

## KASPress Ireland



### News Summary

**19.02.16 – 25.02.16**

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

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#### Top Story

**The Irish Polling Indicator, which combines all opinion polls in one estimate of public opinion, gives Fine Gael a 28.6 per cent share of the vote and the Labour Party 6.6 per cent. Both parties need a significant improvement on these figures if the Coalition is to have a realistic chance of retaining power in Friday's general election.**

#### Politics

- Half of all Irish people don't believe any political party has a strong job creation policy.
- None of the four party leaders landed a killer punch in Tuesday's pre-election television debate, but Tánaiste Joan Burton put in a notably stronger performance than in the earlier debates.
- The public is equally divided as to whether Fine Gael leader Enda Kenny or Fianna Fáil leader Micheál Martin should be taoiseach after the election, according to the latest *Irish Times* Ipsos MRBI poll.
- A defiant Frances Fitzgerald has dismissed recent polls suggesting the Coalition will not be re-elected, saying the only figures that matter are those cast on Election Day.

- The latest *Irish Times*/Ipsos MRBI poll, conducted on Friday and Saturday, shows Fine Gael unchanged (on 28 per cent), with Labour down one (to 6 per cent). The lack of a surge for Fine Gael or a recovery for Labour makes returning the Government in its current form almost impossible at this stage. Independents/Others have gained three points (to 28 per cent) and are on track to record their strongest general election performance.
- Three election polls published this weekend by Sunday newspapers have provided different results for the country's largest parties. They also show a significant proportion of the electorate remains undecided with just days to go until polling on February 26th.
- Northern Ireland Secretary of State Theresa Villiers has said she would campaign for the UK to leave the EU.
- Rural Ireland is a playground for criminal gangs because the consequences are not strong enough, according to a Renua Ireland candidate.
- The Government will attempt to use the common travel area to exempt Irish citizens working in the UK from a British proposal to reduce welfare payments to EU migrants.

### Economy

- Ryanair will run an ad campaign in the British media on Friday urging British citizens to vote Yes to stay in the European Union.
- Ireland ranks with China as the biggest centre for nonbank finance firms after the US and the UK.
- The numbers at work are now at the highest level since early 2009, new figures show, giving a boost to the outgoing Coalition as the election campaign enters its final days.
- Irish workers in Britain, whose children remain in Ireland, should receive an increase in child benefit from the British government under the terms of its deal to stay in the EU.
- Irish businesses have been warned to expect volatility in the value of sterling in the coming months as the EU in/out battle ramps up in Britain.
- An election result that leads to a period of instability or gives a greater sway to fringe elements will cost jobs, the country's top business leaders have warned.

- The former head of the IMF's mission to Ireland says the government cannot claim credit for the economic recovery – and he is concerned about the country's reliance on exports to fuel growth.
- Bank of Ireland said underlying pre-tax profit rose by 30 per cent to €1.2 billion last year as all trading divisions proved profitable and it reduced non-performing loans by a further €3.8 billion.
- Fine Gael plans to factor in the value of pensions in the next public sector pay deal for 300,000 workers.
- Standard Life Ireland has reported record annual sales of €1.36 billion for 2015 with demand for pension products and underlying investment growth boosting performance.
- Striking Luas workers have threatened to withdraw services every two weeks until a dispute over pay and conditions is settled. Some 90,000 commuters will be forced to find alternative ways of travelling to work today as the row continues.
- The uncertainty surrounding Britain's future is worrying Irish businesses who export to the UK, Taoiseach Enda Kenny has said.

## Society

- There has been a reduction in the number of patients on trolleys awaiting a hospital bed, even with more people attending emergency departments, according to the HSE.
- Dublin was ranked 33rd in Global Quality of Living Survey — ahead of London, Paris and Rome — on the qualities of its schools, housing, medical and transportation.
- Garda Commissioner Noirin O'Sullivan is to meet the newly formed Policing Authority this week and it is expected she will be quizzed about gangland violence.
- Up to 10,000 protesters snaked through the rain-soaked streets of the capital yesterday in the last anti-water charge demonstration ahead of Friday's General Election.

## Headlines

- [25.02.2016] [Election 2016: hung Dáil looms](#) [Irish Times]
- [25.02.2016] [Workers at 999 emergency call centre go on strike for 12 hours](#) [Irish Independent]
- [25.02.2016] [Half of Irish people have no faith in parties' job creation strategies](#) [Irish Independent]
- [24.02.2016] [Ryanair calls for Yes vote in Brexit referendum](#) [Sunday Business Post]
- [24.02.2016] [Fewer patients on trolleys despite rise in emergencies](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [24.02.2016] [Russian bank collapse shines light on risks in Irish shadow](#) [Sunday Business Post]
- [24.02.2016] [Numbers in employment at highest level since 2009](#) [Irish Independent]
- [24.02.2016] [Leaders fail to land killer punch in final election debate](#) [Irish Times]
- [23.02.2016] [Irish children of British workers set for benefits rise](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [23.02.2016] [Dublin comes 33<sup>rd</sup> in quality of living ranking](#) [Sunday Business Post]
- [23.02.2016] [Irish Times/Ipsos MRBI poll shows Enda Kenny, Micheál Martin have equal backing for taoiseach](#) [Irish Times]
- [23.02.2016] [Instability, fringe elements 'will cost Irish jobs'](#) [Irish Independent]
- [23.02.2016] [Irish business chiefs are warned of export damage as sterling struggles](#) [Irish Independent]
- [23.02.2016] [Election 2016: Recovery nothing to do with government – ex-IMF mission chief](#) [Sunday Business Post]
- [22.02.2016] [Bank of Ireland results: Pre-tax profit up 30% to €1.2 billion](#) [Sunday Business Post]
- [22.02.2016] [Garda bosses to meet Policing Authority on capital's gang wars](#) [Irish Independent]
- [22.02.2016] ['The only figures that matter are those cast on Election Day' – Defiant Frances Fitzgerald hits out at polls](#) [Irish Independent]
- [21.02.2016] [Thousands brave rain to protest against water charges](#) [Irish Independent]
- [21.02.2016] [Unions up in arms over FG pensions plan](#) [Sunday Business Post]
- [21.02.2016] [Election 2016: Return of Government in current form almost impossible](#) [Irish Times]
- [21.02.2016] [Differing results for larger parties in three election polls](#) [Irish Times]
- [20.02.2016] [Standard Life Ireland posts record sales of €1.36bn](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [20.02.2016] [Villiers joins Vote Leave campaign in support of Brexit](#) [Irish Times]
- [20.02.2016] [Renua: 'Thugs have made playground of rural Ireland](#) [Irish Times]
- [19.02.2016] [Threat of Luas strike every two weeks in pay row](#) [Irish Independent]
- [19.02.2016] ['Profound uncertainty' surrounding Britain's future begins to worry Irish exporters](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [19.02.2016] [Irish push exemption to UK welfare reduction at EU summit](#) [Irish Times]

### **Newspaper (average daily net circulation/political stance - February 2015)**

**Irish Independent** (circulation: 112,383) politically populist; Conservative

**Irish Times** (circulation: 76,194) politically Liberal/Progressive; centre-right on economic issues

**Irish Examiner** (circulation: 33, 198) politically Centrist

**Sunday Business Post** (circulation: 32, 498) politically Liberal