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Triple-lock for abolition in 'early 2026' - McEntee

75% OF IRISH PEOPLE
SUPPORT STAYING
NEUTRAL.

IN 2025, OVER
80% OF IRISH TIMES
OPINION PIECES
THAT TOOK A POSITION
ON NEUTRALITY
OPPOSED IT.



The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Helen McEntee, has said she wants to move quickly on getting the draft legislation abolishing the Triple Lock passed by the Oireachtas. The proposed legislation “will be published and debated by both Houses of the Oireachtas in early 2026”, she said. With a clear government majority, this effectively signals the end of neutrality. Only massive public mobilisation can stop this disastrous move, which will likely lead to our entanglement in NATO or an EU Army.

Latest; Council agrees €90bn for Ukraine – backed by EU budget



Since the article below was written, EU leaders with the support of Ireland have decided to borrow 90 billion euros backed by the EU budget, to fund Ukraine for the next two years rather than use frozen Russian asset. They avoided divisions over an unprecedented plan to finance Kyiv with Russian sovereign cash. Instead, the Russian funds will remain frozen until they pay war reparations to Ukraine though the Commission will continue work on ways to channel them to Ukraine.

The current plan is that Ukraine would pay back the loan if Russia pays war reparations but it is difficult to see that ever happening as the scale of Ukraine's needs are such that reparations would be dissipated and the EU would be left on the hook for the loans. If the loans are repaid in proportion to voting strength, then we'd be liable for around €2bn but that is speculative at the moment. Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic got an effective derogation from the plan.

This development does not detract from the facts as outlined in the article below as the Commission now knows that it will have support for Article 122 being flexibly utilised for issues other than intended in the treaties. Our current government will, no doubt, continue to support this law breaking and ensure that we remain part of the 'coalition of the willing'.

Did you know that we are part of the Coalition of the Willing?



Or, that we support abandoning the Rule of Law to arm Ukraine?



[According to Micheál Martin](#), Ireland supports the EU Commission's plan to violate EU law and the EU Treaties in order to confiscate €200 billion of frozen Russian assets and give them to Ukraine. [Art. 29.4 of Bunreacht na hÉireann](#) obliges us to uphold EU law – like it or not! So, irrespective of your view on the Ukraine conflict, this move by Martin, if successful, would set a potentially disastrous precedent.

Micheál Martin backs Von der Leyen in the attempt to use [Article 122 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union](#) (TFEU) as legal base for this proposed measure. It provides for EU money to be allocated *by qualified majority voting* – that is, without unanimity – as an emergency measure in face of natural disasters or severe economic difficulties. It clearly does not apply to foreign policy matters, which *always requires unanimity* at EU level. The issue of the frozen Russian money is obviously a foreign policy one. Yet Micheál Martin claims that Russia's assets abroad can be seized under this Article 122 TFEU, which only requires a majority vote to implement.

If this Article, can be used to seize Russia's money, it can be used in relation to a whole range of other foreign policy matters to circumvent the requirement for unanimity. So, Micheál Martin abandons Ireland's national veto on EU foreign policy and actively assists another power grab by the EU Commission.

This is a very serious development as it constitutes a surrender of one of the more potent tools of a neutral foreign policy. This decision, which the public seems unaware of, could also impose significant costs on Irish taxpayers in the future and would appear to require a referendum to amend the Constitution. There is also another serious issue, in that Ireland would be underwriting money that will ultimately be used to support Ukraine militarily; hardly the action of a self proclaimed neutral! Meanwhile, the obedient Irish media looks the other way. Below is a legal opinion from Stephen Kelly Russian Assets: the EU's Dangerous Game – International Law. Blog <https://share.google/n78SabFrSZ3AgL1rn>

The Commission plans to relegate women’s rights in the next budget



Over the years in Ireland, the EU has been lauded as a champion of women’s rights. During the various treaty debates representative of women’s organisations were granted media cameos to urge a Yes vote. Now, there is a distinct possibility that funding for women’s rights and indeed, human rights advocacy generally, will be significantly reduced while the equality agenda contains many issues that urgently require attention.

