

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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Top Story

Fianna Fáil has pulled ahead of Fine Gael to become the most popular political party, according to the latest *Irish Times*/Ipsos MRBI poll. Taoiseach Enda Kenny has seen a big jump in his satisfaction rating and there has also been an increase in the Government's rating. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Politics

A progress report outlining the minority Government's achievements is being cited as a reason for Taoiseach Enda Kenny to remain in office until at least 2018. The report outlines 18 "key achievements" and more than 170 actions the Government says it has taken since May. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Privatising Bus Éireann and axing unprofitable routes has been ruled out by Minister for Transport Shane Ross. He said there was no question of talking about privatisation when he briefed the Cabinet on the difficulties facing the company on Tuesday. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Ambitions for a high-speed rail link between Dublin and Belfast could be hit by a hard post-Brexit Border. The warning was made by Northern Ireland infrastructure minister Chris Hazzard, who said he is "keen" to see such a project happen. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Fianna Fail will not support legislation to introduce a new judicial appointments body if it is not chaired by the Chief Justice. Minister for Justice Frances Fitzgerald has agreed with Minister for Transport Shane Ross the general scheme of a Bill which will change the way judges are appointed. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

The Government has signed a deal with US authorities to extend graduate work visas by three years, just weeks before US president-elect Donald Trump takes office. The billionaire tycoon has vowed to crack down on immigration and also indicated that J1 visas are to be scrapped. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

The Government has played down the implications of the Italian referendum result, which saw Prime Minister Matteo Renzi resign after a raft of constitutional reforms were decisively rejected by voters. Minister for Foreign Affairs Charlie Flanagan firmly rejected any comparisons with the Brexit referendum in Britain, and stressed the domestic character of the vote. To read more on Mr Flanagan's comments, [click here](#).

Minister of State Finian McGrath has acknowledged he will not meet his target to have the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities ratified by the end of the year. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Social Protection Minister Leo Varadkar has been told he has the support of around 30 Fine Gael parliamentary party members in the leadership battle to replace Enda Kenny as party leader and possible Taoiseach. That level of support - almost half the parliamentary party - would give Leo Varadkar an advantage over his nearest rival, Housing Minister Simon Coveney. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Sinn Fein raised almost \$70,000 (€65,000) in six months in the US this year. The party's American fundraising arm, Friends of Sinn Fein, collected the money at fundraisers and from individual donors between May and October. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Fianna Fáil has told Fine Gael that the Government party breached the "confidence and supply" agreement between the two parties when it blocked justice spokesman Jim O'Callaghan's Bill on judicial appointments this week. Senior Fianna Fáil sources say that Fine Gael is now in breach of the agreement on which their support for the Government is based. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Taoiseach Enda Kenny has denied any suggestion he was snubbed by US president-elect Donald Trump during his visit to New York. Mr Kenny said his trip to the United States was arranged before the outcome of the election, and there had been no political meetings planned. To read more on Mr Kenny's recent trip to the US, [click here](#).

Taoiseach Enda Kenny has said there will have to be a payment for water services because "water is not free". Speaking in the United States, Mr Kenny again refused to say whether he was in favour of refunding those who complied with the legislation. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Economy

A report released today shows that Dublin ranks in the top five European cities for property investment for the fourth year in a row. The analysis was carried out by consultants PwC and the Urban Land Institute (ULI). It shows that, this year, Dublin ranked fourth behind three German cities - Berlin, Hamburg and Frankfurt - in terms of attractiveness for property development and investment. To read more on this report, [click here](#).

German business leaders are warning Brexit will "create significant job losses" in Ireland, damage growth and harm trade. The report by the German Chambers of Commerce Worldwide and the German-Irish Chamber of Commerce said "Ireland will unduly suffer" because of Brexit, if the country's special circumstances are not understood in Brussels, Berlin and other EU capitals. To read more on this report, [click here](#).

The rate of growth in consumer spending in Ireland slowed for the second month running in November according to the latest data from Visa's Irish Consumer Spending Index. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

There was a 3% increase in the number of professional jobs available in November 2016 when compared to October 2016 according to the Morgan McKinley Monthly Employment Monitor. To read more on this report, [click here](#).

Two key State agencies are on the verge of collapse with An Post and Bus Éireann now in jeopardy. An Post is set to put the price of stamps up to almost €1 to try up make up for massive losses in income. Meanwhile, Transport Minister Shane Ross has told Cabinet that the country's State-funded bus service is at "crisis point" and could be at risk of becoming insolvent in the next 24 months. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

German discount retailer Aldi has announced it is to open 20 stores across the country over the next three years, creating 400 jobs in the process. The €100m expansion programme will initially see stores opening in Ennistymon, Co Clare; Trim, Co Meath; and Leixlip, Co Kildare in early 2017. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Ireland does not engage in "harmful tax competition" in the European Union, the European Commission has told an Oireachtas inquiry, in a marked change of tone from previous criticisms. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Ireland's "remarkable" progress in fixing its public finances slowed this year and budget plans for 2017 that exhausted all available tax revenue leave it vulnerable to shocks, the European Commission and European Central Bank said on Friday. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Limerick businessman, Michael Dowling, who runs a \$10 billion health group in the US, plans to back at least half a dozen Irish medtech and pharma companies over the coming year, he told the Sunday Business Post. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Aer Lingus plans to outsource key ground handling functions at Dublin Airport and may launch a new voluntary programme for staff early in the new year. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Wonga, the controversial payday lender, has closed two Irish subsidiaries. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Plans to launch the first transatlantic flights from Cork Airport to the US have finally been approved after a stalled licence was sanctioned last night. It followed a decision by the US authorities to grant a foreign carrier permit to Norwegian Air International (NAI) - the Irish subsidiary of low-fares giant Norwegian, which applied for the licence almost three years ago. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

The former leader of the UK Independence Party, Nigel Farage, has warned that Ireland is about to go for higher corporation tax rates not because the Government wants it but because "that's what Brussels wants." To read more on Mr Farage's comments, [click here](#).

The Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Mary Mitchell O'Connor has this week warned that recent international political developments have caused considerable challenges for the Irish agri-food industry and that Ireland risks promoting a 'race to the bottom' on food standards and prices. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

The rate of growth in rent prices is slowing, according to the latest figures from the Economic and Social Research Institute. The latest rent index for the third quarter of this year, prepared by the ESRI for the Residential Tenancies Board, shows that while rents continue to rise, the rate of growth slowed over July to September compared to the second quarter of the year. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Society

Patient cases involving drug-resistant tuberculosis are on the rise in Ireland, a group of respiratory experts have warned. Multidrug-resistant tuberculosis is very difficult to treat, according to Professor Joseph Keane of St James's Hospital and Trinity College Dublin. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

The threat of a series of unprecedented strikes by rank and file gardai is over after they backed a €50m pay deal. Three-quarters of members of the Garda Representative Association (GRA) voted to accept an offer that will mean a wage boost of over €4,000 per guard, and there was a 69pc turnout. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

A clinical trial at Cork University Hospital (CUH), the first of its kind in the world, may offer fresh hope to patients with advanced melanoma, a form of skin cancer with a traditionally poor prognosis. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

There will be no more offers made to secondary school teachers, Education Minister Richard Bruton has said. On Saturday, the central executive of the Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland (ASTI) recommended to its members to reject the Government's current proposal in relation to a dispute over pay, conditions, and the junior cycle. To read more on the on-going union dispute, [click here](#).

More than 600 hospital staff are assaulted each year, with nurses bearing the brunt of workplace violence. Figures released to the Irish Examiner under the Freedom of Information Act show 3,462 incidents of physical assaults were recorded by the HSE between January 1, 2011, and July 27, 2016. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Health Minister Simon Harris is to visit Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH) to hear directly from doctors who have warned they can no longer take responsibility for the health of thousands of women on gynaecological waiting lists. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Headlines

- [08.12.2016] [‘Irish Times’ poll: Fianna Fáil pulls ahead of Fine Gael to become most popular party](#) [Irish Times]
- [08.12.2016] [Kenny will use Government’s ‘success’ to stay on for Pope visit](#) [Irish Independent]
- [08.12.2016] [Dublin in top five for European property investment](#) [Business Post]
- [08.12.2016] [Drug resistant TB on rise here](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [07.12.2016] [Shane Ross rules out privatising Bus Éireann](#) [Irish Times]
- [07.12.2016] [High-speed rail link set to be derailed by hard Brexit](#) [Irish Independent]
- [07.12.2016] [Fianna Fáil to reject legislation on new judicial appointments](#) [Irish Times]
- [07.12.2016] [German business warns Brexit will cost Ireland ‘jobs and growth’](#) [Irish Independent]
- [07.12.2016] [Irish consumer spending continues to weaken](#) [Business World]
- [07.12.2016] [Fewer jobs available in November compared to same month last year](#) [Business World]
- [07.12.2016] [Key state agencies on the brink of collapse](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [07.12.2016] [Aldi to create 400 jobs in 20 stores in €100m expansion](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [06.12.2016] [Garda deal agreed – now to decide who will pay](#) [Irish Independent]
- [06.12.2016] [Government signs deal with US to extend J1 visa – signing ‘not linked to Trump’](#) [Irish Independent]
- [06.12.2016] [Ireland does not engage in “harmful tax competition” says European Commission](#) [Irish Times]
- [06.12.2016] [CUH research hope for advanced melanoma patients](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [06.12.2016] [Richard Bruton: No more offers for teachers](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [05.12.2016] [Government reacts to Italy vote: ‘This is not Brexit’](#) [Irish Times]
- [05.12.2016] [EU warns “remarkable” Irish fiscal progress slowing](#) [Business World]
- [05.12.2016] [600 staff attacked per year in HSE hospitals](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [04.12.2016] [Ireland to miss target for ratifying UN disabilities convention](#) [Irish Times]
- [04.12.2016] [Varadkar ‘backed’ by 30 TDs in battle to succeed Kenny](#) [Irish Independent]
- [04.12.2016] [Sinn Féin’s US friends give \\$70k to the party](#) [Irish Independent]
- [04.12.2016] [Tycoon to back Irish medical start-ups](#) [Sunday Business Post] [Paywall]
- [04.12.2016] [Aer Lingus to outsource handling functions](#) [Sunday Business Post] [Paywall]
- [04.12.2016] [Payday lender Wonga shuts Irish outlets](#) [Sunday Business Post] [Paywall]
- [03.12.2016] [Fine Gael breached ‘confidence and supply’ deal, says FF](#) [Irish Times]
- [03.12.2016] [Taoiseach denies snub by Trump on visit to New York](#) [Irish Independent]
- [03.12.2016] [Cork to US flights get green light for takeoff](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [02.12.2016] [Taoiseach says water service must be paid for as ‘water not free’](#) [Irish Times]
- [02.12.2016] [Nigel Farage claims Irish corporation tax rates will increase](#) [Business World]
- [02.12.2016] [Race to the bottom in grocery prices must be prevented warns minister](#) [Business World]
- [02.12.2016] [Rent costs still rising but at a slower rate, says ESRI](#) [Irish Examiner]
- [02.12.2016] [Simon Harris to visit CUMH to hear doctors’ concerns](#) [Irish Examiner]

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