

## KASPress Ireland



### News Summary

### Top Story

24.03.17 – 30.03.17

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

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

London Office

Ireland will not be able to block the final Brexit agreement between the EU and the UK, even if the terms are unfavourable because the final vote will not be subject to a veto, senior officials have said. “The final arrangements will be agreed by qualified majority voting,” a senior official said at a briefing for journalists in Government Buildings. “One country can’t block it.” To read more on this story, [click here](#).

### Politics

Ireland will be “firmly” on the side of the EU and will not act as a “proxy” for the UK despite our close ties, Foreign Affairs Minister Charlie Flanagan has said. The minister dismissed the idea that Ireland is too close to the UK after Prime Minister Theresa May described our “special relationship” in the letter which triggered Article 50. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Minister for Justice Frances Fitzgerald is to ask a Government-appointed reviewer of the Garda Síochána to examine if Ireland should have its own MI5-style security intelligence agency. Under the draft terms of reference for an independent inquiry into the force, the inquiry will investigate if policing and security should be separated – a move that has been opposed in the past by the Garda. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

The Government is to set out its priorities for the forthcoming Brexit negotiations in a “consolidated paper” which it will publish before the EU agrees its position for the talks. In a signal that Ireland will stress its individual concerns in the talks, the paper will be published before the summit of EU leaders on April 29th where the negotiating mandate for the talks with the UK is to be agreed. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Minister for Foreign Affairs Charlie Flanagan has said he is personally saddened by the impending departure of the UK from the European Union. The Brexit vote was “a bad decision” and this is “a sad day,” he told RTÉ’s News at One. He said he agreed with President of the European Council Donald Tusk that “there are no winners” in this case. To read more on Mr Flanagan’s comments, [click here](#).

The Bus Éireann strike can only be resolved by the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC), Taoiseach Enda Kenny has said. “Both sides have admitted that there are issues that need to be discussed,” he added. “That is the opportunity for them to discuss those, at the WRC.” To read more on this story, [click here](#).

An Independent TD who backed Enda Kenny in the vote for Taoiseach has said he is prepared to withdraw his support for the Government. Clare deputy Dr Michael Harty said the coalition has failed to deliver on his pledge to support the post office network. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Fine Gael has warned it will not accept a proposal to prosecute households that “wilfully abuse water or permit wastage” amid fears such a move could result in a flurry of court cases. The party has today said that such a clause, contained in a draft report circulated to members of the Oireachtas water committee, will have to be removed for a deal on water charges to be struck. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Fine Gael may not begin a leadership campaign for a number of months, the Minister for Social Protection has said. Leo Varadkar, one of the frontrunners in the race to replace Enda Kenny as leader, said the contest may not be initiated for some time. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Minister for Social Protection Leo Varadkar has described the revelations surrounding the Garda force as “unacceptable” but said on Sunday that Commissioner Nóirin O’Sullivan is key to addressing those issues. As pressure mounted on the Commissioner over recent controversies and her handling of them Mr Varadkar was asked whether the Garda Commissioner’s position was now untenable. “I think from the point of view of the Government, the revelations that we’ve seen in the last couple of days really aren’t acceptable,” he told reporters at an event in Dublin. “They’re appalling and it is important that there is accountability. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Former Fine Gael TD for Kerry North and for Kerry North-West Limerick Jimmy Deenihan is bowing out of politics and will not run in the next election. After 33 years in politics it was time to reinvigorate the party in north Kerry, develop new energy and get new people into the party, Mr Deenihan said. He was now going to work for the people of Kerry in a different capacity, the 64-year-old said announcing his departure from politics. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

## Economy

After recent decisions by insurer AIG and insurance market Lloyd's of London dealt blows to Ireland's hopes of luring post-Brexit financial jobs from London, there was a brighter signal today from US bank JP Morgan Chase. To read more on this story, [click here](#). [30]

It was announced today that Keltie, a leading firm of European patent, trade mark and design attorneys, has opened its first office outside the UK - in Galway. The firm's expansion into Ireland is being led by Keltie partner Sean Cummings, who has family ties to County Galway and now lives in Connemara. Sean is an engineer with over thirty years of experience in the IP profession in London and has been a partner with Keltie since 1993. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

The latest data from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) confirms that British tourism arrivals to Ireland are down 6% for the period December-February. This represents 49,200 fewer British visitors compared to the same period last year and is real evidence that the Irish tourism industry is very vulnerable to Brexit. To read more this story, [click here](#).