Over the next two years, negotiations will take place for the EU's next seven-year budget, known as the MFF. When the European Commission put forward its [proposal](#), it introduced a new programme, [AgoraEU](#), which would merge three programmes – Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV), MEDIA and Creative Europe – into a single funding stream backed by €8.6bn.

The CERV strand, which aims to protect and promote human rights, gender equality and democracy is a small amount compared to the total EU budget. Just €3.59bn would be allocated compared with nearly €2 trillion overall, representing barely 0.18 percent of the entire proposed budget.

[Read more here](#)

Stop ReArm Europe



The Peoples Movement joined a coalition of over 800 organisations in [calling on the EU Parliament](#) to reject the 2026 EU budget proposal over what we described as an alarming shift toward militarisation at the expense of civilian needs. The appeal, issued under the banner [STOP ReArm Europe](#) was submitted ahead of the vote on the annual budget and related negotiations, including the upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2028–2034 and the so-called defence omnibus legislative packages.

The coalition argued that the proposed direction would commit record levels of EU funds to arms production and military infrastructure, while deprioritising investment in diplomacy, climate action, social protection, and public health. The statement read: “Europe stands at a crossroads: invest in life, or subsidise the machinery of death.”

The EU is increasingly influenced by weapons manufacturers; in 2025 the EU Commission held nearly six times more meetings with defence industry lobbyists than with NGOs, scientists, or trade unions on issues related to war and foreign policy. This lobbying has shaped a legislative agenda that boosts weapons subsidies, reduces oversight, and shifts public resources from civilian to military budgets. The upcoming MFF is expected to multiply EU military funding by five times compared to earlier cycles and these financial shifts risk undermining the EU’s stated commitments to peace, human rights, and sustainable development.

Another step towards EU authoritarianism



Across the EU, a coordinated assault on civil society is unfolding. EU institutions and national governments are deploying a five-step process to eliminate the independent organisations that stand between corporate power and the public interest. The process is sequential and efficient: fabricate a scandal, delegitimise and defund organisations into dependency on philanthropic support, then criminalise their new funding as foreign influence, all while continuing to demand NGOs services for consumer protection and digital rights enforcement that governments refuse to fund themselves.

The epitome of this attack is the creation of a dedicated Scrutiny Working Group on NGO financing within the EU Parliament's Budgetary Control Committee to investigate how certain NGOs have been financed by the EU Commission. After a decade-old anti-NGO campaign, the dominant centre-right EPP of Fine Gael backed by the far-right, Patriots for Europe, succeeded in weaponising a parliamentary tool otherwise reserved for genuine scandals like Dieselgate, against organisations playing an accountability role in policy formation and enforcement across EU policy.

[Read more here](#)

At last, Big Business visibly takes over the EU



After years of championing tougher regulation, the Commission's new "simplification" push is handing corporate lobbyists the kinds of wins they used to only dream about.

From dialling back GDPR to easing pesticide approvals and weakening sustainability requirements, the EU's regulatory machine is being unwound at a pace that even lobbying consultancies admit they are struggling to match as they rush to recruit staff.

Corporate pressure had been building for more than a year – from the Antwerp Declaration to Business Europe's list of 68 laws to weaken – but the real breakthrough came after the 2024 EU elections, when Commission access suddenly opened. The change is reshaping Brussels' culture and internal power dynamics. Commission officials who have spent a lifetime keeping lobbyists at arm's length are now asking them for their wish lists, while racing to rewrite rules in a range of sectors, helped by a right-to-far-right majority in Parliament intent on deregulation. [Euractive has the story.](#)

Or the Irish Times



Claude Cockburn used to tell this story: Noam Chomsky once went to the dentist and was informed that he was grinding his teeth in his sleep. Consultation with Mrs. Chomsky determined that this was not the case. Further investigation found that Chomsky was indeed grinding his teeth, but in the daytime – every morning when he read the *New York Times*. It was an understandable reaction given the "Newspaper of Record's" gross distortions.

