



PEOPLE'S NEWS

News Digest of the People's Movement

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Fianna Fáil leader gung-ho for NATO.



Ireland would not need to hold a referendum to join NATO as it is a policy decision of the government, the Taoiseach and Fianna Fáil leader has said, adding that a Citizens' Assembly might be best placed to take an "informed, evidence-based approach" to assess the issue. No marks for guessing who might provide such an approach!

There would be the inconvenient provision of Article 29 of the Constitution to circumvent however and undoubtedly the issue would end up in the Courts. Then there is the Crotty judgement which found that there was a constitutional limit to the Government ceding sovereignty to another entity.

While there is some reassurance in his statement that; "We would need a referendum to join an EU defence pact, if one was formally developed and declared, because there are provisions in our constitution that would demand such a referendum," involvement in cumulative ad hoc developments as is occurring more frequently of late seem to be propelling us towards involvement in an EU Army in all but name.

Ireland's participation in four more PESCO projects proposed.

A proposal in the name of Fianna Fail and Jack Chambers has been referred to Select Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence. It will consider the proposed approval by Dáil Éireann of Ireland's participation in four further Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) Projects. The Committee must report to the Dáil by July 5th and it is expected to recommend approval of the move.

[The proposal is here.](#)

Denmark will join the EU's defence policy.



Denmark will join the EU's defence policy following a referendum 1 June. It is the only EU member state currently not part of the bloc's defence and security policy and the referendum marks the first time a Danish government has succeeded in abolishing one of several exemptions secured in a 1993 referendum on the Maastricht Treaty.

[Read more here.](#)

Finland won't join NATO without Sweden?

Finnish president Sauli Niinistö said his country won't join NATO without Sweden, amid Turkish objections zeroing in on Sweden's alleged support to Kurdish separatists. "We [Finland and Sweden] go hand in hand", Niinistö said last week after meeting Nato secretary general Jens Stoltenberg. Perhaps it's a first indication that Finland might be having second thoughts about NATO membership.

The government is reeling us into NATO without a debate!



Recently, [Catherine Connolly T.D. asked](#) the Minister of Defence to report on [the meeting of 23 May 2022](#) of the US/NATO led [Ukraine Contact Group](#) which Ireland attended and which will continue to be held on a monthly basis. Ireland was represented at senior official level by the Department of Defence and at senior military level by the Defence Forces.

Ireland has already "provided [military equipment](#) in the form of body armour and ready-to-eat meals to the Ukrainian Armed Forces and has committed to contribute a further €44 million" through the Orwellian European Peace Facility.

While the provision of humanitarian assistance would be widely supported, the provision of "military equipment" to one side in a conflict is hardly the action of a self-declared neutral and our participation in this contact group is just another step on the slippery slope to NATO. **You can read the question and reply [here](#)**

We won't be going away!



The People's Movement monthly protest against EU militarism at Dáil Eireann will continue. [Our next protest is at 1:00 pm on Wednesday June 22nd.](#) Last month we were joined by TDs: Mairead Farrell, Thomas Pringle, Rose Conway - Walsh and Senator Niall O'Donoghue.

Simon Coveney has said that Irish troops could participate in a new rapid reaction force envisaged as part of the EU's long term military posture. "As regards a rapid reaction force, yes, I think there's a good chance that we'll be involved in that." **It's a big step towards the formation of an EU Army. [Please try to get along](#)**

Green taxonomy plan rejected by EU Committees.



In an important decision, members of the environment and economy committees voted to reject a Commission plan to label certain gas and nuclear energy projects as sustainable investments until 2030 under the EU's so-called [Taxonomy for Sustainable Investments](#). The taxonomy objection was carried 76 in favour, 62 against.

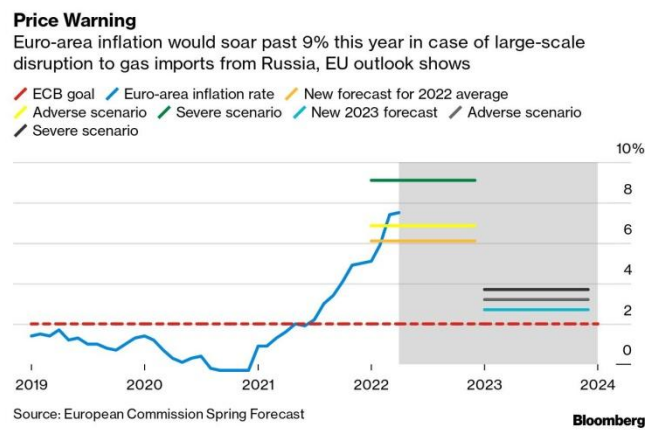
[Read more here](#)

Paschal Donahoe on Eurozone challenges



The Eurozone is currently facing multiple challenges. Soaring inflation and the impact of the war in Ukraine have forced the Commission to downgrade its economic forecasts. But even worse, the ECB had to call an emergency Governing Council last Wednesday to deal with spiking Italian yields, which jumped to their highest level since the eurozone crisis but rallied somewhat on news of the Council meeting. And, one of Eurogroup President Paschal Donahoe's pet projects, the banking union, received a setback after countries blocked the proposed deposit insurance scheme last week.

