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# Irish Neutrality League

## 19 June 2023

Irish Neutrality, EU Common Security and  
Defence Policy & “PESCO”



**Dr. Karen Devine**  
**Lecturer in EU policy and politics,**  
**and Irish Foreign Policy**

# Introduction

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- 1. What the people of Ireland want (neutrality)**
- 2. What the European Union and successive Irish Governments want (EU militarisation for war)**
- 3. What the Irish Government is trying to do: against the people's wishes, force Ireland into taking part in EU militarisation, aided by the EU, the mass media, EU-funded think tanks, and embedded EU-funded "Jean Monnet" lecturers in universities**

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**Most people in Ireland want neutrality:**

**4 in 5 people in Ireland want to retain  
active, positive neutrality**

**Just 13-14% want Ireland to join NATO**

# 4 in 5 people support active Irish neutrality since the 1980s to the present day – just 15% reject it

## Irish Public Opinion Surveys show over forty years of consistent support for Neutrality, with a small minority opting for EC defence /EU Alliances/Wars

- 4 in 5 Irish people want to retain neutrality in the 1980s, 2000s and throughout this decade
- 1 in 5 reject or want to change Irish neutrality and 1 in 4 want Ireland to join an EC Defence (undefined)

Year	MRBI March 1981	MRBI April 1985	NUIM 1988/ 1989	MRBI Jan 1991	IMS Feb 1991	MRBI April 1991	LMR May 1992	MRBI June 1992	MRBI Sept 1996	MRBI June 2001	ISPAS 2001/ 2002	EOS Jan 2003	Red C Aug 2013	Amarach Feb 2022
Alliance-against		64												
Neutrality-against dropping				64		65								
Neutrality-remain							59							
Neutrality-maintain	76								69	72				
Neutrality-retain			84					55			80		78	76
Gulf I - neutral				69	71									
Gulf II - military interv. unjustified												81		
Alliance-prepared to consider joining		25												
Neutrality-change									20					
Neutrality-reject													15	15
EC Defence-join				25			28	19						

<https://www.oireachtas.ie/parliament/media/committees/psop/Opening-statement-from-Karen-Devine--Neutrality-.pdf>

"Of the 1,000 people polled by Amárach [February/March 2022], 76% indicated that they supported Irish neutrality. A mere 15% were in favour of dropping neutrality, while a further 9% were uncommitted."

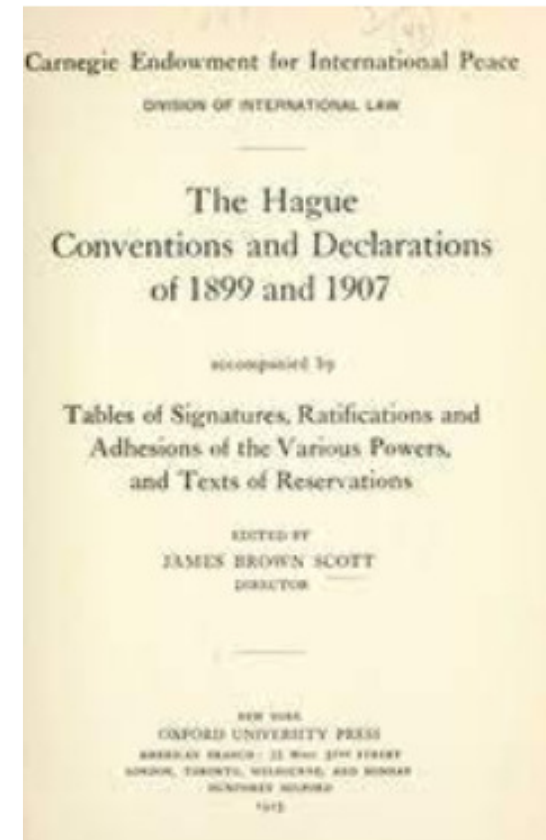
Q. Are you in favour of Ireland holding onto its status as a neutral country?

