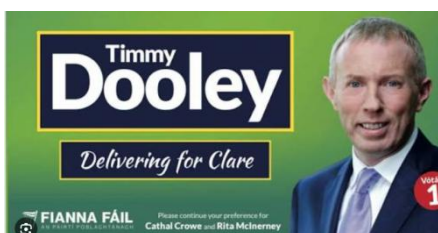


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Delivering for Clare



[On the Tonight show, July 2nd](#): "You can't sit back and say I'd love to be spending all that money on houses and schools" - we need to spend on "defence capabilities" - Timmy Dooley TD. Well, we can sit back and we should ensure that Timmy has plenty of time to sit back after the next election.

Billy Kelleher and the veto



"Institutional reform is something that has to be looked at," and work should begin during Ireland's EU presidency over the next six months to abolish national vetoes on foreign policy according to FF's Billy Kelleher MEP. Getting rid of the unanimity principle – something that applies to EU foreign policy and a few other key decision-making areas – is a longstanding priority for Kelleher's Renew Europe grouping. Kelleher is Renew's chief whip and deputy leader.

The EU Commission is expected to come forward with a long-delayed proposal on the governance of a larger in September. Kelleher typifies Fianna Fail's disdain for national sovereignty and like his party leader, is quite content to dispense with its remnants. Oh, and he wanted to be President of Ireland!!

EU has known since 2017 it had legal right to freeze Israel trade deal

The EU is Israel's biggest trade partner. In 2024, it covered nearly a third of it's trade in goods. That's USD 42.6 billion.

[The EU Observer reports](#) that a historical opinion by the Commission's then top lawyer, said the bloc was legally entitled to suspend cooperation with Israel, such as its 'Horizon Europe' science grants and 'Erasmus' student-exchange scheme, already in 2017 due to Israel's violations of international law in the West Bank. It was even entitled to freeze the whole [EU-Israel Association Agreement](#), which governed their duty-free trade, the memo added.

It showed the EU was fully aware of Israeli abuses; that they were getting worse; that dialogue with Israel was ineffective, and that Palestinians had no legal redress. The opinion also said that [UN Security Council resolution 2334](#) in 2016 had explicitly called for UN members to take measures to prevent acts of destruction in the West Bank. A total or partial suspension of the EU-Israel trade agreement "would comply with customary international law", the memo said.

Operation IRINI – the truth



Minister for Defence Helen McEntee has made [a statement](#) in the Dáil, in relation to the UN Security Council's allowing the mandate to which Operation IRINI was attached, to lapse. The Minister explicitly stated that the existence of the Triple Lock forced the cancellation of Defence Forces participation in this Operation, stating that "the withdrawal illustrates the operational and political constraints that the Triple Lock system places on Ireland's ability to contribute to international peacekeeping and the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)."

The EU extended the Operation's mandate to March 2027 with the aim of tracking and boarding the Russian 'shadow fleet'. If the Triple Lock was not in place, Minister McEntee would be happy to involve us in this operation, dragging us into potential confrontation with a nuclear power. It's just another reason for keeping the Triple Lock.

You can read about the evolution of Operation IRINI [here](#) and an article from the Irish Examiner [here](#)

War fever does not make society safer — quite the opposite.



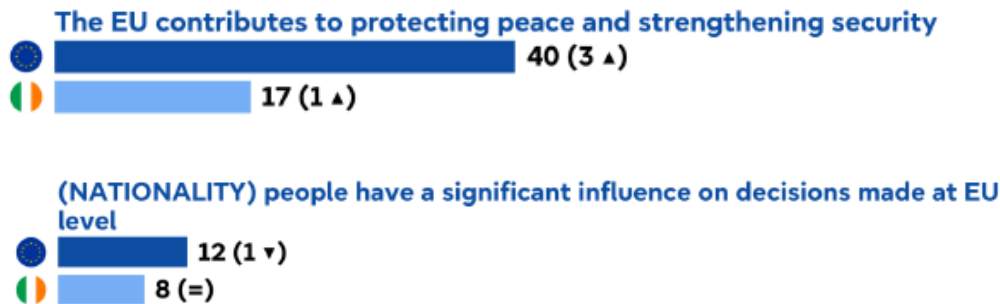
Fear and panic are stoked to push the weapons build up and prepare a new generation for war. The arms industry reaps inordinate profits while welfare measures are cut to the bone. Militarisation is creeping into society: in schools, universities, hospitals, media, and living rooms. Young people are addressed as future soldiers. Military campaigns promise discipline, adventure, and a salary while remaining silent about the brutality of war and death. University research is increasingly steered toward the military industry. Hospitals are presented with plans where health care logic is subordinated to military emergency scenarios. The line between civilian and military is blurring.

