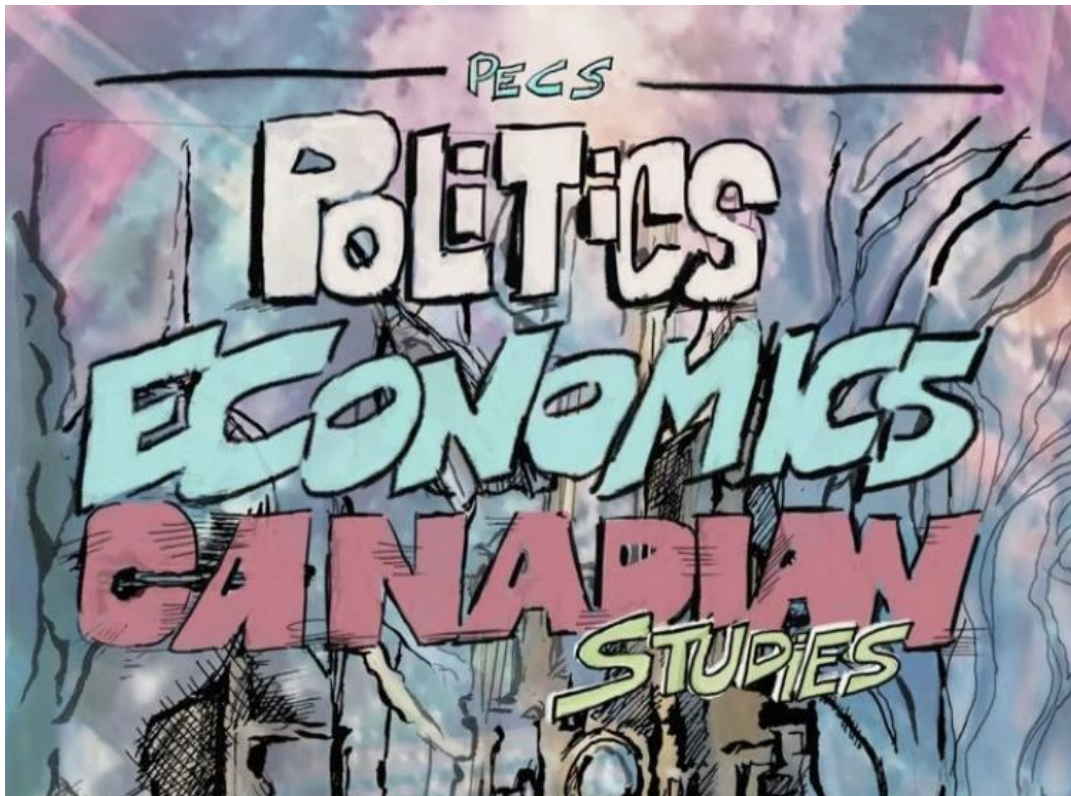


Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU)

THE PEPS GAZETTE



DECEMBER 2024

FOREWORD

I wanted to continue the established tradition for the Mount Saint Vincent University of publishing a Gazette, that will review not only popular socio-political and economic news but also little-known trends at the university, city, provincial, regional, national, and global levels. Our goal is to make The Gazette an interesting and instructive resource on topics that are poorly covered by large mainstream media. We will be happy to receive any feedback and take part in discussions on relevant topics.

This is our second Gazette in 2024/2025 season!

Daniil Zhelezniak, Vice President of PEPS MSVU.

GLOBAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Written by Daniil Zhelezniak

Middle East Developments

Israel-Hezbollah Ceasefire

The biggest news of recent days in the Arab-Israeli conflict was the entry into force on November 27 of the 60-day ceasefire agreement between Lebanese Hezbollah and Israel. Since the beginning of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which began in October, more than 3500 Lebanese citizens have been killed, most of them civilians (Seifeddine, 2024). During the next months, it is planned that the Israeli Armed Forces will leave southern Lebanon, where they invaded on October 1, 2024. In addition, according to the points of the armistice agreement, the regular army of the Republic of Lebanon will become the only armed formation that has the right to be located in the south of the country, while the military infrastructure of Hezbollah will be dismantled. For understanding, Hezbollah is a Shiite Islamist Anti-Zionist military and political organization in many parameters stronger than the state institutions of Lebanon themselves, working closely with the governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Syrian Arab Republic (Haq, 2024). As well as in Canada and many other countries it is recognized as a terrorist organization (“Currently listed entities”, 2024). Also, right before the entry into force of the temporary ceasefire agreement, the IDF inflicted heavy shelling on Lebanon, including Beirut, which caused casualties, and reports of violations of the ceasefire regime by the Israeli side are increasingly coming (Krever, Mallo, Alhenawi, Qiblawi, & Izzo, 2024).