Ibec have warned an assertive national effort is needed to avoid the very real risk of a "divisive, damaging Brexit divorce" and the UK crashing out of the EU without a new trade deal or transitional arrangements. In response to the triggering of Article 50 by the UK, the group said it is advising all member companies to examine how Brexit might impact their business and is providing contingency planning support. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

The latest Quarterly Rent Index from the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) has been released this week and shows that growth in private sector rents continued across all regions of the country in the final quarter of 2016. It is estimated that private sector rents across the country as a whole grew by 7.8% year on year from the fourth quarter in 2016 and the standard national average rent in the final quarter of last year stood at €986 per month. To read more on this report, [click here](#).

New data from Global job site, Indeed has found that since the start of 2017 Ireland has become a more attractive destination for European based jobseekers. Searches for jobs in Ireland from other European jobseekers were 22% higher at the start of 2017 by comparison to the period before the Brexit referendum. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

A new report published yesterday by Oxfam and the Fair Finance Guide International has found that there is strong evidence that Ireland is facilitating significant corporate tax avoidance by top European banks. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Funds advised by CapVest Partners, the private equity firm founded by Seamus Fitzpatrick, have acquired British pork supply giant Karro Food Group which has annual sales of over £500 million. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Viridian, which own electricity supplier Energia, is taking its fight to the courts over what it sees as a serious anti-competitive state levy, which it says impacts on its business and leads to a rise in bills for customers. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

The Irish Times is understood to be considering a bid for the Irish Examiner newspaper, according to sources familiar with the matter. The Examiner is owned by Landmark Media Investments, which had revenue of €47.7 million in 2014. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

A damning new report in Nama has found that the state's toxic loan agency would have secured an additional €18 billion for the taxpayer if it had held and managed its assets, as opposed to its strategy of large-scale disposals. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

The Central Bank is to be quizzed about why it has failed to discipline a single banker for the illegal withdrawal of over 17,000 tracker mortgages. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Just 13 per cent of Irish people believe that policies planned by US president Donald Trump will have a positive impact on Ireland's economic ties with America. Only 3 per cent think trade ties with the US will be very positively impacted. To read on this story, [click here](#).

## Society

Three institutes of technology continue to have "significant" financial deficits, according to the Higher Education Authority (HEA). However, another three that were on the critical list last year are now balancing their books, the Public Accounts Committee was told yesterday. Waterford IT, IT Tralee and Galway Mayo IT still have "significant" deficits, but provisional figures for 2016 indicate that Cork IT, Dundalk IT and Letterkenny IT have improved their situation, Andrew Brownlee, HEA head of system funding, said. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Laws allowing Irish schools to use religion as part of their admission criteria are no longer tenable, a commissioner at the Council of Europe has warned. Human rights commissioner Nils Muiznieks criticised the Government's response to the issue. He said it was putting forward long-term solutions, such as building more schools, which would be of no benefit to children currently being discriminated against. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Dublin property owners who take advantage of a Government grant to refurbish vacant housing for renting will have their properties used to accommodate homeless people. The €140 million Repair and Leasing Scheme allows local authorities to enter into long-term leases with owners of empty properties that are too run down to rent out. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

The number of complaints about tenants in rent arrears and failing to vacate a property at the end of their lease increased by more than 50 per cent last year amid the ongoing housing crisis. Figures from the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) for 2016 reveal there were 737 such complaints from landlords in 2016 compared to 470 the previous year. In 2014, there were 315 complaints about rent arrears and tenants staying beyond their notice period (over-holding). To read more on this story, [click here](#).

All cigarette and other tobacco products will have to be sold in plain packaging with graphic health warnings from September 30, it was announced last night. A commencement order was signed which will outlaw all forms of trademarks, logos, colours and graphics on tobacco products. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Surgeons are planning to carry out heart transplants on children in Ireland for the first time - sparing them the journey to the UK for life-saving surgery. Prof Jim Egan, director of the National Organ Donation and Transplant Office, said he believed the transplants - needed by around three to five children each year - could be done in Our Lady's Hospital in Crumlin. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

A new homeless hostel on Fitzwilliam Street in Dublin's office quarter is expected to open its doors by October this year after work on the building started earlier this month. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Over 82 per cent of rental units in Dublin failed inspections by the four local authorities in the city last year. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown had the highest failure rate of the four. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

A lifting of the restriction on the use of retired teachers in classrooms is under consideration in response to growing shortages of qualified staff for key subjects in second-level schools. It is one of a number of measures now being examined by the Department of Education as a short-term answer to a worsening crisis over teacher supply. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

Tens of thousands of commuters were left stranded on Friday as Bus Éireann workers stage an all-out indefinite strike. The created chaos across the country with workers, students and patients disrupted as all services including Expressway, regional services, and city services such as those in Cork and Limerick grind to a halt. To read more on this story, [click here](#).