# Public Opinion on Neutrality: not getting involved in wars, independence, impartiality/don't take sides = consistent

What is Irish neutrality – public concept is consistent 1980s-2000s and accords with international law

Table 2.1 Rank order of neutrality definitions offered by the Irish public, 1985-2001

Survey responses	RANK ORDER			
	April 1985	May 1992	June 1992	Nov 2001
Don't get involved in wars	2	1	1	1
Don't know	1	2	2	2
Independence	4	3	3	3
Don't take sides	3	5	4	6
Means nothing	8	4	6	4
Staying out of NATO/military alliances	5%	2%	2%	1%
Don't know	31%	25%	21%	16%



Days before the launch of the Gulf War in 2003, in an interview described as “talking to the Minister for Foreign Affairs Brian Cowen, regarding the neutrality of Ireland and the other European neutral states, Finland, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, the Minister claimed: “the essential characteristic is, that none of these countries are part of military alliances, we are not part of mutual defence pacts, we are not members of NATO...if you are looking for an essential characteristic, that is it” but only 1% of people in Ireland consider that characteristic a definition of neutrality. Therefore, successive governments including the current government do not reflect the foreign, security and defence policy preferences of people in Ireland.

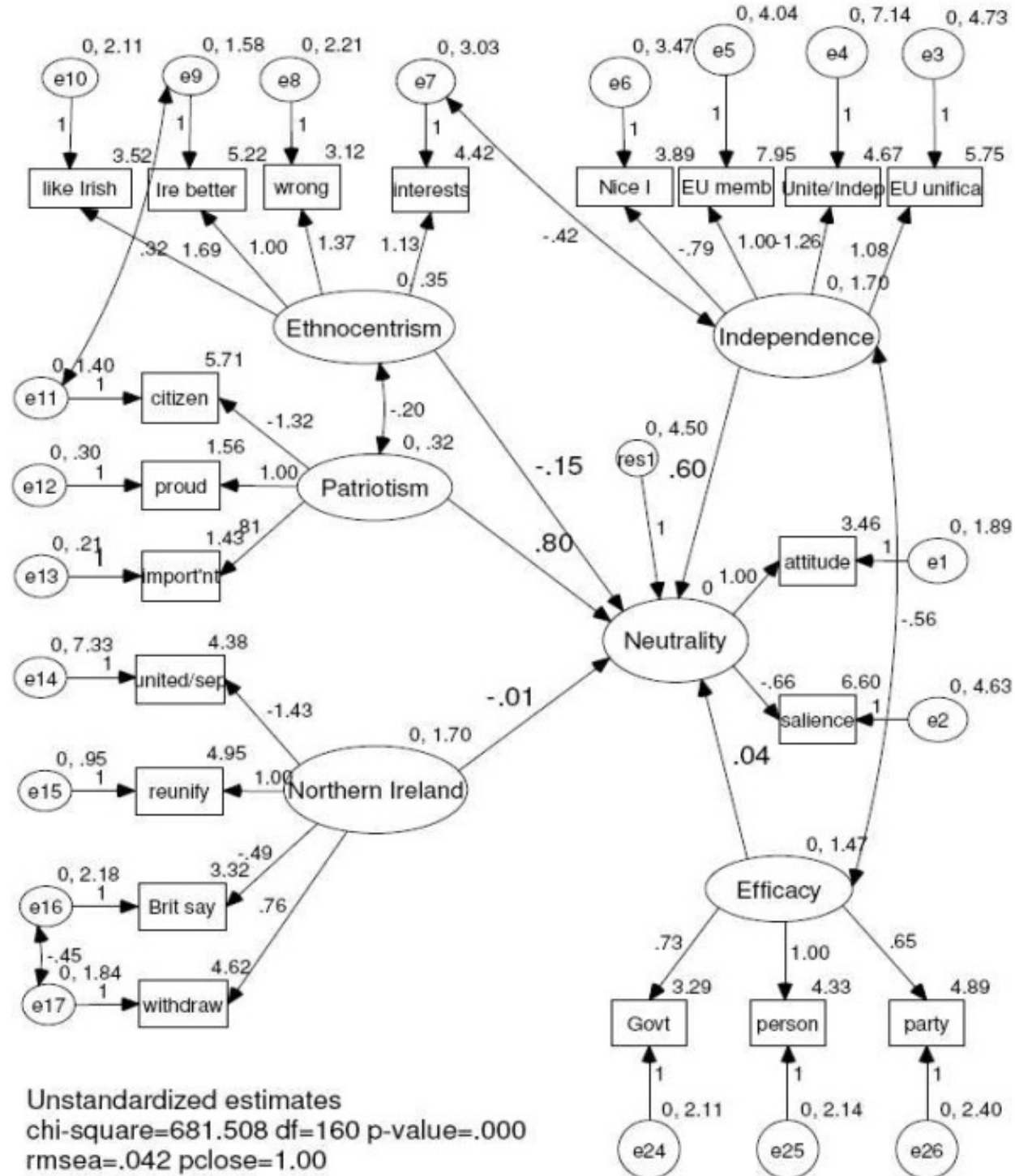
# Values underpinning support for neutrality

