

KASPress Ireland



News Summary

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Welcome to **KASPress Ireland**, our weekly summary of relevant and interesting news from the Irish press.

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Politics

- The Irish Government does not support the United Kingdom's continued membership of the European Union "at any cost", Minister for European Affairs Dara Murphy has said.
- Fine Gael still intends to remove the Universal Social Charge if returned to government after the election, Taoiseach Enda Kenny has said, despite opposition to such a plan from International Monetary Fund staff.
- Ireland has been asked to take in just 20 asylum seekers under a stuttering European Union scheme aimed at relocating 160,000 people from war-torn states such as Syria and Iraq.
- Tributes have been paid to Patrick Joseph (PJ) Mara, the former government press secretary and Fianna Fáil strategist, who died on Friday, aged 73.
- Taoiseach Enda Kenny has said Fine Gael's election manifesto, which he referred to as a "programme for Government", will be independently costed.
- Fine Gael is planning to establish a unit within the Department of the Taoiseach to implement its economic policies and create jobs if it is re-elected.
- A poll by firm Behaviour & Attitudes for the 'Sunday Times', puts Fine Gael on 31pc and unchanged from the last survey before Christmas. Labour is on 6 per cent, down two points. Fianna Fáil is on 20 per cent, up one point,

while Sinn Féin is on 16 per cent, down one point. Combined 'Independents and Others' are on 26pc, up two points.

- Support for Fianna Fáil has grown according the latest opinion poll. A Red C/*Sunday Business Post* tracking poll showed public support for Micheál Martin's party was up two points to 19 per cent. The rise brings it level with Sinn Féin. Fine Gael remains the leading party but they were down two points in the poll to 30 per cent. The Labour Party was unchanged on 9 per cent while Independents were up one point to 15 per cent and the Social Democrats were down one to 1 per cent.
- Fianna Fáil will not enter coalition with Sinn Féin or Fine Gael under any circumstances, party leader Micheál Martin has said.
- Parents should not be forced to have their children baptised to get a place in a State-funded school, Children's Minister James Reilly has said, adding that it might be possible to change the situation through legislation rather than a referendum.
- Tánaiste Joan Burton faces a motion of no confidence in the Dáil over her decision to bypass a competitive process and appoint former trade union leader David Begg as chairman of a State board.
- Tánaiste Joan Burton has defended the Government against criticism by the European Commission that expansionary budget decisions could threaten Ireland's economic recovery.

Economy

- Taoiseach Enda Kenny is attending the Davos gathering today of world leaders, chief executives, activists and celebrities. He will address a panel debate on the global economy today at the 46th annual World Economic Forum in the Swiss alpine resort of Davos today. This is his fifth consecutive year to attend the forum. The theme of this year's conference is preparing for the fourth industrial revolution.
- Up to 1,500 new jobs were confirmed in a series of investments in the technology and environmental service sectors.

- Sinn Fein's finance spokesman, Pearse Doherty, has said in an interview that "we don't want to scare off investors and we wouldn't," as "we need to have wealth generated in the country."
- Despite all the positive headlines, Ireland is still trailing many of its international counterparts in finding jobs for its citizens, according to the latest assessment of the global labour market by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
- AIB and Bank of Ireland's weak asset quality is hindering their chances of getting a ratings upgrade, Fitch has warned.
- Dublin Airport is set to hire 180 staff this year, primarily in customer service roles. The airport made the announcement this week as it confirmed that 2015 had been a record year for passenger traffic through Dublin. The airport handled 25 million flyers last year, higher than the previous record of 23.5 million that was set in 2008.
- Companies have delayed developing Irish oil and gas projects worth an equivalent of 60 million barrels in the past year due to major falls in the price of the commodity, a new study has found.
- The European Investment Bank has agreed to provide €200 million in funding to build flood barriers and other defences in around 30 at-risk areas. This is the first time Ireland has been provided with money from the bank to tackle flooding.

Society

- Small rural post offices could receive up to €20,000 a year in government subsidies to remain operational.
- Dr Rhona Mahony, the master of the National Maternity Hospital, Holles Street, has called for a referendum to let the public decide on whether termination of pregnancy should be allowed in cases of fatal foetal abnormality.
- Education Minister Jan O'Sullivan plans to almost double the number of foreign students to boost the income of ailing colleges and universities in the coming years.

- International mafia money is being routed through Ireland concealed in massive hedge funds, according to the head of the Criminal Assets Bureau (Cab).
- Lecturers in institutes of technology are planning to strike on February 3 and now their union colleagues in almost half the country's second-level schools, as well as colleges of further education, are also threatening to stop work for day before the General Election.

Headlines

- [21.01.16] [Enda Kenny will speak at a debate at Davos today](#) [Sunday Business Post]
- [21.01.16] [We need to have wealth generated in this country says Sinn Fein](#) [Sunday Business Post]
- [21.01.16] [State does not support the UK staying in the EU 'at any cost'](#) [Irish Times]
- [21.01.16] [Up to 1,500 new jobs in technology and eco sectors](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [21.01.16] [Lifeline for rural post offices as they could receive up to €20,000 a year in government subsidies](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [20.01.16] [FG still plans to scrap USC despite IMF warning, Kenny says](#) [Irish Times]
- [20.01.16] [Ireland still lagging behind international counterparts in finding work for its citizens](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [19.01.16] [Irish people must be allowed to decide on abortion, says Holles Street master](#) [Irish Independent]
- [19.01.16] [Ireland asked to take only 20 asylum seekers under EU plan](#) [Irish Times]
- [19.01.16] [Irish banks' asset quality denting rating, says Fitch](#) [Irish Independent]
- [18.01.16] [Dublin Airport set to hire 180 staff as 25 million passengers pass through doors](#) [Irish Independent]
- [18.01.16] [Kenny says Fine Gael election manifesto will be independently costed](#) [Irish Times]
- [18.01.16] [PJ Mara, Fianna Fáil's supreme strategist, dies at 73](#) [Irish Times]
- [18.01.16] [Foreign student increase to boost Irish colleges](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [18.01.16] [Fine Gael to create new economic unit in Kenny's department](#) [Irish Times]
- [18.01.16] [Two surveys show increase in support for Fianna Fáil](#) [Irish Independent]
- [17.01.16] [Russian mob hides cash in IFSC funds and land](#) [Irish Independent]
- [17.01.16] [Irish projects worth €1.6bn shelved as oil crisis deepens](#) [Irish Independent]
- [16.01.16] [Fianna Fáil support on the rise, poll shows](#) [Irish Times]
- [16.01.16] [Martin rules out FF entering coalition with SF or FG](#) [Irish Times]
- [15.01.16] [Tánaiste defends Coalition against budget criticism in EU report](#) [Irish Times]
- [15.01.16] [Ireland to get €200m flood defence aid from Europe](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [15.01.16] [Tánaiste Joan Burton faces motion of no confidence](#) [Irish Times]
- [15.01.16] [Children's minister James Reilly calls for end of baptism links to schools](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [15.01.16] [Teachers' strike action could close second-level schools and third-level colleges for a day](#) [Irish Independent]