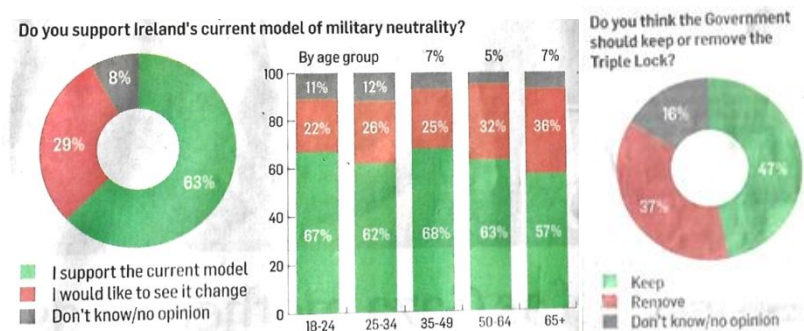


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Only 28% in favour of changing our policy of 'military' neutrality

[The latest Irish Times poll](#) confirms widespread support for neutrality, particularly amongst younger people. However, positive support for retention of the Triple Lock is below 50% though at 37% in favour of removal, the task of convincing the 16% is the challenge. This is not helped by the lack of public debate and knowledge of its importance for the future of neutrality; though a good start has been made by those involved in the Neutrality Roadshow.



Speak up please Messrs Ahern and Cowan



Micheál Martin is determined to breach the solemn "National Declarations" to maintain the Triple Lock guarantee against involvement in foreign wars that were made by your Governments in 2002 and 2009 with the support of all EU member states. You gave these

guarantees in order to get the Nice and Lisbon referendums through a second round after Irish voters had rejected those Treaties previously, largely out of concern for neutrality.

Only a few years back Taoiseach Micheál Martin declared that the Triple Lock was "the core of Irish neutrality". Yet today he proclaims that it constitutes a limitation on our sovereignty. This is rich coming from the political leader of an EU country that does not have the power to make its own laws, have its own currency, control its own valuable sea fisheries and operate an independent foreign policy.

Eamon De Valera, the founder of your Party originated Ireland's neutrality policy. Mr Martin has strayed far from the principles and values of its founder. To renege on the commitments made by your Governments would be an insult to those Irish voters who changed their votes in order to ratify the Nice and Lisbon Treaties because of the Triple Lock guarantees. It would be a profound betrayal of trust and would fully deserve the anger and loathing of the Irish electorate.

Proposal by the government to abolish the Triple Lock



This Bill proposes to abolish the Triple Lock, and it also proposes that the Government should be able to send a full military platoon of 50 soldiers for military operations abroad without even Dáil approval. The text of the [General Scheme of the Defence \(Amendment\) Bill 2025](#) may be accessed [here](#)

It is open to any organisation or citizen to make a written submission to the Committee on the matters it is considering. [A submission should be made](#) to the Clerk of the **Defence and National Security Committee** at Leinster House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2 with a covering letter indicating who is making the submission, and the points of the submission itself then set out in numbered points or paragraphs.

In case you may wish to make a submission, the e-mail address of the Clerk to the **Defence and National Security Committee** is defence@oireachtas.ie and the e-mail address of the Committee's Press Officer is Stephen.Higgins@oireachtas.ie, with that person's phone number being given as (01) 6184743

[Here is a comprehensive submission](#) forwarded from the National Platform, which provides a very detailed set of arguments that may be of assistance in composing your submission. [You will find other arguments here.](#)

Our next protest will be held on June 18th at Dáil Eireann.



The EU Commissions' drift towards authoritarianism

The second Ursula von der Leyen EU Commission lists "[protecting our democracy. upholding our values](#)" among its key priorities. These are commendable words but, as always, actions speak louder.

Judging by its actions, the commission's commitment to democracy seems to stop at the vocabulary, and definitely does not extend to upholding basic principles of participatory democracy in its own institutional practices. The article below by [Päivi Leino-Sandberg](#) professor of transnational European law at the University of Helsinki outlines this drift.