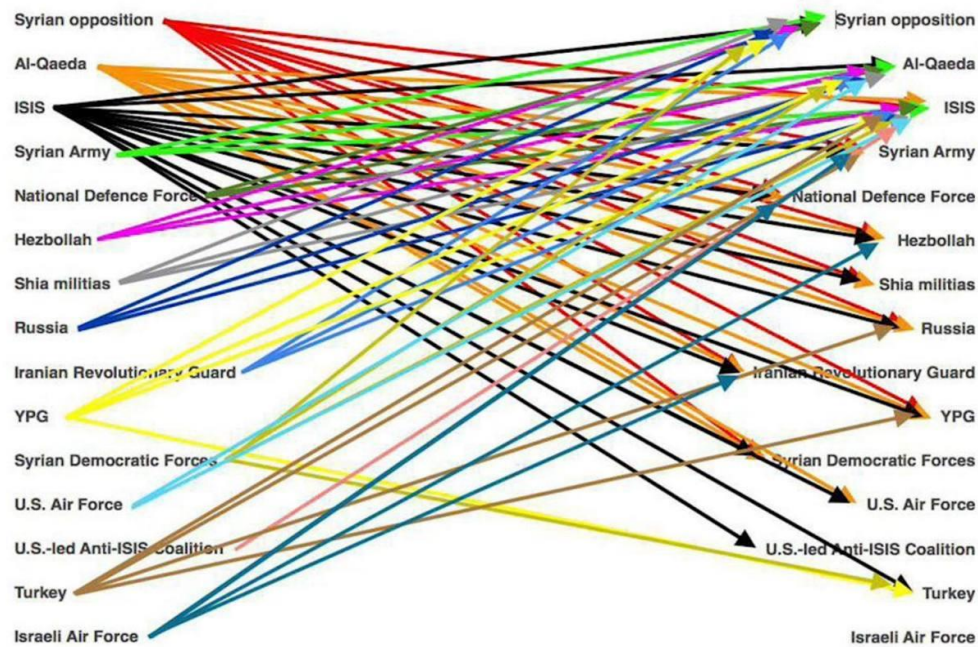
Arrest warrant for PM Netanyahu

Another important news related to Israel is that the International Criminal Court has issued an arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Galant, as well as three representatives of the Hamas, due to allegations of war crimes and mass killings (Jabakhanji, 2024). Not all international leaders and movements agreed with this decision of the ICC, so the current US President, Joe Biden, called this kind of development outrageous, thereby emphasizing his support for the Israeli government (“Statement from President Joe Biden on warrants issued by the International Criminal Court”, 2024). The ICC arrest warrant presupposes its compliance with 124 countries that have ratified the Rome Statute in relation to wanted individuals (“Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court”, 2002). However, this is not always the de facto way things happen, so the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, whose arrest warrant was issued in March 2023, did not encounter any difficulties when visiting Mongolia, a country that has ratified the Rome Statute (Comerford, 2024).

Renewed Conflict in Syria

Recently, the Civil War in Syria, which began in 2011, has significantly intensified. At the end of November 2024, the rebel group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) — a group formerly associated with Al-Qaeda and now with the Turkish government - organized a surprise offensive, capturing Aleppo, the largest city in the Syrian Arab Republic (Jabakhanji, 2024). HTS also continues to advance in other directions, in particular to capture the city of Hama, but the speed of advance decreases over time (Rahal, 2024). Since the revolution of 2011 and the beginning of the civil conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, more than 600,000 people have died, and millions have been forced to leave their country as refugees (“Syrian Revolution 13 years on: Nearly 618,000 persons killed since the onset of the revolution in March 2011”, 2024). So, in addition to Syria itself and the various types of domestic or international rebel groups such as HTS, Hezbollah, al-

Qaeda, ISIL, countries such as Israel, Turkey, Iran, Russia, the United States, Turkey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and EU members are directly involved in the conflict, or have you been involved before (Selvaraj, 2024). The Hayat Tahrir al-Sham group, which captured Aleppo, positions itself as an opposition to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and his allies, such as the Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as forces associated with them (Al Jazeera Staff, 2024). For a more detailed understanding of what force is opposing whom on the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic, see the photo below (this may change over time):



Eastern Europe Developments

War in Ukraine

The Russo-Ukrainian War, that began in February 2022, escalated significantly after the US election due to changes in the use of new types of weapons and related to these policies. So, in

November 2024, the United States and United Kingdom allowed the Armed Forces of Ukraine to strike with Western long-range missiles, such as ATACMS and Storm Shadow on the generally recognized territory of the Russian Federation (Shamim, 2024). This decision was delayed for a long time by the White House and marked a significant increase in escalation in the relations between the West and Moscow, evoking associations with the times of the Cold War.

