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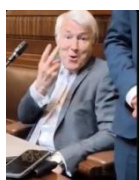
Ireland participates in EU live military exercise



The EU has carried out its third "Live Exercise" (LIVEX) in Hungary, from 25 March to 10 April. Ireland was one of thirteen participating member states along with Austria, Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Spain and Sweden. Once fully operational in this year, the EU RDC - [Rapid Deployment Capacity](#) - will enable the deployment of a European force of up to 5,000 soldiers, capable of responding to any crisis outside the EU's borders.

The Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) prepared the plan for a swift reaction of EU Member State's military forces to a fictional crisis. This incorporated procedures from the political level all the way down to the tactical level. Germany contributes with the Core Battlegroup of which we are currently a member. That's Irish neutrality for you and not a word in the media! [Here's an inside report from Euractiv](#)

A betrayal of trust



The Ahern and Cowan governments made solemn promises to the Irish people to abide by the triple lock guarantee against involvement in foreign wars. All parties in the Dáil and Seanad endorsed these promises. The EU took cognisance both politically and legally of the enormity of these promises. What has changed? Micheál Martin, Simon Harris and Michael Lowry now think that they have the Dáil numbers to ride roughshod over the long established popular support in the country for a policy of active neutrality and deliver us, without triple lock protective guarantees, to a militarised EU. In order to do that the Government will renege on these solemn "National Declarations."

[The various Declarations are here.](#)

New PANA publication on Triple Lock



PANA Triple Lock
Print.pdf

The Triple Lock resulted from the defeat of the Nice Treaty on the 7th of June 2001. The Government recognised that the deep commitment to Irish neutrality had to be responded to. Hence: the Triple Lock legislation. This legal guarantee of neutrality certainly helped to ensure that the second Nice referendum was passed."

Bertie Ahern on the Triple Lock – lest we forget!



The statement by the Taoiseach, Mr Bertie Ahern, T.D., on the Seville European Council, Dáil Éireann, 25th June 2002 [is here](#)

“Should the people decide in a future referendum that the State may ratify the Treaty of Nice, our National Declaration will be associated with Ireland’s instruments of ratification and it will also be registered at the

United Nations.

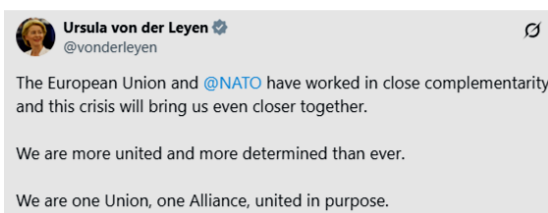
The Government priority going to Seville was to secure agreement of our partners to the Declarations. Our success on this issue at Seville opened the way to the Government today deciding to hold a second referendum on the Treaty of Nice in the autumn of this year.....”

[Read more here](#)

Join our demonstration in support of the Triple Lock on May 21st



Those undersea cables - again



This is an extensive topic. It intersects with EU and NATO ambitions to expand territorial dominance and control, with both entities naming undersea infrastructure as a priority area for them. Ireland, as an EU member state and as an island nation in the north Atlantic,

finds itself at the centre of these aspirations.

Three-quarters of all undersea cables in the northern hemisphere pass through or near Irish territorial waters, mostly off the southwest coast. There is a tendency to treat undersea infrastructure in the north Atlantic as though it were in an extra-jurisdictional space devoid of legal norms and that the EU or NATO had reasonable cause to intervene to protect it. In fact, such infrastructure is subject to a vast body of customary international law and international maritime law developed over centuries to deal with the conduct of states at sea.

[Read more here](#)

Big protest in Rome against EU militarisation and for social justice



where Five Star Movement MEPs staged a protest outside the EU Parliament.

[Tens of thousands marched](#) through Rome earlier this month in a protest led by the Five Star Movement against the EU's proposed rearmament plan, as recent polls show Italians are among the EU's most reluctant supporters of increased defense spending. Organisers claimed attendance approached 100,000. The rally followed a similar demonstration held in Strasbourg,

The EU is preparing for war with Russia.