[Read more here](#)

Court rules that EU Commission violated transparency rules



The EU Commission violated transparency rules by failing to grant access to text messages between Ursula von der Leyen and the CEO of pharma giant Pfizer. In a long-awaited [judgement](#) in the so-called '[Pfizergate](#)' scandal, the General Court of the EU [decided](#) that the Commission "has not given a plausible explanation to justify" its dismissal of a journalist's request to access the texts.

The case stems from a 2023 complaint filed by *The New York Times* after the Commission refused to release text messages exchanged between von der Leyen and Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla in 2021. The row over the messages – reportedly linked to negotiations over a €35 billion vaccine deal – has prompted accusations of secrecy and institutional opacity at the highest levels of the EU.

The Commission failed to plausibly prove that the texts "did not contain important information" – such as that pertaining to negotiations over lucrative vaccine contracts. If they did contain "important information", the Commission would be obliged to keep the texts and hand them over on request. The ruling reinforces concerns around EU transparency and von der Leyen's dictatorial leadership style.

A dismal record for Irish transparency



In Brussels' EU quarter, embassies known as permanent representations play a key role in shaping EU laws. But finding out information about their activities is more than difficult. Transparency of the institutions is required by the Treaties of the EU (article 15 TFEU), while the right of access to documents from the institutions is stated in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (article 42).

A new [report](#) from Civil Society Europe exposes just how opaque these bodies remain, even as they quietly wield legislative power. Researchers scoured embassy websites for basic information: staff names, job portfolios, contact details, and records of meetings with lobbyists. Only six countries — Croatia, Finland, Italy, Portugal, Romania, and Sweden — met a baseline of transparency, researchers found. At the other end, Bulgaria and Ireland ranked dead last.

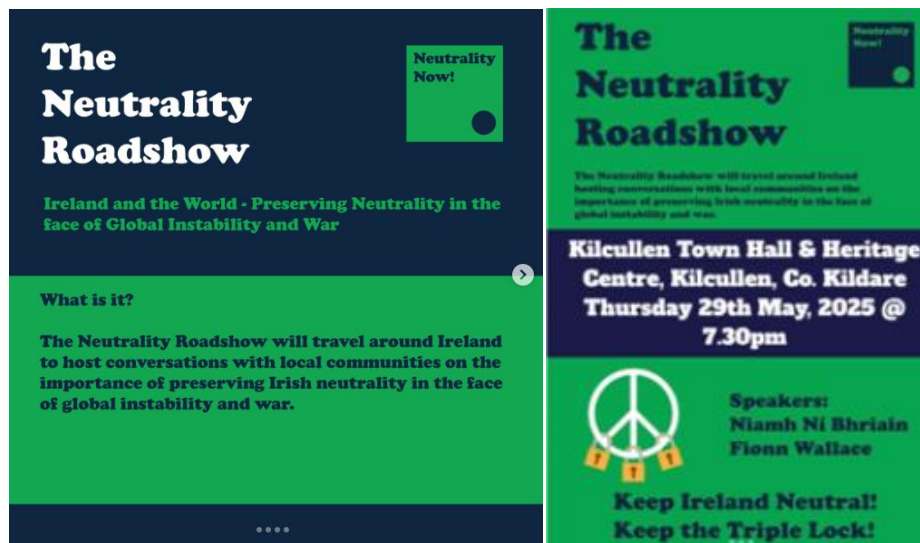
The EU – an essential partner for NATO



If you ever had doubts, put this link in your browser <https://youtu.be/ucNOo14AI8g?si=xmHrdBZhNZkEFVK3> and then consider where neutral Ireland stands as a member of the EU.