This is dangerous. A society preparing for war changes from within. It grows accustomed to orders, distrusts criticism, and applauds to the rhythm of the war drum. Pacifists are dismissed as naive, trade union members as irresponsible, and opposition parties as allies of the enemy. Militarisation abroad always goes hand in hand with militarisation at home: with the creation of a domestic enemy, the restriction of democratic space, and the normalization of authoritarian reflexes.

As the EU militarises and Ireland is dragged along on its coat tails; is this where we are heading as government spending on arms accelerates? It's a question we urgently need to face.

The Irish are no fools all the same!

Two extracts from the latest Eurobarometer from the EU.



Pfizergate – we may soon know all!



The EU Commission will likely be forced to publish complete versions of its multi-billion euro contracts to buy Covid-19 vaccines after the lawyer to the EU's top court urged it to throw out an appeal by the EU executive. In a legal opinion, the advocate general at the EU Court of Justice, said that a 2024 court ruling that requires the commission to disclose un-redacted versions of the contracts should remain intact. The case against the commission was initially brought by five Green MEPs in 2021, requesting access to documents related to the joint purchases of Covid vaccines.

The court found that the commission should also have published text messages between commission president Ursula von der Leyen and Pfizer chief executive Albert Bourla, who personally negotiated a €35bn vaccine contract, effectively bypassing the normal public procurement process.

The thin end of the wedge – another EU encroachment on freedoms



[This recent ruling by the ECJ](#): may initially appear to be just another sanction on a Russian entity, Russia Today (RT), but on closer reading, it is clear that it isn't just censorship in the conventional sense - blocking access to a website or removing content from platforms - this is the criminalization of information relayed by private citizens, with prison sentences attached. It doesn't matter if the information relayed is accurate or not. It just matters that it originates from RT or other media outlets banned in the EU. It's purely based on the identity of the originator.

The ruling is actually explicit about this: the regulation, quoted by the Court says that the prohibition applies to "any content," drawing no distinction based on what the content actually says. If it originates from banned outlets, it's banned. Think about the absurdity of it: if a banned media outlet publishes a video saying the sky is blue and you share it on a publicly accessible website in the EU, you'd fall within the scope of this ruling, making you liable to criminal prosecution – whether you knew it was banned or not. That's the way the EU is going but you're safe enough sharing Irish Times posts.

Peoples Forum on Peace and Neutrality

SCHEDULE	
FRIDAY	
18.30	Arrival and registration
19:00-21:00	Keynote: Clare Daly and Andrew Reinstein with Patrick Bresnahan
SATURDAY	
9.30	Arrival and registration
10:00-11:00	Ireland's diplomatic tradition and neutrality Karen Devine, Philip McDonagh, with John Maguire
11:00-11.30	Coffee break (tea and coffee provided)
11.30-13:00	Militarism, the arms trade and war profiteering Sam Perlo-Freeman, Khem Rhogaly, Laetitia Sedou, with Harry Browne
13:00-14:00	Lunch break (lunch provided)
14:00-15:30	Irish neutrality and international law Francesca Albanese, Stephen Kelly, Joe Noonan, with Rory Rowan
15:30-16.00	Closing address Mr. Michael D. Higgins, former president of Ireland

	Michael D Higgins at the People's Forum on Peace and... 5 vistas · hace 1 hora	⋮
	Clare Daly at the People's Forum on Peace and Neutrality 6 vistas · hace 1 hora	⋮
	Stephen Kelly at the People's Forum on Peace and Neutrality 2 vistas · hace 1 hora	⋮
	Joe Noonan at the People's Forum on Peace and Neutrality 4 vistas · hace 3 horas	⋮
	Karen Devine at the People's Forum on Peace and Neutrality 4 vistas · hace 1 hora	⋮

The video recordings of all the speakers from the People's Forum on Peace and Neutrality held last month are now available on YouTube @neutralityforum. More info at: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DaA0zOjsztB/?igsh=MWJlbnpuZHpkbmo5aw==>

You'll find interviews with some of the participants on this podcast:
<https://open.spotify.com/show/1A0tS3ZTWhRNYLAqvy8bf8>

Two to watch for as von der Leyen further consolidates power

Von der Leyen's habit of taking a personal interest in strategic dossiers has become one of the defining features of her presidency. Now she is extending her reach deeper into the area of military policy.