In response to this, on November 21, 2024, for the first time in history, Russia used its new Oreshnik ballistic missile to strike against the military-industrial infrastructure of the Ukrainian city of Dnipro (Greenall, & Partridge, 2024). The Oreshnik is capable of carrying several nuclear warheads and reach speeds of up to more than 3 kilometers per second, but there were none during the strike on Dnipro, which means that this attack was rather used by the Kremlin to demonstrate strength and geopolitical “red lines”. In addition, at the same moment, President Vladimir Putin changed Russia's defense doctrine allowing it to use nuclear weapons even against non-nuclear states if such states are used for anti-Russian provocations by nuclear powers (Faulconbridge & Kolodyazhnyy, 2024).

At this time, at the Ukrainian front in November 2024, Russian troops achieved certain operational successes in eastern Ukraine, capturing some key fortified areas, in particular in the Donbas and in the Zaporizhzhia Region. The Ukrainian Army, faced with overstrain, lack of resources and equipment and increased cases of desertion, led to the fact that the Russian Armed Forces captured the largest number of territories per month in recent times (“Ukraine: L'armée russe a pris 725 km² en novembre, du jamais vu depuis le début de l'invasion”, 2024).

Protests in Georgia



Another important point of geopolitical tension in the post-Soviet space can be considered Georgia, which is experiencing significant political unrest after the government's decision to suspend negotiations on joining the European Union until 2028 (Megrelidze, 2024). This was followed by mass protests in Tbilisi and other cities, where demonstrators demanded the resumption of negotiations with the EU and the holding of new parliamentary elections. As of the end of November, the unrest is gaining momentum, including raising the relevance of arguments about the country's geopolitical orientation, trying to balance plans for European integration and NATO membership with pressure for closer rapprochement with the Russian Federation. The Georgia - Russia relations are very strained, and diplomatic ties were completely severed after the Russian-Georgian war in 2008 (“Tensions in relations with Russia”, 2022).

Environment

COP29

The COP 29 Climate Summit, held in mid-November this year in Baku, Azerbaijan, concluded with an agreement on the annual mobilization of \$300 billion by 2035 to help developing countries combat the effects of climate change (Bickis, 2024). This figure is notable because it is significantly lower than the requested \$1.3 trillion, which has caused some criticism (Mohan, 2024). The atmosphere of the summit has become even more heated due to the re-election of US President Donald Trump, whose denial of climate change and plans to abandon international climate commitments cast doubt on the future participation of such important country as the United States (Pacheco-Vega, 2023). In addition, the conference approved a set of rules for carbon credits aimed at providing financial support to climate projects in different parts of the world. The summit was attended by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and about 80 states' leaders, but compared to the previous COP summit in Dubai, there was a significant decline in attendance, including high-ranking politicians from countries such as the United States, Germany and China (Rojanasakul, 2024). In addition, criticism of this summit was related to the venue - Azerbaijan, which is a petrostate, where revenue from oil and gas production is about 50% of GDP and 90%+ of export revenues (Ahamdov, 2024). Also, the government of Ilham Aliyev is regularly accused of an authoritarian style of government, violation of human rights, including in the region of the Armenian majority - Karabakh, about the history and situation in which you can read in the previous Gazette of the PECS society, the November edition.

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US POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Written by Daniil Zhelezniak

US Election 2024

On November 5, a key North American political event took place in the United States, the presidential elections, and elections to the Senate and House of Representatives of individual states. The forty-seventh president of the United States was the candidate of the Republican Party, Donald John Trump, who gained 312 electoral votes and won even in the general vote, which is rare for Republicans (Banarjee, 2024). The 47th President will take office on January 20, 2025. This material will try to include a demographic analysis of the elections, by analogy with the November edition of the PECS Gazette, where only assumptions and predictions were present, not all of which came true.

Young Voters: For the first time since 1988, the demographic group of young men aged 18 to 29 years preferred Republicans, thus men of all ages voted for the Reds to a greater extent (Brown, 2024). The Trump campaign has used various forms of the masculine appeals and effectively engaged this population group through non-traditional media platforms, including collaborations with famous people, podcasts, YouTube content and appearances at sporting events.

Latino Voters: Latin American voters, who are the largest ethnic group of the population after white Americans, have sharply shifted ideologically to the right, which significantly affected the

support of Democrats in key states such as Pennsylvania, Nevada and Michigan (Clemetson, 2003). So, for the first time in more than 130 years, Hispanics voted [for the Republican Party](#). This trend challenges the perception of Latinos as a monolithic Democratic voting bloc, highlighting the importance of this group for planning a strategy for Democrats for elections in 4 years (Gamboa, Acevedo, Silva, Sesein, & Hampton, 2024).