## Headlines

- [30.03.2017] [Ireland won't be a 'proxy' for UK in Brexit talks](#) [Irish Independent]
- [30.03.2017] [Minister for Justice considering MI5-style security agency](#) [Irish Times]
- [30.03.2017] [JPMorgan Chase eyes Dublin office building](#) [Sunday Business Post] [Paywall]
- [30.03.2017] [European intellectual property firm to invest in Galway](#) [Business World]
- [30.03.2017] [Refurbished private housing to be used for Dublin's homeless](#) [Irish Times]
- [30.03.2017] [Colleges running 'significant deficits'](#) [Irish Independent]
- [30.03.2017] [Schools' religion barrier is 'untenable' – commissioner](#) [Irish Independent]
- [29.03.2017] [Independent TD puts government 'on notice' that he is preparing to withdraw support](#) [Irish Independent]
- [29.03.2017] [Government to outline Irish priorities before EU position is agreed](#) [Irish Times]
- [29.03.2017] [Flanagan says triggering of Brexit makes today 'a sad day'](#) [Irish Times]
- [29.03.2017] [Taoiseach insists bus row must be resolved at workplace commission](#) [Irish Times]
- [29.03.2017] [Sharp drop in UK visitors alarms Irish tourism industry](#) [Business World]
- [29.03.2017] [Damaging Brexit divorce must be avoided warns IBEC](#) [Business World]
- [29.03.2017] [Private rents in Dublin now 8.3% above 2007 peak level](#) [Business World]
- [29.03.2017] [Damaging Brexit divorce must be avoided warns IBEC](#) [Business World]
- [29.03.2017] [Cigs must be in plain packaging](#) [Irish Independent]
- [29.03.2017] [Figures show increase in tenants failing to vacate homes at end of lease](#) [Irish Times]
- [29.03.2017] [Surgeons plan first children's heart transplants in Ireland](#) [Irish Independent]
- [28.03.2017] [Fine Gael: We will not 'prosecute' those who waste water](#) [Irish Independent]
- [28.03.2017] [Ireland cannot block final Brexit deal even if terms not favourable](#) [Irish Times]**
- [28.03.2017] [EU jobseekers to Ireland up 22% compared to pre-Brexit referendum levels](#) [Business World]
- [28.03.2017] [Strong evidence that Ireland facilitates significant tax avoidance](#) [Business World]
- [27.03.2017] [Fine Gael leadership race may not begin for months, Varadkar says](#) [Irish Times]
- [27.03.2017] [Cap Vest acquires Karro Food Group for €180 million](#) [Sunday Business Post] [Paywall]
- [26.03.2017] [Varadkar says Garda scandals 'unacceptable' but supports O'Sullivan](#) [Irish Times]
- [26.03.2017] [Energia parent takes case over power levy](#) [Sunday Business Post] [Paywall]
- [26.03.2017] [Dublin 2 hostel to open by October](#) [Sunday Business Post] [Paywall]
- [26.03.2017] [Irish Times may bid for Examiner](#) [Sunday Business Post] [Paywall]
- [26.03.2017] [Nama's lost profits: Taxpayers miss out on €18bn windfall](#) [Sunday Business Post] [Paywall]
- [26.03.2017] [Central Bank to be quizzed over tracker mortgage scandal](#) [Sunday Business Post] [Paywall]
- [26.03.2017] [Few believe Trump will be good for Ireland-US relations](#) [Sunday Business Post] [Paywall]
- [26.03.2017] [80 per cent of rentals in Dublin fail tests](#) [Sunday Business Post] [Paywall]
- [25.03.2017] [Retired teachers may return to class to fill staff shortage](#) [Irish Independent]
- [24.03.2017] [Jimmy Deenihan announces departure from politics](#) [Irish Times]
- [24.03.2017] [Bus strike to leave thousands stranded across country](#) [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