Poland is planning to train every adult male for war, Norway is restoring old military bunkers, and Germany has unlocked billions for a historic boost to defence spending. Countries across the EU are scrambling to prepare for a possible war with Russia.

Is it realistic to posit Russia as a major military threat to the EU or is EU militarisation, which weakens the welfare state and creates a warfare state, just a means of transferring wealth from the needy to the shareholders in the weapons manufacturers? In the process, de-industrialising EU – particularly Germany – would revitalise its engineering industry building tanks and guns. We have seen this twice before in Europe and it did not have a happy ending. And while history may not repeat itself, the lesson from history is to oppose this madness.

[Read more here](#)

The EU is complicit in genocide



The EU has done nothing to rein in Israel, as evidenced by the recent visit by EU foreign policy chief Kallas. During her visit, Kallas reiterated her “strong condemnation” of Hamas’s violence, while merely “deploring the breakdown of the ceasefire, which has caused an appalling loss of life.”

Kallas reaffirmed the EU's solidarity with Israel and added: “We agree the immense threat Iran poses to the region.” Likewise, neither Kallas nor other EU leaders have taken any concrete action regarding the brutal military campaign launched by Israel in the West Bank in January — just after the Gaza truce began.

The EU has thus signalled that it is comfortable with disproportionate use of force, even at the cost of countless civilian lives. The outlook is a humanitarian catastrophe of unimaginable proportions. It seems unwilling to raise objections in the face of such a terrifying scenario. [The rest of the world will draw its own conclusions](#) from its lack of action and practically complete support for Israeli genocide.

Kallas, after being slammed by group leaders for not attending debates in the last two plenary seasons, found herself talking to an empty hemicycle during a recent debate about Gaza.

New Ombudswoman replaces O'Reilly



Teresa Anjinho has outlined her vision for the coming years; the Portuguese legal expert portrayed her office as the impartial voice that will be needed in these “polarised” times of growing societal anxiety. She made a clear call for reform of the European law on access to documents (Regulation 2001/1049). Her predecessor, Emily O'Reilly, wasn't exactly on board with changes, as she warned that reform could risk weakening the legal text we already have.

But Anjinho argued the need for a “more structured framework” that brings clarity to institutions and matches today's realities. She even suggested that the explicability of algorithms used by EU bodies should be made public. At the moment, EU institutions don't even bother to register communications made via instant messages or emails.

Two Dublin MEPs concerned about EU military spending.



Two Dublin MEPs have said the cost of military rearmament should not come at the cost of social services. Sinn Féin MEP Lynn Boylan said, “The EU has been able to find a vast amount of money to fund this rearmament, while it has neglected funding for communities and for a just transition to tackle climate change.” Boylan also expressed concern that a number of proposals in the plan look to bring the EU closer to NATO. She noted that the EU Commission said that cohesion policy funding, used to help communities across the EU, could be dipped into to help fund military spending.

Labour's Ó Ríordáin said that EU military funding must not come at the expense of social services such as housing, healthcare and education; “von der Leyen's proposal to raid essential social cohesion funds for rearmament spending must be rejected.

Ireland was not at Mercosur meeting as France pushes for import 'emergency brake'



It is shocking and deeply concerning that Ireland was not represented at a key meeting of ten EU countries who have voiced serious reservations about the Mercosur – EU Trade Deal. This was a critical opportunity to stand with like-minded member states in pushing for agriculture to be kept out of the agreement.

The fact that Ireland was not at the table is simply inexplicable. [The meeting, convened by France](#) focused on the inclusion of an ‘emergency brake’ on agricultural imports – a mechanism that could be triggered to restrict imports if EU markets were destabilised.

If we want to protect Irish farming we must work in lockstep with other EU countries that share our concerns and recognise the dangers this deal poses. Ireland's absence really is inexplicable and it seems that no explanation has been forthcoming.

