

Europe's next move, the new activism and a Pogue looks back

While Russian forces in Ukraine withdraw and regroup for what's expected to be a new, sustained assault on the Donbas region, our focus this week turns to some of the war's wider ramifications for Europe.

Germany knows it must rapidly reduce its reliance on Russian gas, but the economic consequences could be enormous. Lithuania, bordered with the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad, is calling for a full rethink of Nato's "tripwire" defence strategy. In Poland, now sheltering more than 2.5 million Ukrainian refugees, fears are growing over how long the welcome can be sustained.

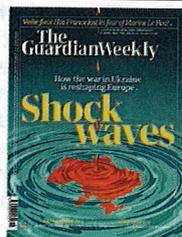
And in France, the far-right leader Marine Le Pen - a known admirer of Russian president Vladimir Putin - stands a real shot of becoming president in a run-off against Emmanuel Macron. We reflect on a pivotal election race for Europe's future, while in the Opinion pages Jonathan Freedland wonders for how long Putin's friends around the continent will remain silent.

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As the third part of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's report reiterates the urgency of curbing emissions, Dorian Lynskey spends a night out with the activists of Just Stop Oil, one of the new generation of disruptive campaign groups who are trying to bridge the gap between climate awareness and action.

Then, Simon Hattenstone travels to Dublin to meet Shane MacGowan, finding the legendary former Pogues frontman in a different chapter of his life but still as contrarian as ever.

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On the cover

"I have become sadly well acquainted with the depiction of spilt blood of late," writes the illustrator Pete Reynolds on his cover artwork for this week's edition. "However, even when asked to illustrate the impact of the war beyond Ukraine - to wider Europe - it still felt necessary to put the suffering of the Ukrainian people at the heart of the image."



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