

European States Fund Militarisation as Heatwave Kills Thousands



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An estimated 20,000 people have died in Europe's worst heatwave in decades. EU states will spend €454 billion on militarisation in 2026, while committing just €15 billion a year to climate adaptation.

Details. Between June 22 and June 28, a historic heatwave swept across Europe. Preliminary estimates from climate scientists suggest over 20,000 heat-related [deaths](#) across the continent, though this figure has yet to be formally peer-reviewed.

► Confirmed official figures are already severe. [France](#) recorded 2,025 excess deaths, [Belgium](#) 1,200, the [Netherlands](#) 3,500, and [Spain](#) over 1,000. Health authorities [warn](#) that these numbers will rise as more regional data comes in.

► Despite temperatures [soaring](#) past 40° Celsius, state governments provided no structural relief, leaving citizens entirely dependent on passive warnings as fatalities at home [spiked 91%](#).

► In the UK, authorities issued the second-ever red health [alert](#) for extreme temperatures, yet limited their response to standard public [advisories](#) on hydration and staying indoors, with no concrete emergency cooling measures implemented.

► This crisis is rapidly accelerating. Climate scientists explicitly [warn](#) that global weather will only grow more severe. Extreme heat has already [killed](#) over 200,000 Europeans over the past four years alone.

Context. Climate scientists explicitly [warned](#) state governments as early as 1988 that heatwaves of this intensity and frequency were coming, yet capitalist states systematically ignored them.

► Today, roughly [80%](#) of European households lack adequate cooling, ageing rail networks [buckle](#) under the heat, and schools and public hospitals regularly report dangerous [overheating](#) that threatens vulnerable [patients](#).

► The EU itself [acknowledges](#) it will need to invest €59-173 billion per year in climate adaptation until 2100 to protect agriculture, infrastructure, and ecosystems. Current committed spending stands at just €15-16 billion annually.

► These effects are not limited to Europe. Last month, heatwave temperatures in India hit 48°C. A recent demographic [study](#) confirmed that a five-day heatwave causes roughly 30,000 excess fatalities across the country, as millions of informal workers are forced to labour in deadly [conditions](#) with [failing](#) power grids cutting off any access to basic cooling.

Important to Know. Capitalist states are fundamentally incapable of planning for ecological crises because they exist to secure capitalist [profits](#). Upgrading public infrastructure yields no immediate returns, so the ruling class does nothing. Instead, they pour billions into destructive [fossil fuel industries](#) because mass extraction remains competitive and highly profitable.

► This contrasts with the speed at which capitalist states mobilise to protect and expand their capital. During the 2020 pandemic financial [crash](#), the European Central Bank printed over a trillion euros to rescue collapsing private markets. This massive bill was then entirely offloaded onto the working class through soaring

inflation and brutal austerity cuts.

► The same logic applies to imperialist warfare, where governments redirect public wealth to the military while claiming they cannot afford climate infrastructure. EU states will spend [an estimated €454 billion](#) on militarisation in 2026 alone – just days after the deadly heatwave, the United Kingdom [announced](#) a further £15 billion [surge](#) in military spending.

► In contrast, the Soviet Union's consideration of nature naturally flowed from planned production. It [established](#) vast nature reserves as untouched scientific baselines to guide sustainable land use, launched large-scale afforestation projects, and minimised waste through the full use of materials – reusable packaging, glass bottle deposits, and paper recycling were standard practice.

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