Being proud of being Irish and a desire for Ireland to be independent are the two values predicting supportive attitudes to neutrality in public opinion

The more an individual favours Irish independence, the more that person favours the maintenance of Irish neutrality

An attachment to Irish identity is related to an attachment neutrality

**Irish neutrality is the identity of the Irish people projected to the world**

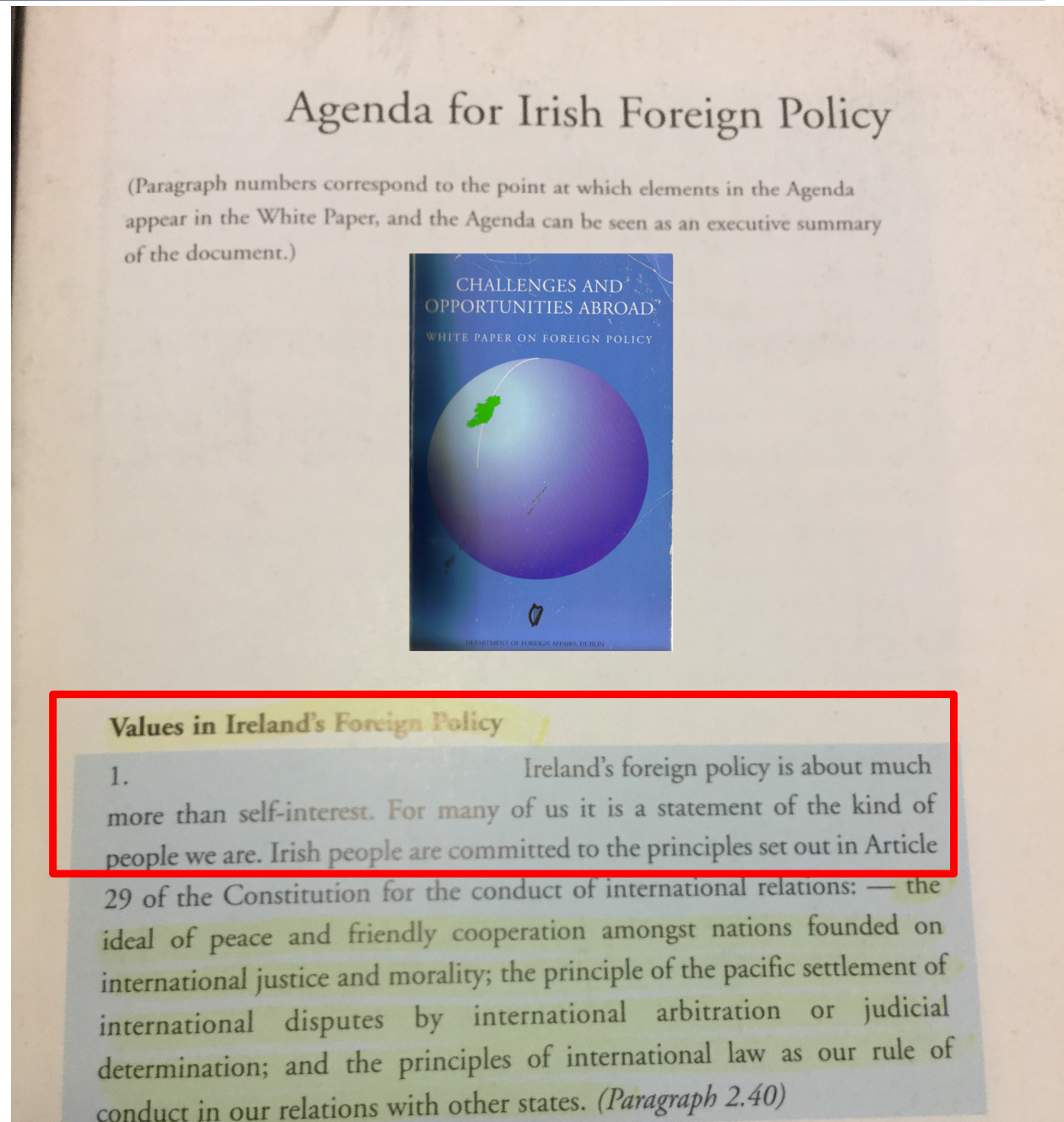


Looking at the regression weights of the five latent variables shown in Table 9, only the two hypothesized determinants of public support for Irish neutrality, independence and patriotism, show statistically significant parameter estimates and positive relationships (.6



