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European Union

The European Union, capitalism's class offensive

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At the end of the Second World War, many towns, transport systems, housing, factories, infrastructure and industrial sites had been destroyed. Jobs had disappeared and poverty was everywhere. We had to rebuild. It would be a Europe not designed to meet the immense needs of the people but to satisfy the profits of the richest.

Two decisions were to make this Europe possible. In 1945, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin signed the Yalta agreement. They wanted to reorganize Europe after Germany's capitulation, divide up the occupation of its territory, redraw the borders of several European states and guarantee the stability of the new international order. The victors shared the world.

In 1947, the Marshall Plan formalized an American loan of 16 billion dollars for European reconstruction, on condition that American equipment and products were imported in equal amounts. This was in the double interest of American capitalism: to sell off the surpluses of a flourishing economy and to establish its companies on European soil. Truman, President of the USA, wanted to contain communism, so he facilitated the creation of a capitalist Europe, which was supposed to be more desirable to the people than the Soviet planned economy.

Right from the start of Europe, the people were ignored and kept out of the decisions that would affect them.

The construction of capitalist Europe

The creation of European law was based on treaties signed between states, in the service of capitalist interests.

In 1951, the Europe of Six (Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) came into being with the creation of the ECSC (Economic Coal and Steel Community) for a period of fifty years. The aim was to reconcile France and Germany around a common interest to ensure peace and economic prosperity between the European states.

In 1957, two Treaties of Rome were signed. One created EURATOM, for an unlimited period, to coordinate research into the rapid development of civil nuclear energy. The other created the EEC (European Economic Community) to launch the common European market. Several common policies were established. The funds allocated to these policies initially went to the agri-food and production industries.

In 1986, the Single European Act extended the scope of goods to all public services. Free and undistorted competition became compulsory, leading to a huge wave of liberalization. The transposition of directives in each Member State led to major privatisations of all public services (transport, postal services, telecoms, electricity, gas, then health and education). It also saw the dismantling of labour regulations and social protection.

In 1993, the Maastricht Treaty established the European Union (EU). This marked the completion of economic union, with the free movement of capital, goods, people and services. And the introduction of the single currency. The European Central Bank, which is completely independent, manages the euro and the stability of the currency. The famous "Maastricht criteria" provided a drastic framework for national budgets. The authoritarian turn was strengthened: common European security policy (CFSP) and police and judicial cooperation.

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The Treaties of Amsterdam (1997) and Lisbon (2007) - the latter establishing the European Constitution that was defeated in France in the 2005 referendum, but ratified by Sarkozy in 2008 with Hollande's approval - aim for full employment, gender equality, respect for human rights and security. Only the security aspect has been achieved. Frontex's budget has exploded: from 6 million when it was created in 2005 to 845 million in 2023! Its primary mission is to turn back migrants.

With the destruction of public services, the deregulation of all social gains and murderous xenophobia, Europe (27 States to date since the withdrawal of the United Kingdom in 2020) is a generous windfall for capitalists and a mortal danger for peoples.

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Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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