Drought of Ambition



The EU Parliament's Environment Committee split over whether [to phase out PFAS](#), also known as "[forever chemicals](#)," while weighing a draft strategy for how the EU should manage its water resources. Despite increasing concerns over water pollution, the position for the full phase-out of PFAS, known as "forever chemicals", has also been weakened, arguing that "essential uses" must be guaranteed.

It also fails to address water pollution and water scarcity driven by agriculture and industrial run-offs by diluting the '[precautionary principle](#)' and the 'polluter pays principle', and not committing to stronger enforcement of existing regulations, including the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive, Nitrates Directive, and the Pesticides Use Regulation.

The committee has ninety members. Lynn Boylan (SF) is the sole Irish member. Billy Kelleher (FF) and Sean Kelly (FG) are substitute members

ESA to build military satellite network



The European Space Agency is drawing up plans for a military-grade reconnaissance satellite network with the EU as part of a record €21 billion budget spend, according to the agency's director-general, Josef Aschbacher.

In its budget for 2024, Ireland increased its contribution to ESA for the year by €3.3 million. "Ireland's commitment to the European Space Agency and Ireland's space-active industry is steadfast," then Minister of State Neale Richmond said. The additional allocation brought the country's total contribution to ESA for 2024 to €26 million and it is expected to be more than €30m in 2025. That's your money, going into space.

Martin commits Ireland to the "coalition of the willing."



[A meeting](#) of countries prepared to be involved in the so-called "coalition of the willing" to assist Ukraine took place at NATO headquarters in Brussels recently, at which Ireland was represented by

Emer Higgins. Readers will recall that the previous coalition of that name was launched based on a concocted story about WMD and left up to a million dead in Iraq.

Following the meeting, Micheál Martin has said the Government would send Irish troops to Ukraine to be part of a peacekeeping force if there is a ceasefire and a peace deal that ends the war but never mentioned UN authorisation or the warring parties' agreement. He didn't ask the Irish people either, whether they agreed with this decision. It's just another step to abandoning the Triple Lock and eventually, neutrality

Talks to have the Irish army as a long term part of the EU Battlegroup



The Irish have joined a number of other EU nations on an exercise testing how quick they can deploy if the EU decides to send them into a crisis location. The options include a natural disaster or a conflict zone. “There is a potential that we [the EU Battlegroup] might be used and that’s why I think Ireland also realises that you make this decision making process faster,” according to General Piotr Blazeusz, the head of EuroCorps, an organisation that liaises between NATO and EU military missions. Ireland is a so-called associated member.

“What I see you are also changing. For many years, you have been a neutral country, and you cherish your neutrality, but I think the changes in the security department are now forcing a lot of changes in your traditional approach. One of them is now that there is a discussion of getting out of this triple lock,” he said.

The full *Journal* [report is here](#)

The starvation of Gaza and the EU



Starvation is being used as a [method of war](#) against Palestinians. It is not incidental. It is intentional. It is engineered. Since October 2023, Israel has declared a “complete siege” on Gaza, blocking the entry of food, fuel, electricity, and clean water. Israeli forces have bombed bakeries, destroyed water infrastructure, and attacked aid convoys.

[The use of starvation](#) as a weapon of war is prohibited under international humanitarian law, including [Article 54 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions](#). It is also defined as a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. And yet, the EU remains complicit.

While [Palestinian children](#) starve, the EU continues to fund, arm, and normalise relations with the very regime imposing the siege. Despite Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement conditioning cooperation on respect for human rights, the agreement remains in force. Despite the EU common position on arms exports, which prohibits transfers when there is a clear risk of violations of international humanitarian law, weapons continue to flow. Scrap the EU-Israel Association Agreement. Enforce an arms embargo. Uphold international humanitarian and criminal law. Recognize the State of Palestine — not as an act of sentiment, but as a commitment to ending permanent displacement, siege, and dehumanization.

[The Association Agreement](#) [Euro/Med]. Article 2 Argument is [here](#).