# “A statement of the kind of people we are” (Government of Ireland 1996) “a statement of who we are as a people” (Government of Ireland 2014)

- The first two sentences of the only White Paper on Ireland’s Foreign Policy states: ‘Ireland’s foreign policy is about much more than self-interest. For many of us, **it is a statement of the kind of people we are**’ (White Paper, 1996: 7)...
- ....‘the values that underlie Ireland’s policy of neutrality have therefore informed almost every aspect of our foreign policy’. (White Paper, 1996 p.119)
- This was repeated in the Irish Foreign Policy Review 2014: “The interests we pursue and the values we promote abroad are a statement of who we are as a people.” (Ireland, 2014: 3)



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**The Context:  
European Union military  
alliance, mutual defence  
clause and “PESCO”**

**The European Union told  
neutral states to get rid of their  
neutrality during accession**

**Governments did so**



# The EU's operating principles

- Giandomenico Majone wrote that the EU is an elitist project. He identifies EU operating principles as follows:
  - (1) integration has priority over all other competing values, **including democracy** and
  - (2) EU decision-makers follow wherever possible, the **strategy of the fait accompli** - the accomplished fact which makes opposition and public debate useless (2009: 1) and
  - (3) ultimate ends are largely irrelevant: what counts are procedures and the **expansion of European competences**.



Giandomenico Majone's book *Europe as the Would-Be World Power: The EU at Fifty* (2009)

# European Union views neutrality as incompatible with the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy

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## EU view on the incompatibility of CFSP and neutrality

Bulletin  
of the European Communities

Supplement 3/92

32. The accession of the EFTA countries who have applied for membership — Austria, Sweden, Finland, and Switzerland — should not pose insuperable problems of an economic nature, and indeed would strengthen the Community in a number of ways. **The question of neutrality, and its compatibility with the common foreign and security policy, is however a particular concern.**

Europe and the challenge  
of enlargement

24 June 1992

# EU tells neutral state governments to drop neutrality and use the words 'military neutrality' for a common defence

## EU view on the incompatibility of CFSP and neutrality

8. The Community would need, in the context of the accession negotiations, to ascertain further the full nature of the present Finnish policy in order to be satisfied that this would not hamper the possible evolution in time of a common European defence. As the Commission already pointed out in its report on enlargement<sup>3</sup> of 24 June 1992, 'specific and binding assurances will be sought from [applicant countries] with regard to their political commitment and legal capacity to fulfil the obligations' of the common foreign and security policy.

security policy obligations. The Finnish policy of neutrality is not rooted in national or international law; the doctrine of the anticipated effects in peacetime of maintaining neutrality in wartime is less developed in Finland than it is in some other countries where there is a legal basis for neutrality.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless such anticipated effects, even if they are of a political nature, can pose problems for the Union to the extent that they might cause Finland to oppose itself systematically to certain actions which, in its view, could be prejudicial to its policy of neutrality or what is left of it.

## The challenge of Commission opinion on Finland's application for membership

Document drawn up on the basis of SEC(92) 2048 final

Neutrals must join NATO — Kohl aide  
The Irish Times (1921-Current File), Mar 10, 1995;  
ProQuest Historical Newspapers The Irish Times (1859-2009)  
pg. 2