[The European Security Strategy](#), due after the NATO summit, is supposed to define the EU's threats, priorities and tools. Previous strategic documents, including the EU Global Strategy and the Strategic Compass, were largely handled by the EEAS. This time, the diplomatic service is expected to limit its focus mainly to [Article 42.7](#), the EU's mutual assistance (defense) clause, and other issues where member states have requested specific guidance, such as the definition of threats.

Andrius Kubilius, the defense commissioner is working on setting up a [European Defense Union](#) — a developing policy framework specifically assigned to him by von der Leyen. Von der Leyen remains firmly in control of the Commission, consolidating power in while gradually sidelining alternative centers of influence — including the EEAS.

Tainted justice?



More than 40 per cent of jurists at the EU Court of Justice have declared private financial interests, with some working on cases concerning industries where they hold stakes. A new Investigate Europe investigation reveals the transparency concerns and possible conflict of interest risks at the bloc's most powerful court.

These individuals are invested with unique power to shape the rules governing half a billion people. The 90-odd members of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) can compel governments to rewrite laws, force corporations to shell out billions and have the last word on laws of the world's largest trade bloc. These appointed experts are held to exacting standards to avoid anything casting a shadow of doubt over their decisions. Yet a significant number of them have ties to the very companies the court can effectively regulate, Investigate Europe has revealed. Let's see what Michael McGrath, Commissioner for Democracy, Justice and the Rule of Law does about this!

[The report is here](#)

Who does the EU really serve?



The Commission's Critical Chemicals Alliance (CCA) has been effectively taken over by the industry it is meant to scrutinise. The alliance is tasked with identifying chemical molecules and production sites deemed "critical" to the EU economy. Those designated as such could qualify for EU or national subsidies.

But a [report](#) by Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) has found that the initiative gives large chemical producers, who directly benefit from the way this list is shaped, a central role in what goes on it. It is illustrative of how EU policy is picked apart by the chemicals industry and its lobby groups and recast to serve its own narrow interests. No chance that civil society groups would gain such privileged access! 'Nothing new here!'

Part of the welcome for von der Leyen and her cronies



Ireland's EU Presidency - Aughinish Alumina and the EU



Ireland's EU Presidency programme claims to rest on three pillars: competitiveness, values, and security. The "values" pillar is purportedly about "democracy, equality and human rights" and has crumbled within days under the weight of its own contradictions.

The Aughinish Alumina affair exposes this hypocrisy with surgical precision. Estonia proposed banning EU alumina exports to Russia eighteen months ago and was ignored. The Commission repeatedly refused to include alumina on sanctions lists. Yet now, simply because Ireland holds the presidency chair, there is sudden urgency to sacrifice 900 Irish jobs in County Limerick on the altar of geopolitical posturing.

The Irish State—not Brussels, not Stockholm, not the EU Parliament—should determine the future of Irish industry based on our own national priorities and ban the export if it is considered appropriate. That the Government cannot see this reveals how deeply the addiction to EU membership has corroded democratic accountability. The real choice is not between "more Europe" and "less Europe," but between genuine national democracy and subservience to a supranational elite that treats nations as provinces and workers as expendable.

The latest: The EU Parliament has voted in favour of a proposal to ban alumina exports to Russia. Fine Gael and Sinn Féin voted in favour of the non – binding proposal.

[Read more here](#)

Military Spending in Europe



In 2025 Ireland [surpassed only Iceland](#) in terms of military spending but the EU member states spent an average of roughly 2%. To reach that average, we would have to spend ten times more on weaponry than we did in 2025. The data is extracted from the [SIPRI Military Expenditures Database](#) and

does pose the question; what would we use these weapons for as, assuming we 'need' them in the first place, that most will be redundant on delivery as strategies and weaponry are evolving fast. But the bottom line was so eloquently expressed by Timmy Dooley TD when he said: "I'd love to be spending all that money on houses and schools" - we need to spend on "defence capabilities." So, money that should be used to improve the welfare of Irish people will instead line the pockets of arms manufacturers. Surely, that can't be right?

