the popularity of the ultra-right and fascism. But we consider it most important to explain to people that they should not vote for the fascists. We also urge not to give the Nazis the opportunity to organize events, hold manifestations. Let no one give the ultra-right the opportunity to rent a conference room. And near the demonstrations, we hand out leaflets and explain to the participants that they have come to the ultra-right. And we also need to educate people into intolerance to xenophobic statements, rhetoric against minorities, feminism etc.

Olesya Orlenko (Friends of Humanité). Based on the results of an interesting and intellectually stimulating conversation, I would like to say that it is impossible to solve the problem of the ultra-right by prohibitive measures alone. We need to understand why people vote for the ultra-right, why give their sympathy to them. And in this matter, international support and cooperation is extremely important.

17th of November 2021 - "For another agenda": How to take back the power of knowledge from the powerful for the people (Patents, Finance, Society)

The workshop dedicated to the "Other Agenda" was proposed and implemented by a network of actors who are committed to the project. First of all, by the Agora of the Earth's inhabitants, which is the creator and brings together intellectuals and activists from all continents. Then Transform Europe and the Party of the European Left which have chosen to commit themselves to the project. Finally, Move Up, which is the coalition that worked during the Italian G20.

The starting point is to build an alternative agenda to that of the dominant parties, which proved to be a failure during the G20 and at Cop 26.

Another agenda that challenges in all its aspects the power that the dominants have acquired over knowledge and that manifests itself in all fields, from patents on vaccines to finance. Another agenda that allows humanity to regain possession of life.

On the proposals put forward by Riccardo Petrella, which we enclose, an important discussion took place between intellectuals and activists from various continents, cultural, social and political subjectivities.

Participants included: Riccardo Petrella (Agora inhabitants of the earth) Adriana Fernandez (Expert in communication, Argentina) Conny Hildebrandt (Co-President of transform!europe) Paolo Ferrero (Vice-President of the European Left)	Lucie Sauv� (Teacher at university of Quebec) Dorothy Guerrero (Global justice now) Alassane Ba (Directory centre humaniste, Senegal) Moema Viezzer (Writer and Feminist Brasil) Moderators: Roberto Morea and Roberto Musacchio
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The reflections and introductory proposals were appreciated, shared and enriched. In particular, the themes of the formation of knowledge, of the suffering that the dominant determine especially in vast areas of the world, of the need to link human suffering and the condition of the planet, of having a new anthropology were taken up. It was recognised that the cornerstones of this domination, patents, finance, must be attacked.

The proposal is to have a permanent network of intellectuals and social activists from all continents, a sort of Council of the Other Agenda, which would work to address the various issues and create a sort of assembly of humanity within the next two years.

The decision to ask to participate in the work of the European Forum of leftist, green and progressive forces was appreciated, and we thank the forum for hosting this work. It is very important that a project like the other agenda has people like those who make up the Forum. The proposal is that the Forum takes on this project and its continuation.

17th of November 2021 - Fighting the Pandemic, Fighting for Equality: Access for all to vaccines and treatment to fight COVID-19

Marc Botenga (MEP, PTB, Belgium)

Herv  Chneiweiss (President of the bio-ethic committee of UNESCO, France)

Tania Crombet-Ramos (Clinical Research Director of the Centre of Molecular Immunology of Havana, Cuba)

Leena Menghaney (Global IP Advisor, MSF Access Campaign, India)

Maurice Cassier (Economist and sociologist, research director at CNRS, France)

Emmanuel Maurel (MEP, GRS, France)

Charlotte Balavoine (Political advisor in the European Parliament)

This workshop addressing access to Covid-19 vaccines, treatments and technology transfer was really interesting because it tackled all the different steps toward a solution. Furthermore, the debate was rich thanks to the different backgrounds and specialties of the speakers: political actors, NGO actors, doctors, investigators in social sciences.

Participants questioned whether the current situation is cause for hope or sadness. The figures and data are damning for rich country manufacturers and governments: Moderna has sold only 0.2% of its vaccines to low-income countries ; only 14% of the doses promised by rich countries have been delivered to the poorest countries ; Pfizer and Moderna alone are raking in 82.2 million euros a day ; Moderna has refused to transfer its technology to a South African regional platform producing vaccines forcing the country to do its own research delaying the access to the vaccines to 2024 ; the blocking of the lifting of patents by Germany, supported by other European countries ; the fact that the European Commission has told India to withdraw its request for the lifting of patents by exerting bilateral pressures. **Marc Botenga** went so far as to speak of a "crime against humanity" following the British Medical Journal, and **Herv  Chneiweiss** recalled that while the death toll from Covid is estimated at 5 million today, the reality is closer to 15 million.