[Read more here](#)



“We have entered a war economy” – Macron.



Emmanuel Macron said on Monday that cooperation in the EU's defence industry needed to be enhanced, including by the introduction of measures to favour EU companies on strategic issues. "We need to...have a stronger industrial and technological base for European defence, one that is much stronger and much more ambitious. And I will be intractable on this subject."

Addressing defence industry bosses, Macron said, "We have entered a war economy in which I believe we will have to organise ourselves in the long term," Macron said. The daily *Le Monde* reported on Monday that the French government was considering changes to legislation to allow the state to requisition the capacities of businesses in the civilian sector for its military procurement, something normally permitted only during a state of war. France's military budget of €40.4 billion set to increase to €50 billion by 2025, accompanied by €80 billion in social cuts.

Ireland expresses climate concerns.



Ireland is one of a group of 10 EU countries that have raised the alarm about the future of the EU's landmark [Fit for 55](#) climate package, warning that efforts to dilute its key files could see the EU miss its targets.

In a [letter](#) signed by ministers and seen by *POLITICO*, the ten countries say they are looking “with rising concern at the different calls to water down ambition across the files in the package — and the direction of travel of negotiations in this regard — in both the Council and in the EU Parliament.” As a result, they warn, the EU risks “missing the mark by 2030 and setting us on an impossible trajectory thereafter.”

Austria, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, Sweden, Slovenia, the Netherlands, Finland and Spain, along with Ireland, signed the letter. The Commission unveiled its Fit for 55 package last year, in a bid to cut emissions by 55 percent by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. But the proposal suffered a serious setback last week after key parts of the legislation, including a reform of the Emissions Trading System and the introduction of a carbon border tax, [failed to pass the European Parliament](#).

Boom time forecast for EU armaments industries.



EU member states have accumulated a military investment gap of 160 billion euros during the nine years between 2009 and 2018, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, has said.

“If we had been spending on defence every year since 2009 until 2018 the same amount of money that we were spending in 2009 (...) we would have spent 160 billion euro more,” Borrell said at a press conference. Borrell was speaking at the end of a Council of EU defence ministers in which they addressed the bloc's shortfalls in military spending.

Specifically, he said that in the short term it would be necessary to replenish military stocks; in the medium term, to increase existing defensive capabilities and, in the long term, to reinforce and modernize them. And then we had the clincher: “It's going to be a big task and a big (opportunity) for our industry,” Borrell said.

"If we want a modern and interactive European Armed Forces, we must act now." He said that the main strategy for the medium term is to expand the existing capabilities of EU countries, to eliminate the gap between member countries in terms of both quality and quantity: "Our air defence systems, drones, air refuelling capabilities, tanks. and we need armoured vehicles, coastal protection and cyber capabilities".

The French ambassador wades in to the neutrality ‘debate.’



The carefully and [diplomatically worded comments](#) on Irish neutrality by French ambassador to Ireland Vincent Guérend need to be challenged. He stated that “Neutrality is not respected by Russia and China in the way Ireland would like to think it is”. While nothing justifies the Russian invasion of Ukraine which formally abandoned its neutral status in 2014 there is no basis for accusing China for breaching the neutrality of any foreign country in recent decades.

France itself arguably committed very serious breaches of Libyan neutrality in 2011 when it led the efforts to overthrow the Libyan Government by abusing the terms of the UN no-fly-zone resolution, leaving Libya in chaos ever since.

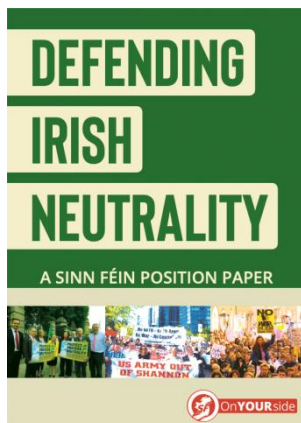
[Read more here.](#)

And so it goes on!

First [we were told](#) by the Finnish ambassador that the debate on Irish neutrality has been full of “wrong notions” and false assumptions that Ireland would be forced to enter an EU army. This is a very unlikely scenario, as even the Taoiseach acknowledges that a referendum would be necessary. The most common “wrong notion” is that neutrality is a constitutional provision.

The former Chief of Staff of the Estonian army said that neutrality is a “[luxury only rich countries can afford!](#)” He was in Dublin to speak at the ‘Future of Irish Defence’ summit organised by the hardly unbiased security group [Slándáil](#). [Here are some neutral countries](#). Rich?

A Position Paper on neutrality.



In a Position Paper published by Sinn Féin in 2019 and appended below, the party states that: “The right to determine one’s own relationship with other countries and to pursue an independent foreign policy is a key component of the principles of national self-determination and sovereignty.

Neutrality has earned the Irish state significant good-will abroad and is essential to our ongoing positive relationships with other countries. Furthermore, as a state with extensive experience of peace-keeping and conflict resolution, Sinn Féin believes that we as a people are in a uniquely strong position to advance a policy of positive neutrality”.