### Neutrals must join NATO — Kohl aide

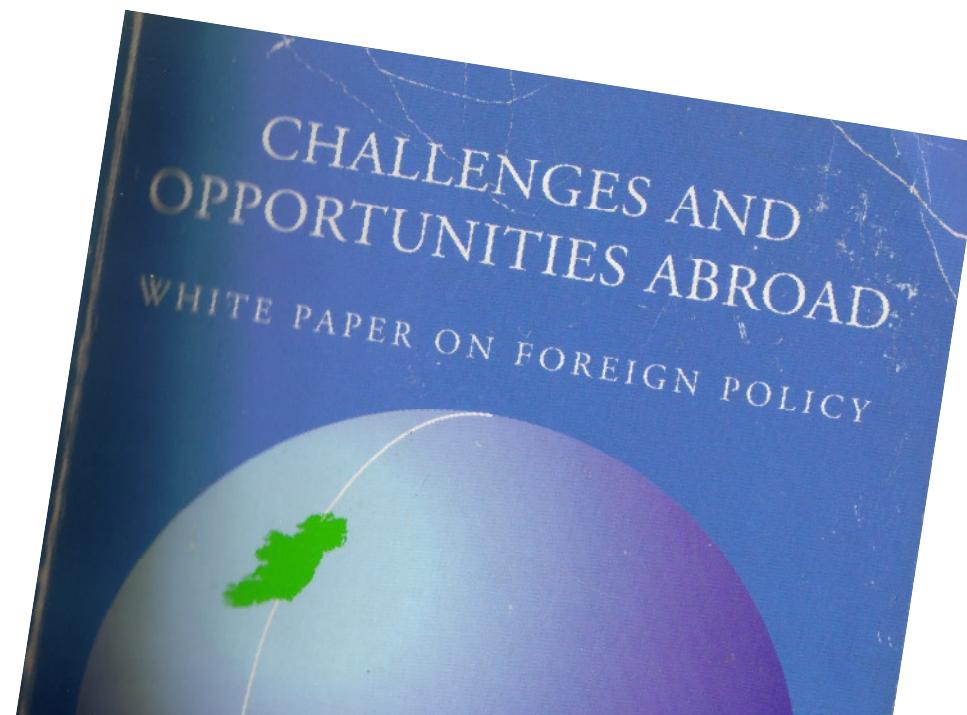
...because it has been whittled down to only 'military neutrality' meaning non membership of a military alliance

# Irish government admits that joining the EU's proposed military alliance and adopting its mutual defence clause is incompatible with neutrality

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'The government will not be proposing that Ireland seek membership of NATO or the WEU, or the assumption of their mutual defence guarantees' (White Paper, 1996: 119)... 'their founding Treaties' provisions committing the parties to collective action in the event of an armed attack would not be compatible with an intention to remain neutral' (White Paper, 1996: 120)

The Irish White Paper anticipated a proposal to include a mutual defence commitment similar to WEU Art. V in a future European Union Treaty, in which 'member-states undertake to assist another member that is the object of an armed attack' (1996: 143)... 'which would not be compatible with our existing policy of neutrality' (1996: 144)



# EU's definition of collective [common] defence: part of WEU military alliance and assuming its mutual defence clause (WEU-EU merged via Lisbon Treaty)