However, the debate opened by evoking past victories: the laboratories that marketed the HIV vaccine saw their complaint against the South African State, which had lifted the patents, dismissed; or the fact that Indian women have access to generic treatment for breast cancer thanks to harsh battles related by **Leena Menghaney**. But without going so far back in time, the intervention of **Tania Crombet-Ramos** gave us some comfort. The Cuban example has much to inspire us. In the midst of an economic crisis and subject to the US embargo, the country has succeeded in producing a vaccine, and five others are in the process of being validated. Today, Cuba has produced 50 million doses and the lethality rate is 0.106% compared to 2% worldwide.

The solutions are there, and **Maurice Cassier** has proposed a precise action plan: first step, the lifting of patents. But that is not enough! We must also force laboratories to transfer technology so that local laboratories can produce and distribute vaccines quickly. How can we get the laboratories to bend? Through contractual weapons: in pre-order contracts, it is necessary to include technology sharing clauses. This was proposed by US senators on the 12 October. If research is financed by the public authorities, it is only fair that the vaccine should become a global public good. **Emmanuel Maurel** concluded by recalling that an infectious disease like Covid-19 will remain a global threat as long as it exists anywhere in the world. From a purely rational point of view, a high virtue in the Commission's view, it is by collaborating and sharing that we will succeed in defeating this disease.

So it was on a note of hope that the MEP concluded, surely bearing in mind Tania's words that the goal always seems unattainable but that perseverance, courage and generosity are the best allies. Cuba's example should encourage us all to engage in a real fight against the Commission and the Big Pharma lobbies.

18th of November 2021 - Left proposals for the Future of Europe

Cornelia Hildebrandt (Co-President of Transform! Europe)

Dimitrios Papadimoulis (Vice-President of the European Parliament, SYRIZA MEP, Greece)

Pierre Laurent (Vice-President of the Party of the European Left, PCF senator, France)

Helmut Scholz (Die Linke MEP, Germany)

Ruairí Ó Murchú (Sinn Féin MP, Ireland)

Yiannis Bournous (SYRIZA MP, Greece)

Georgi Pirinski (former MEP S&D, Bulgaria)

All participants expressed the fact that the future of Europe is a key moment where major changes must happen. The particular context of the global pandemic and global warming are changing the expectations and needs within the European Union. But at the same time, there are more and more differences and contradictions, especially with regard to a part of Europe that is ready to break up the European project, because it no longer shares the same values.

The participants expressed the importance of a more solidary approach to the management of the European debt. They want the economic stability pact to be replaced by a more sustainable, social, and fair pact. And that the European Union should be more cooperative and coordinated to meet the public health challenges that are ahead of us.

Changing the treaties will require bringing together national and European actors both at political level and in civil society, NGOs, citizens and young Europeans. To do this we need to go beyond the current limits to create an alliance of progressives on the left. And we will also have to change the rules for more economic, social, and fiscal solidarity, but also to relaunch the battle for peace, the agenda for peace and stability in Europe.

The interlocutors expressed the fact that the situation in Ireland due to the Brexit and the trade issues that arise is very important today and that all progressive forces and the left in Europe are following these issues very closely.

Finally, everyone agreed that there is a need for greater public investment to defend our ways of life, and to create answers to the existential crisis in Europe, notably through the creation of a green golden rule that would allow us to respond to both the ecological challenge and the social challenges.

23rd of November 2021 - EU money for decent jobs: using the Recovery Fund to achieve a Social Progress Protocol

Like the proverbial “pot of gold” at the end of the rainbow, the EU’s recovery fund is expecting to flood the EU economy with billions in grants and cheap loans. Beyond the urgency to get money flowing, the success of this one-off tool will have huge ripple effects for future talks in a myriad of issues.

Whether it will succeed in rebooting the economies of the EU countries in a way that ensures sustained and sustainable growth in the long term while meet with trade unions expectations is something that remains to be seen and was the core topic of the discussions.