Discussions on an EU Army are pending



EU Commissioner for Defense and Space Andrius Kubilius speaking to the daily *La Stampa* after a meeting with Italian Defense Minister Crosetto, described the talks as "high-level strategic discussions," adding that: "We also need to discuss a possible European Defense Union, a new security architecture that could include the UK, Norway, and Ukraine, to consolidate Europe's defensive capabilities. As for the idea of a European army, it is probably too early to say anything concrete. but we must begin to discuss it openly." Here is the current mutual defence clause (Article [42\(7\)](#) of the Treaty on European Union). The clause, brought to us courtesy of the Lisbon Treaty, is binding on all Member States.

“The weak link in EU defence.”



Ireland's projected budget surpluses for 2025 and 2026—€10.2 billion and €5.1 billion—have sparked renewed calls from the political and media establishment for deeper military integration with Europe. *The Financial Times*, in a recent piece labelling Ireland “the weak link in EU defence,” claims that because Ireland hosts Big Tech, Big Pharma and Big Data, it has a duty to “pay its share” for Western security. Economic success, they argue, brings military obligations: higher defence spending, participation in EU military structures, and ultimately an end to neutrality. Like all good ideological manoeuvres, the argument contains a grain of truth, and then distorts it beyond recognition.

An article addressing the issue, by Eoghan O'Neill, may be read [here](#).

Michael D Higgins' legacy on neutrality



Michael D Higgins gave voice to concerns over various governmental attempts to eliminate facets of neutrality and commit Ireland to further EU militarism. In 2018, the President stated that the government has a duty to explain why it signed up to PESCO (Permanent Structured Co-operation), the EU's security and defence operation.

Continuing this line of questioning in June 2023, Higgins reflected public support for active, positive neutrality when he questioned the selection of speakers at the government's International Security Forum, the composition of which was mostly made up of ‘the admirals, the generals, the air force, the rest of it’, – and asked why there was no representation from still-neutral countries such as Austria. Aside from the military, every invited lecturer from a university in Ireland was either EU funded or a government party affiliate. Just one speaker from PANA was permitted to contribute. Higgins was critical; too, of the EU for its increasing military posturing, citing Emmanuel Macron's comments that ‘the future of Europe is as the most reliable pillar in Nato.

EU Defence Commissioner sets up Group of Elders – including Pat Cox



EU Defence Commissioner Kubišius has convened a group of political elder statesmen and women to consider the future of European defence. Participants are tasked with addressing a range of broad military questions. These ranged from how a European Defence Union (EU Army) could be created; the role non-EU countries like the US and Ukraine should play, to what the bloc's long-term strategy towards Russia should be. Among its members is Pat Cox, former Fine Gael politician and MEP. Cox is a former EU envoy to Ukraine.

The last such conclave under Giscard d'Estaing produced a Constitution for Europe, later the Lisbon Treaty. All the signs are that this one will be used as cover to produce a blueprint for an EU Army – or army of armies. Otherwise, Kubišius could have consulted Gen. Clancy and the EUMC if he needed military advice!

Yet another EU scandal in high places!



We've had Qatargate; Huawei-gate; Pfizer-gate and now EEAS-gate. Corruption has reared its head again in Brussels' after police raided the EU's foreign service and the College of Europe in Bruges, where Brigid Laffan formerly worked as a research co-ordinator. They arrested two senior figures: Federica Mogherini, EU's former chief diplomat, and Stefano Sannino, now a Commission director-general who formerly headed the EEAS. Both have since resigned, having been formally [accused of fraud and corruption](#). Meanwhile, ex-EU Parliament Vice-President Eva Kaili [awaits trial](#) charged with participation in a criminal organisation, corruption and money laundering.

The IMF eyes social provision in the EU



Europe's 'explosive' public debt requires revision of social contract, IMF warns. Europe's soaring levels of public debt necessitate a fundamental "rethink" of governments' role in providing critical services to EU citizens, the Fund [said in a note](#). "A discussion on the scope and sustainability of the 'European model' seems unavoidable" in many countries, the Fund noted. This essentially means cutting public services and increasing taxation. How else are they going to raise the funds to support militarisation?

[Read more here](#)

MERCOSUR postponed again



It's reported that the EU Commission plans to sign the Mercosur trade agreement on 12 January in Paraguay. EU leaders refused to give von der Leyen the mandate to sign the deal in Brazil in late December as planned, after France and Italy [pushed for delays](#) and extra safety nets for farmers. [Here's the IFA's](#) and [ICMSA's](#) take on the development and here, the [new safeguard measures](#) passed last week.