As the government moves to abolish the Triple Lock, it is no longer far-fetched to claim that Irish troops may serve alongside NATO troops in conflict situations. As the Fianna Fáil leader said at the recent Arbour Hill 1916 commemoration "Ireland will continue to stand aside from military blocks, but we cannot stand aside from our international responsibilities." These responsibilities will be defined, not by the Irish people but by a FF/FG government that will trumpet neutrality defined as not joining NATO or an EU Army but participating fully in either or both. Martin has already said that 'we' would be willing to participate in a 'peacekeeping' mission to Ukraine, presumably as part of the Coalition of the Willing – and we know how the last such Coalition turned out.

The Neutrality Roadshow



The Neutrality Roadshow continues following over a dozen successful meetings around the country. Look out for one near you!

Further dates to be announced:

https://www.instagram.com/neutrality_now/reel/DJhIZw8sBbu/

Stop ReArm Europe.



"We oppose the EU's plans to spend an extra €800 billion on arms. This will be €800 billion stolen. Its stolen from social services, health, education, labour, peace building, international cooperation, from a just transition and climate justice. It will only benefit arms manufacturers in Europe, in the USA and elsewhere.

It will make war more likely and the future less safe for everyone! It will generate more debt, more austerity, more borders. It will deepen racism. It will fuel climate change. We do not need more weapons; we do not need to prepare for more wars. What we need is a totally different plan: real, social, ecological and common security for Europe and for the world." **Stand up against war.** <https://stoprearm.org/>

Keep the Triple Lock



Sen. Frances Black and Brian Stanley TD joined us on our last protest on May 21st.

Twelve EU countries request activation of the national escape clause



The ReArm Europe plan is intended to boost the EU27 national military spending by €650 billion out of the projected €800 billion. Activating the so-called “national escape clause” would allow EU countries to boost defence spending by 1.5% of annual GDP for a period of four years, possibly renewable. As of 30 April, 16 EU countries “had decided to request the activation of the clause” according to a [Council statement](#), while 12 have introduced a [formal request to the Commission](#).

The Council statement is very clear, as it says that the exemption is only to “facilitate the transition to necessary higher defence spending at national level in Member State” and that “Member States remain committed to the implementation of the revised economic governance framework also throughout the duration of the activation of the clause.” The exemption is therefore not really interesting neither for countries with already high debt level such as France or Italy, or for those with healthier public finances like the Netherlands or Sweden and according to the government: Ireland. Guess where a lump of the Apple billions will go and who will suffer budget cuts?

Germany on the march but



Germany has inaugurated its first permanent foreign military deployment in Lithuania since World War II, with Chancellor Friedrich Merz calling it “the beginning of a new era,” having pledged to turn the German army into “the strongest conventional army in Europe.” “The federal government will provide all financial resources that the German Armed Forces need to become the strongest military in Europe in conventional terms,” Merz said.

The 5,000-strong Litauen Brigade is headquartered just south of Vilnius at Nemenčinė just two kilometres away from the site where the Nazis and their Lithuanian collaborators exterminated up to 100,000 Jews and others. Commemorating and acknowledging the shared historical guilt play no role in the German-Lithuanian military cooperation that, over the past few years, has again grown stronger.

Von der Leyen’s Green Deal and EU military expenditure



Ursula von der Leyen, who took the reins of the commission in 2019 on the platform of a Green New Deal, has replaced her environmental rhetoric of global collaboration to tackle a planetary crisis with dark warnings of military threats, tightened security and aggressive economic competition.

We have faced two of the hottest years on record consecutively; the Mediterranean is warming a fifth faster than the rest of the world’s seas, and lives and livelihoods are at risk across the continent. Yet despite more intense climate risks than ever, Europe is investing in weapons with more zeal and aggression than it has ever approached the climate emergency.

[Read more here](#)

'Forever chemicals' are everywhere: so why isn't the EU banning them?



One of the most lobbied files in Brussels is the proposed universal restriction on PFAS, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, better known as the 'forever chemicals'. These persistent, harmful substances are in everything from your waterproof coat to your fridge, from your frying pan to your mobile phone, from your drinking water to your glass of wine. It's likely we all have PFAS in our blood and this could have serious implications for our health. Growing scientific research shows that exposure to PFAS may lead to negative health impacts, including by altering the immune system, increasing cancer risk, or affecting reproductive functions. A comprehensive ban is long overdue and the Irish government should be proactive on this issue.