In essence, a number of topics were repeated and agreed by the speakers at the workshop. In a nutshell:

- No “back to normal” is possible.
- Precarious and unprotected jobs should be banned, a conditionality clause should be impose to companies applying for this fund (positive conditionality to achieve social cohesion and social rights):
 - 1) change fiscal rules to avoid austerity.
 - 2) jobs and social dialogue must be protected when public money is granted into recovery plans.
 - 3) increased and upwards convergence is needed.
 - 4) social partners must be involved in tripartite social dialogue at each step.
- Reverse the dismantling of the collective bargaining is paramount.
- Democracy is under attack in many EU countries: we need to build a new Social Contract of the XXI century.
- Money spent in the green transition must also deal with the social consequences arising.
- Taxation is key: money has to serve the working class, not the rich.
- No off shoring of manufacturing activities should be allowed when this fund is granted (KPIs to update industrial strategies should be shared with employees).
- Not too many new projects needed but should be well-oriented in its expenditure. Money cannot be granted to enterprises without a “social conscience”.
- No liberal reforms or cuts in wages should be attached to this fund.

In essence:

Capacity of mobilising has been key to achieve some wins.
We need to act globally or will be irretrievably defeated.
Solidarity should be expanded beyond trade unions: **we should seek synergies with other relevant players.**

24th of November 2021 - Hundred Shades of EU: mapping the political economy of euro peripheries

Presenting Interdisciplinary Research Team: Veronika Sušová-Salminen - history/anthropology (CZ), Valentina Petrović - sociology/political sciences (RS), Giuseppe Celi - economics (IT)

Moderation: transform! europe Facilitators Tatiana Moutinho (PT), responsible for the “Cooperation Strategies for Southern Europe” strategic line and Dagmar Švendová (CZ) responsible for “Central and Eastern Europe Strategy”

Silent moderation and Q/A Box: Liliana Pinto from the European Forum’s organization

“*Hundred shades of the EU – Mapping the Political Economy of Euro Peripheries*” is a research study, conducted by transform! europe with the support of the Rosa-Luxemburg Foundation that aims at characterizing at the socio-economic, political, and cultural levels the current existing peripheries within the European Union.

The full study will be published in the first quarter of 2022 and the workshop, organized in the context of the European Forum 2022, some of aspects were unveiled.

The online workshop was introduced by providing an explanation of the meaning of the terms “core” and “periphery” and it was explained how core-periphery relations within the EU were approached:

Firstly, political, and economic polarization patterns in the EU have been documented by several recent studies. It was highlighted that the promise of economic convergence and economic growth between richer and poorer countries was a feature of European integration right from the onset. This promise remained unfulfilled (apart from the short convergence period before 2008), especially if one takes a long-term perspective on development and growth in the EU.

Given the persistent discrepancies and inequalities between the regions, the study starts from the premise that competition, and therefore growth, is driven by the economic structure of a country. In this context, historical legacies play a decisive role for a country’s starting position once EU integration hits in.

Depending on which indicators were used, different classifications of core-periphery arise. Therefore, several socio-economic indicators that helped to understand the different development levels in the three regions were chosen. The selection of the indicators was driven by existing literature and studies on core-periphery relations. (In this case, the study looks at inter alia GDP per capita, growth, debt rates, indicators on informality and social exclusion and inequality). Furthermore, in line with current research on core-periphery relations within the EU, the concepts are characterized as being relational, spatial, and non-static (Gräbner & Hafele 2020, Magone et al. 2016). Relational, because without a core, there is no periphery. Spatial, because geographical distance is the manifestation of a historical process leading to a widening gap between core and periphery, in which the growth of political communities was driven by the core areas, which were politically, administratively, economically, and educationally more advanced than the periphery (Deutsch et al. 1957). Also, the concepts of “core” and “periphery” are non-static, as economic (as well as political) characteristics can change over time, and therefore a state’s core-periphery position within the broader regional and global system is also dynamic.

The two peripheries within the EU are the South (PT, ES, IT, GR, CY, MT) and the East, which was divided into CEE (CZ, SK, HU, PL, LT, LV, EE) and SEE (SL, CR, RO, BG) regions. This was necessary because the researchers believe that without taking the structural imbalances and country specific characteristics into account, adequate policy recommendations cannot be developed.

Thus, the Southern economies became dependent on tourism, remittances and FDIs (that target mostly services), which are volatile sectors and financial sources. In cases of external shocks, such pillars are not likely to protect the economies and its citizens sufficiently. This also became evident when looking how the CEE economies (especially the V4 countries) recovered after 2008, whereby the Southern country group has had great difficulties and continues to exhibit sluggish economic growth. It is highly unlikely that Southern peripheral countries will change their dependent position any time soon.