## Glossary



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

### Collective defence

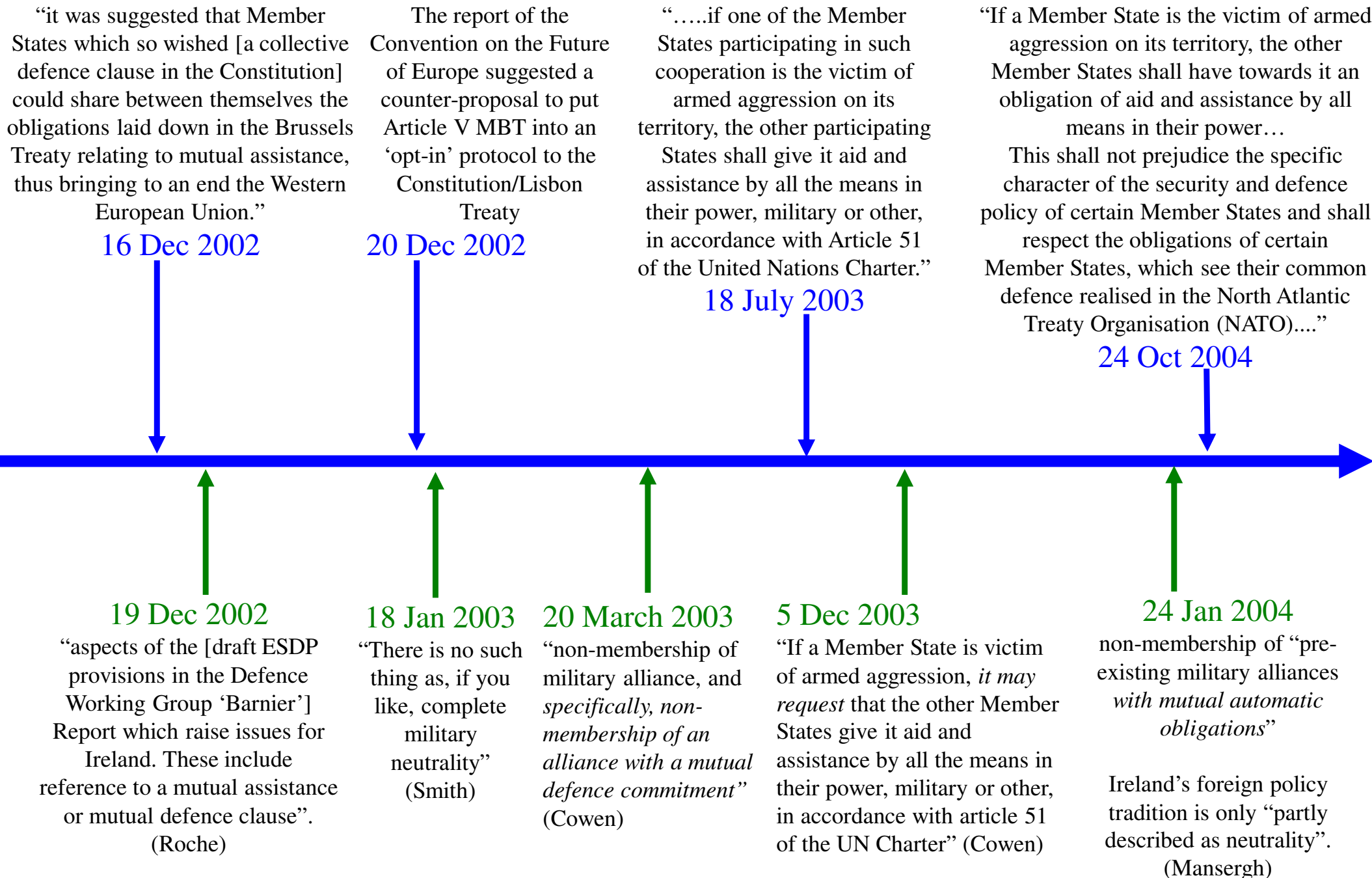
*The glossary is being updated given the recent signing of the [Treaty of Lisbon](#).*

Collective defence refers to participation in the defence of Europe under the Treaties of Brussels (Article V) and Washington (Article 5), which stipulate that in the event of aggression, the signatory states are required to provide assistance for the restoration of security:

- The **Treaty of Brussels** was signed in 1948 by France, the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. It was amended in 1954 by the Paris Agreements establishing the **Western European Union (WEU)**. Article V of this Treaty sets out the principle of mutual assistance in the event of an armed attack against any of the High Contracting Parties, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations (the right of self-defence).
- The **North Atlantic Treaty** was signed in Washington in 1949 by ten Western European countries and the United States and Canada. Article 5, on the solidarity between its members in the event of an armed attack, forms the crux of the Treaty. If such an armed attack occurs, each of the parties will assist the Party attacked in the exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence by taking any action deemed necessary to restore and maintain security, including the use of armed force. These measures are terminated once the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.



# Irish Government agreeing to the adoption of the [W]EU mutual defence clause vs Government's neutrality concept, 2002-2004





# European Commission Guide to the Lisbon Treaty for the referendums in Ireland lies by omission – fails to mention the mutual defence clause and only mentions the ‘solidarity clause’, as part of Government cover up\*

## Security and defence

The Lisbon Treaty spells out more clearly the EU's role in the area of common foreign and security policy. Decisions on defence issues will continue to need unanimous approval of the 27 EU Member States.

### TREATY OF LISBON

#### AMENDING THE TREATY ON EUROPEAN UNION AND THE TREATY

7. If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States.

Commitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which, for those States which are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation."

It introduces a solidarity clause (of a voluntary nature) when a Member State is the victim of a terrorist attack or a natural or man-made disaster.

Mutual  
Defence  
Clause  
omitted  
from  
the  
"Guide"  
to the  
Lisbon  
Treaty

\*the [government's] aim is to focus the campaign on overall benefits of the EU, rather than on the Treaty itself" (April 14, 2008) "The Treaty Con: Leaked Email Reveals Government Plans to Hoodwink Voters." Irish Daily Mail.

