

KASPress Ireland



News Summary

18.12.15 – 23.12.15

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

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Politics

- A group of Taoiseach Enda Kenny's most senior advisers held a confidential meeting with senior British Conservative Party figures to study techniques for next year's General Election.
- Fine Gael TD John Perry is to be added to the General Election ticket in Sleigo-Leitrim after his bitter legal row with the party was settled in the High Court on Tuesday.
- Labour leader and Tánaiste Joan Burton has claimed that a single-party Fine Gael government would lack balance and be a "disservice to people".
- Fine Gael and Labour have been accused of taking part in "auction politics of the worst kind" after both parties promised to slash taxes if re-elected as a new opinion poll showed growing support for the coalition.
- Renewed efforts to save the Schengen zone got broad support from EU leaders, with the possibility that Ireland could play a greater role in the future. Taoiseach Enda Kenny said "the status quo cannot continue" with the current high numbers of refugees moving into Europe from African countries and Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Syria.
- British and Irish ministers are to meet in Dublin to discuss the implementation of the Fresh Start Agreement.

- Sinn Fein is facing a backlash over the party's decision to vote against anti-terrorism laws introduced in the wake of the militant Islamist extremist attack on Paris.
- Foreign Affairs Minister Charlie Flanagan warns Britain leaving EU would have 'grave consequences' for Ireland.
- Support for the Coalition has grown in the latest political opinion poll. Fine Gael support has increased by one point to 32 per cent, according to a Sunday Business Post/Red C tracking poll.

The Labour Party are up two points to 9 per cent while Sinn Féin are up one point to 19 per cent. Fianna Fáil dropped two points to 17 per cent, the same level of support it received in the 2011 general election. Independents and other parties were down to 23 per cent.

- Taoiseach Enda Kenny travelled over the weekend to Lebanon and the Golan Heights in Syria to visit Irish peacekeeping troops who will be away for Christmas.

Economy

- The Labour Party will not seek to resurrect its plan to link rent increases with the rate of inflation after the General Election, Tánaiste Joan Burton has indicated.
- Plans by Taoiseach Enda Kenny to move to US levels of income tax have been strongly rejected by the Labour Party.
- Mortgage approvals fell by 8 per cent in the year to November, amid calls for a loosening of the Central Bank's lending restrictions.
- Environment Minister Alan Kelly's advisers rushed to get rent certainty measures agreed by the Cabinet days before the budget in the fear that landlords would hike up rates or evict tenants.
- A survey published on Monday by Mercer, a leading personnel and pension consultancy says that salaries in Ireland will rise by more than 2 per cent next year. 97 per cent of the 135 organisations surveyed plan to increase their workers' pay over the course of 2016, as the economy recovers further.

- Dublin house prices are now falling hard at the same time as regional values surge - the exact opposite experience to one year ago.
- Taoiseach Enda Kenny has promised to slash income taxes across the board to bring Ireland into line with low-tax countries such as America and Britain.
- Swiss Bank, Credit Suisse, is to make Dublin its primary hub for servicing hedge funds in Europe and will move staff from London.

[Embassy of Ireland, Berlin: Ireland Economic up-date – December 2015](#)

Society

- Minister for Justice Frances Fitzgerald is to review the requirement to wait four years for a divorce in Ireland. Ms Fitzgerald has said it is time to assess whether a reduction in the term is necessary.
- President Michael D Higgins has highlighted the plight of refugees and the homeless in his annual Christmas address.
- Housing support agency Threshold has called on the Government to introduce a national strategy for the private rental sector amid expectations that a generation of people will never own their own home.

Headlines

- [23.12.2015] [FG advisers meet top Tories to run rule over election tactics](#) [Irish Times]
- [23.12.2015] [Labour abandons the idea of linking rent to inflation](#) [Irish Times]
- [22.12.2015] [Minister to review four-year wait on divorce requirement](#) [Irish Times]
- [22.12.2015] [Fine Gael TD John Perry added to election ticket in dramatic twist](#) [Irish Independent]
- [22.12.2015] [Alan Kelly's advisers rushed rent certainty measures amid fears of landlords rising rents](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [22.12.2015] [Central Bank rules hit as mortgage approvals slump by 8%](#) [Irish Times]
- [22.12.2015] [Enda Kenny's US-style income tax plan strongly rejected by Labour Party](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [21.12.2015] [Irish workers are likely to get pay rises next year](#) [Irish Times]
- [21.12.2015] [British and Irish ministers meeting to discuss implementation of Fresh Start Agreement](#) [Irish Independent]
- [21.12.2015] [FG alone in government would be a 'disservice'](#) [Irish Times]
- [21.12.2015] [Dublin house prices fall as rest of country surges on](#) [Irish Independent]
- [21.12.2015] [President focuses on the homelessness crisis](#) [Irish Independent]
- [21.12.2015] [Coalition low-tax pledges denounced as 'auction politics'](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [20.12.2015] [Sinn Fein won't support anti-terror laws following Paris attacks](#) [Irish Times]
- [20.12.2015] [Brexit could see return of border checkpoints](#) [Sunday Business Post]
- [20.12.2015] [Taoiseach Enda Kenny promises massive tax cuts to bring Ireland into line with low-tax countries](#) [Irish Times]
- [19.12.2015] [Support for Coalition rises in latest opinion poll](#) [Irish Times]
- [18.12.2015] [Credit Suisse to shift prime broker staff to Dublin from London](#) [Sunday Business Post]
- [18.12.2015] [Threshold: A generation will never own a home](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [18.12.2015] [Fresh bid to save free travel area in Europe](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [18.12.2015] [Enda Kenny's Christmas visit to Irish troops in Lebanon and Golan Heights](#) [Irish Examiner]