In contrast, CEE states are dependent on FDIs, but exhibit more policy space due to not being part of the Eurozone (the most obvious example is Hungary’s macro-economic and fiscal policy after 2010). While SEE states are also dependent on FDIs, Slovenia exhibits a relatively more favourable position due to its gradual transformation process in the 1990s and the preservation of its productive basis during the 1990s. The 2008 economic crisis has weakened Slovenia’s economy badly, especially as it has introduced the euro, and was constrained in its policy options.

During the session all Researchers took the round in answering the variety of the questions:

- *Why is so important to revitalize the discussion on core - periphery relations within the EU?*
- *What was the historical context for European integration for the South and the East in the EU?*
- *What new peripheries have emerged in Europe and which fragilities can be recognized?*
- *What are commonalities and differences between the three regions?*
- *What kind of economic models exist in these peripheries?*
- *Are there dependencies specific for the three regions? How would you describe them?*
- *How do you want to study the political manifestation of peripherality in the EU?*

24th of November 2021 - Migration and refugee EU policies - a dark stain in the European narrative. Alternative proposals for a sustainable and creative coexistence

Key speakers: Vasilis Papadopoulos, Chairman of the Board -Greek Council for Refugees

Carla Scheytt, Solidarity Network Bohum

Katerina Anastassiou, transform! Europe, facilitator on migration/global strategy

Sergio Bontempelli (Associazione Diritti e Frontiere)

Moderator : Olga Athaniti, ELP migration wg, coordinator

Intervention among the audience : Marlon Lacsamana, Secretary General of MIGRANTE Europe

The current landscape of the migrant and refugee policies and strategies in the EU, the existing legislative framework and the New EU " Pact on Migration and Asylum seekers `` have been in the centre of the inputs, the discussion and the information shared among the key speakers and other attendees. The militarisation of both external and internal EU borders, the augmentation of absolutely illegal push backs, the EU sponsoring of the so-called voluntary returns of refugees as well as the criminalisation of solidarity towards refugee population create an obscure reality within European societies. The pandemic situation adds new fear factors that help the demonisation of both migrants and refugees, the acceptance of marginalisation of migrative labour forces and the strengthening of xenophobic, fascist and racist narratives. The uprising of the Far Right is a reality to be faced, as a dystopian landscape threatens democracy. In addition to the factors already mentioned, climate crisis multiplies the number of people fleeing their native land and moving to European countries.

Changing from perplexity to defence against fragile humans depicted as intruders, European Institutions follow the spread of impunity when it comes to violation of the international legislation protecting basic human rights, without presenting any sustainable strategies to deal with the situation. Vast detention camps and lack of basic infrastructure worsens the overall picture.

Moving past the humanitarian crisis, the discussion also focused on the class characteristics of the issue. Not only it emerges out of its every aspect, but it is one of the main points to be understood and projected in order to reverse the dominant hate speech and the xenophobic practices. When it comes to undocumented migrants or asylum seekers, they are simultaneously described either as a menace for the native labour forces or usurpators of social funds that are being stolen by the local population. Overlooking the fact that not only the agriculture sector but also the caring of the elderly, the sick or the children are being practically operated by underpaid migrants, the neoliberal political narrative intends to prevent class solidarity between native workers and migrants, in favour of the exploitation of both parties. In this sense, borders within the EU member states create different status among workers, enforcing precarity and various forms of discrimination

Making clear that the refugee and migrative situation is not just a humanitarian but also a working class issue, political and social leftist forces, trade unions and solidarity networks need to stand united against discrimination, exploitation and menace against migrants and refugees. Solidarity and common class struggle is a key factor in order to move towards a democratic, open Europe. Humanitarian and labour approach are complementary tools to serve this goal and in order to do so, both leftwing political parties and trade unions need to let go of any anxiety that equally embracing migrants and refugees will deprive them from voters or militants. Human and democratic rights are valid for every human being, while populism is a common dangerous enemy, even when it seems to use a leftist vocabulary.

The utmost urgency to enforce all forms of common struggle, political and social initiatives, together with the dominant feeling that the European Forum can be a privileged area for creative and inspiring actions was the optimistic yet determined final notion to conclude the webinar.