# WEU merger with the EU is completed after Lisbon Treaty ratified



The Lisbon Treaty's Article 42(7) allows the transfer of “the WEU collective defence element in Article 5 Modified Brussels Treaty to the EU” (Trybus 2005: 337)

A WEU-EU merger, through the transfer of the functions of the WEU to the EU, would effectively constitute full membership of the WEU and “there would be no doubt...this certainly means the end of the policy of military neutrality” (Keatinge 1996: 173)



On 31 March 2010, the WEU was terminated with a declaration:

With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, a new phase in European security and defence begins. Article 42.7 of the Treaty on the European Union now sets out that, if a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power.....In this light we the States Parties to the Modified Brussels Treaty have collectively decided to terminate the Treaty, thereby effectively closing the organization...

# Just 12% of people in the European Union are aware of the mutual defence clause and know what it is (2016)

## EU Public ignorant of European Defence Clause in Lisbon Treaty, 2016

*\*European Commission and European Parliament, Brussels (2016): Eurobarometer 85.1 (2016). TNS opinion [producer]. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA6693 Data file Version 1.0.0, doi:10.4232/1.12591*

- Eurobarometer 85.1 shows only 12% of European citizens claim to be aware of the mutual defence clause and to know what it is, driven by more males (17%) than females (9%)

QA16	Have you ever heard of the mutual defence clause between the Member States of the EU?
(READ OUT- ONE ANSWER ONLY)	
Yes, and you know what it is	1
Yes, but you do not really know what it is	2
No	3
DK	4

		EU MUTUAL DEFENCE CLAUSE - HEARD ABOUT (%)			
		Yes, and you know what it is	Yes, but you do not really know what it is	No	DK
GENDER	Man	17	23	59	1
	Woman	9	20	71	1

- People in France have the lowest level of awareness and understanding at just 6%, despite France being the first EU state to trigger the clause, in November 2015.
- Surely if there were such public demand for it, given the ten years of its existence, would there not be widespread public awareness and understanding of it?

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**The next steps:  
European Union army/PESCO  
and official (currently de facto)  
NATO membership**

**The European Union-funded  
agents (who dominate the  
“Forum” speakers)**

# Ireland's membership of the merged WEU-EU military alliance “implies membership of NATO also”

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## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES ABROAD

WHITE PAPER ON FOREIGN POLICY

4.107

Moreover, although membership of the WEU is in theory open to any member of the European Union, certain NATO members appear to take the view that it is not possible in practice to separate the mutual defence commitments in the WEU and NATO Treaties. For them membership of the WEU implies membership of NATO also.



DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DUBLIN



# European Commission claims the EU is an Empire, calls for an EU army.... and wants to battle against “nationalists” .... Irish Government are trying to join this army against the expressed preferences of the people of Ireland

theguardian

## Jean-Claude Juncker calls for EU army

European commission president says this military development would persuade Russia the bloc is serious about defending its values



Jean-Claude Juncker, the former prime minister of Luxembourg, told a German newspaper that having an army would solve the problem of the EU's foreign policy not being taken seriously. Photograph: Frederick Florin/AFP/Getty Images

The [European Union](#) needs its own army to help address the problem that it is not “taken entirely seriously” as an international force, the president of the European commission has said.

As Alyson Bailes said, regarding the genesis of the ESDP in 1999, “no one talked much at the time about doing something for the ‘good of the world’. A lot of people were thinking about the good of Europe”

THE IRISH TIMES

## Berlin backs Jean-Claude Juncker call for European army

Commission president insists controversial call not related to Trump's election victory

Thu, Nov 10, 2016, 18:00

Derek Scally in Berlin



European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker told a Berlin audience that the United States “won't look after Europe's security for ever”. Photograph: Tobias Schwarz/AFP/Getty Images

Germany has backed a renewed call by European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker for the European Union to push ahead with developing an EU army.