Security – a Priority of Ireland's EU Council Presidency

McCann FitzGerald, the leading legal firm, sums up succinctly the military priorities of the Irish EU Council Presidency, for its clients - [Here](#)

It makes for sobering reading but does illustrate how deeply the government has enmeshed us in EU military planning and how the elements that would constitute an EU Army are being rapidly developed.

The costs of an Irish EU presidency – triple that of Cyprus or Denmark



EU Affairs Minister Thomas Byrne has played down the near €300 million budgeted figure for Ireland's upcoming Council presidency. "We haven't set it as high as that. The figure will be high ... but we haven't published a final figure really," he said.

Czechia's [independent audit office](#) has studied the spending of 15 different countries during their Council presidencies and concluded that the €84 million spent on Prague's presidency in 2022 was just below average. Ireland's last presidency in 2013 was budgeted to cost €60 million excluding security costs. The actual expense was just over €40 million in a time of austerity measures. Cyprus' presidency, spent an estimated €68 million on operational expenses, including security, and €27 million on development projects and capital expenditure, mainly infrastructure. The Danish foreign ministry estimates its presidency cost €80 million including security costs. So, why is the government spending so much and who are they trying to impress?

Resist militarisation!



The recent London Anti-War Conference denounced the arms build-up by the EU, as seen in the Commission's €800billion 'ReArm Europe Plan/Readiness 2030'. "Austerity and militarisation" are merely "two sides of the same coin", noted Ian Hodson, President of the food workers union, BFAWU, pointing out that Starmer cut funding for wheelchair users in order to finance armaments spending: "People with disabilities are paying

for war!" The Conference was preceded by a growing number of national and international protests against militarisation. Here in Ireland, as the drive to militarise accelerates and the possibility of repressive measures increases, the trade unions should be a central bulwark against such a development, particularly as the effects of reduced social spending to finance arms purchases begins to bite. It is now time to lay the groundwork for such resistance.

[Read more here](#)

EU Ombudsman investigates secretive meetings with lobbyists



The EU Ombudsman is opening an inquiry into the Commission's so-called "Reality Checks," a form of closed-door consultation, often reserved for businesses and lobbyists that feed directly into the EU's simplification and deregulation drive. She has asked the commission for a written reply and access to internal documentation, following a complaint lodged by [Corporate Europe Observatory](#) (CEO). The issue is the decision to exempt Reality Checks from standard transparency rules for meetings.

A CEO investigation [published](#) in April, found that companies and business associations often made up between 80-100 percent of participants across commission directorates. The meetings they attended included sessions on sensitive topics such as free trade, steel, defence and artificial intelligence.

Surveillance by Hook or by Crook – Brussels style



The EU Parliament has “adopted” the extension of Chat Control 1.0. This is the temporary suspension of the EU’s ePrivacy rules that allows tech platforms to mass-scan citizens’ private communications, ostensibly to detect child sexual abuse material. “Adopted” is placed in quotation marks here because the word implies something that conspicuously failed to happen: a majority of MEPs voting in favour. In fact, 314 MEPs voted to reject the text, against 276 in favour. And yet it passed anyway. This was made possible through a procedural sleight of hand worthy of Brussels at its most cynical.

The file was rammed through under an “urgency procedure”: European Parliament President Roberta Metsola unilaterally reopened a dossier that MEPs had already rejected in March, and the Council conveniently bounced it back at the start of the summer recess, when securing attendance is hardest. Rejecting it a second time would have required not a simple majority but an absolute one: 360 votes. The law was therefore approved despite a majority of MEPs voting against it.

In case you missed it - the Vatican gets it right



The EU has been forced to defend its commitment to international law after the Vatican accused Brussels of applying a double standard when it comes to war. Cardinal Fernández, the Vatican’s doctrinal chief, argued that governments increasingly invoke international law based on political convenience rather than universal principles.

He accused the bloc of [inconsistency in its foreign policy](#), imposing sanctions on some countries and providing military and financial support to others, even when faced with what he described as “more serious invasions with even more brutal consequences” elsewhere. The contradiction, Fernández argued, reflected political and economic interests instead of a stable commitment to international law.

“The Vatican is voicing what much of the Global South feels: The EU does not stand for universal values. It stands for corporate interests,” according to MEP Marc Botenga, while Lynn Boylan argued that the EU had adopted 20 sanctions packages against Russia while allowing Israel to act “with impunity.” We can expect to hear more from the Vatican.