Part of our December protest against the abolition of the Triple Lock and notice of our next one.



**PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT
GLUAISEACHT 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 January 15th at 1:00pm.
Outside Dáil Eireann, Kildare St.

Please try to get along - it is important!
Placards and posters will be provided.

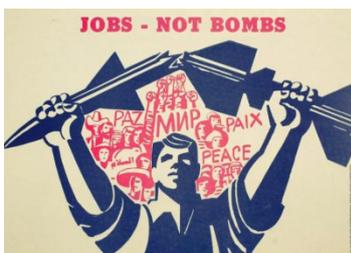
Oireachtas Joint report critical of SAFE and ReArm Europe



The Oireachtas Joint Finance Committee, chaired by Peoples Movement patron Mairéad Farrell, [has launched its report](#) on the Prioritisation of Defence Funding in the EU, examining the EU's €150bn [SAFE Programme](#) and the €800 billion [ReArm Europe](#) plan. The Committee opposes the use of the EU general budget under the SAFE Regulation and is concerned that it may be in conflict with Ireland's neutrality. The committee delivers seventeen opinions in its report and it is important to note that it received cross-governmental support within the committee. [Here you can read a submission](#) made on behalf of the Peoples

Movement. Other submissions are in the appendix.

EU Militarisation and the Working Time Directive – unions must act!



One of the [European Defence Industrial Programme's](#) least discussed but most alarming features is the creation of a special "crisis mechanism". Under this framework, basic protections set out in the [EU's Working Time Directive](#) could be suspended, allowing for extended shifts and longer workweeks in arms production. The Working Time Directive limits working time to 48 hours per week and 13 hours per day — limits already very lenient for employers.

[EDIP is a Regulation](#) proposed by the Commission to start implementing concrete measures identified in [European Defence Industrial Strategy \(EDIS\)](#). As it would be a Regulation, we would have no option but to implement it in full or face ongoing fines

The EDIP's crisis derogations would allow corporations to go beyond this, overriding existing protections in the name of "continuity of production". This proposal represents not only a frontal attack on workers' rights, but also on health and safety. Longer shifts mean more fatigue and especially in high-risk industries such as explosives and heavy manufacturing, where fatigue is a serious safety hazard. EDIP reintroduces, through the back door, language that trade unions had removed from earlier defence legislation, such as the Act to Support Ammunition Production. IndustriAll's [response is here](#)
[Read more here](#)

From the Bog to the Cloud



From the Bog to the Cloud provides a rigorous critique of Ireland's contemporary role within global imperialist structures, offering a compelling strategy for change through anti-imperialist struggle. Authors Bresnihan and Brodie examine Ireland's complex position between the competing interests of the EU, Britain, and the US, arguing that the country remains locked in a state of dependency. Their core framework revolves around the concepts of exploitation and the extraction of value, highlighting how Ireland is entangled in processes of digitalisation and decarbonisation, most clearly seen in the proliferation of data centres and the limited rollout of renewable energy.

The book unfolds as a radical exploration of Ireland's space, time, infrastructure, economy, and politics. It challenges revisionist histories that present Ireland's modernisation as a neutral, inevitable process, instead showing how imperialism shaped the development of both the Free State and its current FDI-driven economy. Through a materialist lens, Bresnihan and Brodie delve into the ongoing struggle over land, energy, and sovereignty, contextualising Ireland's historical and contemporary challenges.

By focusing on the exploitation of resources through foreign direct investment (FDI), particularly in the context of data centres, the book sheds light on the persistent legacy of colonialism. It offers powerful insights into popular resistance movements, illustrating how they can be linked to a broader anti-imperialist agenda. The authors assert the need for reclaiming state power, calling for a just transition that avoids bourgeois ideological capture, and instead mobilises for the popular good.

From the Bog to the Cloud: Dependency and Eco-Modernity in Ireland (Patrick Bresnihan and Patrick Brodie, Bristol University Press, 2025)