Paschal Donohue and Palantir



Alex Karp, chief executive officer of Palantir Technologies, is known for his bluntness, but even the most ardent pacifist should consider the arguments in his book. Photograph: David Paul Morris/Bloomberg

Paschal Donohue

Thu Apr 17 2025 - 05:00

In a recent Irish Times book review, our Minister for Finance and President of the Eurogroup, advocated for the weapons manufacturers, coming down in favour of EU militarisation: “The need for Europe to look after its own security is now clear. Other examples could also be used to demonstrate the need for partnership between the state and private markets.”

But even more astonishingly, he proposed that “even the most ardent pacifist should consider the arguments” in Palantir CEO Alex Karp’s book. If you haven’t heard of

Palantir, there are a few links below. Sufficient to say, that their AI systems are used by the Israelis to target Palestinians. So is Paschal Donohue suggesting that we funnel public money to merchants of death like Palantir? As for considering the arguments, you can make up your mind after you’ve had a look at the links! AI weapons Palantir disinvestment Alternatively, you might give Social Democrats TD Eoin Hayes a bell. Mr Hayes worked for Palantir between 2015 and 2017 and a little issue around shareholding in the company led to his suspension from the party.

More money for arms – the poor will pay!



The EU Commission has published a preview list of EU funds that could be allocated to military activities in the coming years. Commission presented the preview of the regulation, designed to stimulate military-related investments within the EU budget.

They labelled the proposed changes to current EU programmes a “mini Omnibus”, offering a first glimpse of what June’s simplification package for the military industry and member states might look like, in an attempt to increase investment in the sector and scale up production. Last month, the Commission proposed that EU countries re-purpose cohesion funds from underdeveloped regions across the bloc to arms manufacturers’ production – a move which attracted widespread criticism.

The missing link!

This link was omitted from PN 273 article: ‘The provisions of the EU’s Joint White Paper for European Defense Readiness 2030, threatens us all’ – which was truncated in error.

The EU Commission has released its Joint White Paper for European Defense Readiness 2030. It was endorsed by the European Council of EU heads of state, the White Paper calls for a staggering increase in EU military spending of €800 billion, to prepare the EU for high-intensity war with nuclear-armed Russia.

PFAs are even in your tippie



A report by the Pesticides Action Network (PAN Europe) has uncovered high concentrations of a forever chemical (PFA) in wines from across the EU – including in organic.

The [report](#) found some wines had trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) levels 100 times higher than the strictest threshold for drinking water in Europe. TFA is part of the PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl) family of substances and are extremely persistent in the environment, they are [a known](#) threat to human health.

The NGOs analysed 49 wines. Comparing modern wines with older vintages, the findings suggested no detectable residues in pre-1988 wines [but a sharp increase](#) since 2010. PAN sees a correlation between rising levels of TFA in wine and the growing use [PFAS-based](#) pesticides.

Though nearly [a quarter](#) of Austria's vineyards are cultivated with the organic method, Austrian bottles are over-represented in the list of contaminated wines, 18 out of 49. Though this is an area where the EU could take positive action, officials passed the buck to member states, noting they resisted the Commission's proposal to quit renewing certain PFAS pesticides. An eventual [agreement](#) was reached on just two substances.

Common Fisheries Policy Reform



Euractiv reports that the EU Commission has [closed its consultation](#) on whether the Common Fisheries Policy – last reformed in 2013 – is fit for purpose, amid sharp divisions between the industry, MEPs and NGOs. Two years ago, the Commission carried out an in-depth [evaluation](#) of the CFP,

which identified successes in the recovery of vulnerable fish stocks but also shortcomings in the implementation of some rules.

At the time, industry representatives [regretted](#) “a missed opportunity” to overhaul the policy, which they said was overburdened with environmental norms. It remains to be seen whether the EU executive will choose to reopen the [legislation](#) this time.

The EU Parliament voted in January in favour of reports on EU fisheries pushed by the EPP group (Fine Gael), which drop some environmental bans and focus on fleet competitiveness, effectively calling for a reform of the Common Fisheries Policy.

Hairdressers not included



As part of the Commission's €30 million annual budget for communication campaigns in 2023, make up services amounted to €88,000. That's a budget of around €3,259 per commissioner a year. Hairdressers are not included.