[Read more here](#)

Big questions for Lt. Gen Clancy



The outgoing Austrian leader of the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) urged Europeans to define roles for their armed forces in defending the continent in his remarks before stepping down from the post. He will be replaced by Irish Lt. Gen. Seán Clancy for the next three-year term.

Brieger reiterated the need for cooperation with the NATO alliance. He said that the chiefs of defence from all 27 EU countries – that includes Ireland – are in agreement that there needs to be a “more concrete definition” of the EU's mutual defence clause, outlined in Article 42.7 of the Treaty of the European Union. Brieger asked of Art 42:7: “What is the concrete role? What could be the best delineation with the tasks of NATO?” The task of answering those questions falls to Lt. Gen Clancy and we can be sure that the continued existence of the Triple Lock is an impediment to the desired outcomes.

EU Rapid deployment Capacity now operational



The EU's military crisis response force is now "operational" and ready for deployment after having won political backing from all 27 EU countries. The force of about 5,000 troops, called the EU Rapid Deployment Capacity (EU RDC), reached full operational strength at the beginning of the year. Deployment is subject to unanimous political approval of the 27 member states.

Declaring the RDC "operational" does not mean that the EU troops will now be deployed abroad. Capitals would still have to agree on any decision to send the force, should they see the need for it in a specific 'crisis' case. Plans for the force were laid out in the EU's 2022 military strategy, the Strategic Compass.

Scary prospects



The Pfizergate scandal shows that Commission President von der Leyen has become the increasingly arrogant over recent years. She single-handedly negotiated the purchase of up to 18 billion doses of the Pfizer BionTech vaccine at the cost of €35 billion – the largest vaccine contract ever signed by Brussels. The price per dose that she agreed is said to be 15 times higher than the cost of production,

meaning that the EU overpaid for these vaccines by tens of billions of euros.

Now she has proposed that the Commission should centralise orders for arms across the EU and act as arms wholesaler to Member State Governments in the interest of centralising the EU further and organising arms orders in the same way as vaccine orders. Stand by for her embrace of the arms manufacturers!

How reassuring!



Speaking of the extension of the French nuclear deterrent to other EU countries, Pres. Macron has recently emphasised – just as he had earlier with Polish President Tusk—that there has “always been a European dimension to nuclear deterrence”, but that it should not be made explicit “in order to preserve

strategic ambiguity!!”

While discussions are ongoing with allied countries, the president stressed that “France, will not pay for the security of others,” Echoing Donald Trump! Paris is reportedly considering increasing its nuclear arsenal – though “without triggering a third world war”, Macron assured us all. France possesses around 300 nuclear weapons.

The ECB's call to arms – where does Pascal D. stand?



The President of the European Central Bank, Christine Lagarde, when underlining her conviction of the importance of a strong Euro, has trumpeted that: “Trade and military power are important to establish the demand for an international currency. Investors, and in particular official investors, also seek a geopolitical guarantee in another form. They invest in assets in

regions that are reliable security partners and can honour alliances with hard power.”

It follows, she continued, that “a credible geopolitical foundation must also rest on strong military partnerships. We are witnessing an important shift in Europe towards rebuilding our hard power. And we should be clear that following through on this effort is a preliminary condition for the euro to become more widely used.”

DEFEND NEUTRALITY

PROTECT THE TRIPLE LOCK

**URGENT: SEND LETTER TO COMMITTEE
ON DEFENCE AND NATIONAL SECURITY**



**See the article above: Proposal by the government to abolish the
Triple Lock**

Among other things, the Bill defines an “international force” as a body established, led or controlled by the UN, OSCE, EU or other regional groups and while NATO isn’t specifically identified in the Bill, there is a subsection which states “any other regional arrangement or body”. The text of the [General Scheme of the Defence \(Amendment\) Bill 2025 may be accessed here](#)