Black Voters: Although African American voters have traditionally supported Democratic candidates by a wide margin, the 2024 elections showed a decrease in this support, which may be a serious concern for Democrats in the future. Thus, about three quarters of Black Americans in Wisconsin (a swing state) supported Kamala Harris, compared with about Biden's 90% in previous elections (Bentley, 2024). Support among Black men has also declined: only 72% voted for the Democratic candidate, compared with 89% in 2020 (Gooding, 2024).

Arab American Voters: Support among American voters of Middle Eastern descent, a group that has traditionally held democratic views, also faltered in 2024. This shift was primarily influenced by the Biden administration's approach to events in the Middle East, in fact supporting the genocide of the Palestinians led to a decrease in support for the Democratic candidate in areas with significant Arab-American populations, including in swing states (Harb, 2024). An example of such an area can be considered Dearborn in Michigan, which has the largest concentration of Arab and Muslim populations in the country that for the first time voted for Republicans, including due to the transition of the electorate from Democrats to alternative candidates, in particular to the Green Party (Ibish, 2024).

These demographic shifts are indicative of the complex and changing political landscape in the United States, underscoring the importance of preparing strategies for the 2028 elections in

advance. In addition, such trends tell us that political polarization in the United States of America is no longer based on race or ethnicity, but rather on gender or simply ideological preferences, which will also affect the future plans of the two major parties.

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LOCAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Written by **Daniil Zhelezniak**

Nova Scotia General Election of 2024

An important event in our region was the Nova Scotia General Election of 2024, which took place on November 26. According to the results of these elections, the Progressive Conservative Party of Prime Minister Tim Houston remained in power, even improving its previous result, that allows to form the majority government, gaining 43 of the 55 seats in the House of Assembly. The New Democratic Party won nine seats, while the Liberal Party secured only two seats, having lost 12, from which the competitors took advantage of it. This article includes a review with brief details of these 12 electoral districts of the province that flipped towards other parties compared to the 2021 elections. The basis for the information is the preliminary calculation and analysis of the CBC News experts (“Nova Scotia Votes 2024”, 2024).

1. Annapolis: Progressive Conservative candidate David Bowlby, achieved victory by only 7 votes, secured 44.45% of the vote, by demonstrating a 12.17% increase, leading to a gain from the Liberal Party.

2. Bedford Basin: Tim Outhit of the Progressive Conservatives achieved 60.11% of the vote, marking a 34.35% increase since 2021, while the Liberals lost 29.50%.

3. Bedford South: Our university is located exactly in this area, where PC Damian Stoilov won with a difference of about 100 votes. Stoilov garnered 41.25% of the vote, reflecting an 11.52% increase, leading to a gain from the Liberals.

4. Clare: This district is located in the southwest of the province, next to Digby County, of which it was once part. Ryan Robicheau of the Conservatives obtained 59.71% of the vote, a 16.29% increase, resulting in a gain from the Liberal Party, which has dominated in the area since the early 1990s.

5. Clayton Park West: In this area of the HRM, Progressive Conservative Adegoke Fadare won by a margin of 86 votes beating the New Democrats coming second, and received 35.45% of the vote, a 10.68% increase, leading to a gain from the Liberals.

6. Cole Harbour: Leah Martin of the Progressive Conservatives secured 42.01% of the vote, marking a 10.03% increase, resulting in a gain from the Liberal Party, for the first time in a long time.

7. Cole Harbour-Dartmouth: Progressive Conservative Brad McGowan achieved 51.64% of the vote, a significant 21.90% increase, leading to a gain from the Liberals.

8. Fairview-Clayton Park: Here, in a fairly equal competition between the three major parties, New Democratic candidate Lina Hamid garnered 39.05% of the vote, a 1.94% increase, resulting

in a gain from the Liberal Party, which can be considered an important success for Claudia Chender's party.

9. Hammonds Plains-Lucasville: In this one of the largest electoral districts of the Halifax Metropolitan Area by size, Rick Burns of the Progressive Conservatives obtained 46.97% of the vote, an 11.27% increase, leading to a gain from the Liberals.

10. Kings South: This electoral district is located on the coast of the Bay of Fundy, and for example includes the town of Wolfville and Acadia University, there was also a shift towards the Progressive Conservative Party. Julie Vanexan secured 50.12% of the vote, marking a 15.00% increase, resulting in a gain from the Liberal Party.

11. Sackville-Cobequid: Minimally ahead of the PC, New Democratic Party candidate Paul Wozney achieved 44.94% of the vote, a 12.35% increase, leading to a gain from the Progressive Conservative Party.

12. Yarmouth: In this area located in the very south of Nova Scotia, Conservative candidate Nick Hilton got 48.29% of the vote, an 11.26% increase, resulting in a gain from the Liberals.

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