The paper is important as it represents the position of the largest party supporting neutrality and likely to be part of the next government.

You can read the Position Paper [here](#).

O'Sullivan calls for action against Israel.



It seems that Israel can belittle the EU Parliament with impunity. Six MEPs and EU staff on an official trip were due to meet Palestinian ministers in the occupied territories a couple of weeks ago but Israeli restrictions had made the visit untenable.

Israel informed the EU embassy in Tel Aviv that the leader of the delegation, Pineda was persona non grata and that MEPs wouldn't be allowed to visit Gaza anyway, pushing all the MEPs to boycott the trip in solidarity. In calling for strong action, Grace O'Sullivan MEP a member of the delegation with Chris McManus MEP said that "regret" shouldn't be the last that Israel hears about it. EU Commission president von der Leyen was also due to visit Israel, O'Sullivan noted.

[Read more here.](#)

French judges question the EU justice commissioner's impartiality.

French judges are questioning whether the EU's justice commissioner Didier Reynders, , can be impartial in investigating what they say are "grave attacks" by the government of President Emmanuel Macron on the independence of the French judiciary. The two largest French judges' unions, one considered left-leaning and the other apolitical, have raised their concerns with Reynders — a former Belgian foreign minister — before, but now query his impartiality because of his long friendship with former French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

[Read the *politico* article here.](#)

The economic cost to the EU of the war in Ukraine.



How bad is
the Ukraine war
for the European recovery?



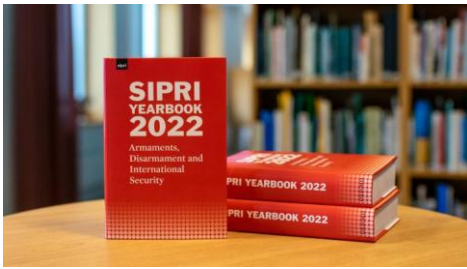
A [new report](#) by the European Investment Bank setting out the economic costs to Europe of Russia's war on Ukraine makes for interesting reading – particularly the tables and histograms. It predicts that the finances of EU countries are likely to deteriorate; the share of EU firms at risk of default will jump to 17 percent, while government finances will also be hit.

Simulations by the Bank find that the share of EU firms losing money could rise, particularly among businesses hit by lower exports to Ukraine, Russia and Belarus and those exposed to higher energy prices. At the same time, rising inflation could push more Europeans under the poverty line.

Meanwhile, *Euractiv* reports that the Commission has not conducted an economic impact assessment of its push to cut Russian gas imports by two thirds by year's end, the first step of its €300 billion plan to eliminate Russian energy imports altogether by 2027

[Read the report here](#)

Nuclear arsenals growing!



The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), which has just published a major report, warning of a new nuclear arms race. It found that after decades of nuclear disarmament, all nuclear powers are currently spending a lot of money on new nuclear warheads and associated delivery systems, such as long-range missiles, ships, submarines, and aircraft.

SIPRI has spent years estimating the nuclear weapon inventories of the world's nuclear-armed states. The current total is understood to be 12,705, with over 90% owned by Russia and the United States.

[Read more here](#)

Irish Defence forces undergo NATO training in Cork



1 BAR personnel from Collins Barracks Cork, on an OCC evaluation exercise. Picture: Óglaigh na hÉireann
A NATIONAL exercise evaluation of the Irish Defence Forces is taking place in Kilworth Camp in Cork, under the supervision of NATO. They will continue training until November, when they undergo NATO led evaluation.

[Read more here](#)



Just click above to access the Facebook page

Glyphosate.



Health and environmental organisations [have raised concerns](#) over the EU chemical agency's decision to keep the current classification of glyphosate, used in herbicides. The agency found that the available scientific evidence did not meet the criteria to classify glyphosate as "carcinogenic."

Three independent scientists have stated that there are major incoherencies in the EU's scientific evaluation of the genotoxicity and carcinogenicity potential of glyphosate. In their presentations, the scientists highlighted that all the evidence available, including the cancer studies submitted by pesticide manufacturers themselves, indicate that glyphosate, commonly used in Roundup weedkiller has the potential to cause cancer.

PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT
GLUISEACHT AN PHOBAIL 

No to EU Militarisation and an EU Army!

Neutrality is our best defence.

People's Movement will hold its monthly protest on
Wednesday 22nd June at 1:00pm.

Outside Dáil Eireann, Kildare St.

Please try to get along – it is important!

Placards and posters will be provided.

“Maladministration” or corruption?



The EU Ombudsman, Emily O'Reilly, has confirmed her finding of maladministration in a case where the European Commission refused public access to documents about 1.5 million faulty medical masks. The Commission refused full access to the 12 documents on grounds of commercial sensitivity, even after the journalist asked for a reassessment.

O'Reilly said that the refusal amounted to maladministration. Following a reassessment, all but three documents were granted full access to. The lack of full access means the Ombudsman has confirmed her findings of maladministration. “The information was released two years after the request, and so was no longer of use to the complainant. When there is such a delay in releasing requested information, it amounts to denying access,” the Ombudsman’s office argued.