# EU army's “most demanding missions” are for “the fulfilment of the Union level of ambition” (not “peace”)

PROTOCOL (No 10)

ON PERMANENT STRUCTURED COOPERATION ESTABLISHED BY ARTICLE 42 OF THE TREATY ON EUROPEAN UNION

the performance of these tasks is to be undertaken using capabilities provided by the Member States **in accordance with the principle of a single set of forces,**

See 12008M/PRO/10 **Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union - PROTOCOLS - Protocol (No 10) on permanent structured cooperation established by Article 42 of the Treaty on European Union** *Official Journal* 115 , 09/05/2008 P. 0275 - 0277

Brussels, 8 December 2017  
(OR. en)

14866/17

CORLX 548  
CFSP/PESC 1063  
CSDP/PSDC 667  
FIN 752

## LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) within the Union framework is hereby established between those Member States whose military capabilities fulfil higher criteria as referred to in Article 1 of Protocol No 10, and which have made commitments to one another in this area as referred to in Article 2 of that Protocol, **with a view to the most demanding missions** and contributing to **the fulfilment of the Union level of ambition**

# The EU's Jean Monnet 'embedded' lecturers in universities are an "in-built contradiction"

## Keynote Speeches



Professor Joseph H. H. Weiler

PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE

Previously Professor Weiler served as Professor of Law and Jean Monnet Chair at Harvard Law School and subsequently as Director of the Jean Monnet Center at NYU School of Law. He is Editor-in-Chief of the European Journal of International Law (EJIL) and the International Journal of Constitutional Law (IJCML). Professor Weiler is also an Honorary Professor at University College London and the University of Copenhagen, and Co-Director of the Academy of International Trade Law in Mexico, China. He holds a Ph.D. in European Law from the EU, Florence and honorary degrees from numerous European universities.

European University Institute

personal capacity

## The Jean Monnet Professor — A life of inbuilt contradiction

The life of a Jean Monnet Professor, and of many others in this particular field of European studies, is a life of contradiction.

On the one hand, part of our mission as Jean Monnet Professor is to disseminate the values of European integration. The Commission, the initiator of this hugely successful programme think of us openly as intellectual ambassadors of the Union and its values.

Promoting the values of European integration is a core mission of the Jean Monnet Professor, such that they are openly regarded as the "intellectual ambassadors of the Union and its values" **BUT this mission is in complete contradiction to the academic's primary mission to pursue the truth**

# Jean Monnet professors have “ideological baggage” & an “instinct to defend [the EU] when [it] is criticized”

At an even deeper level, most of us become Jean Monnet professors because, in complicated ways, we believe in European integration. It is not only a professional commitment to many of us, but also a kind of *credo*; for example, when the European Union is criticised, our instinct is to defend it.

professors, come to it with idealistic/ideological baggage which one does not necessarily find in comparable areas of the social sciences, area studies and the like.

Herein lies the contradiction. Because above our identity as Jean Monnet professors we have a higher calling: before we are Jean Monnet professors we are professors, and as scholars we are committed to dispassionate critical enquiry, without partisan political bias — to the extent possible.

The then head of the European Union’s University Institute explained that **Jean Monnet lecturers are ideologues**: “it is not only a professional commitment... but also **a kind of *credo***” and they **“come to it with idealistic/ ideological baggage which one does not necessarily find in comparable areas of the social sciences, area studies, and the like”**

**EU studies is the only academic subject funded by such a propaganda machine**

**The Jean Monnet mission is in contradiction to the academic’s primary mission to pursue the truth – “dispassionate critical inquiry”**

**It is not possible to reconcile their “instinct to defend [the EU] when [it] is criticized” with the pursuit of truth “even if it is uncomfortable to the institutions, the funders of the Jean Monnet Programme”**

# EU-funded agent celebrates that ‘military neutrality’ is obsolete due to the EU becoming a military alliance

“The Next Generation Ireland conference will run 26 March 2011 in the Institute for International and European Affairs (IIEA). This conference is organised to coincide with the publication of a new book – *NEXT GENERATION IRELAND* – edited by Ed Burke and Ronan Lyons and published by Blackhall Publishing” Ed Burke’s chapter is called:

## Chapter 10

The author would like to thank Daniel Keohane, Hugo Brady and Ben Tonra their generous insights in commenting on earlier versions of this draft. However

## 10. Strategic, Coherent and Constructive: Three Pillars for a New Irish Foreign Policy..... 179 *Ed Burke*

“Even if neutrality is defined by some political leaders in Ireland as simply meaning an aversion to military alliances, Ireland’s commitment to the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy renders such a definition obsolete.”

“the EU is now a military as well as a political and economic alliance. A new government needs to explain why this is a good thing”

“The time has come to question whether, as the Department of Foreign Affairs claims, Irish neutrality is truly a ‘resource’ and not a hindrance.<sup>56</sup>”

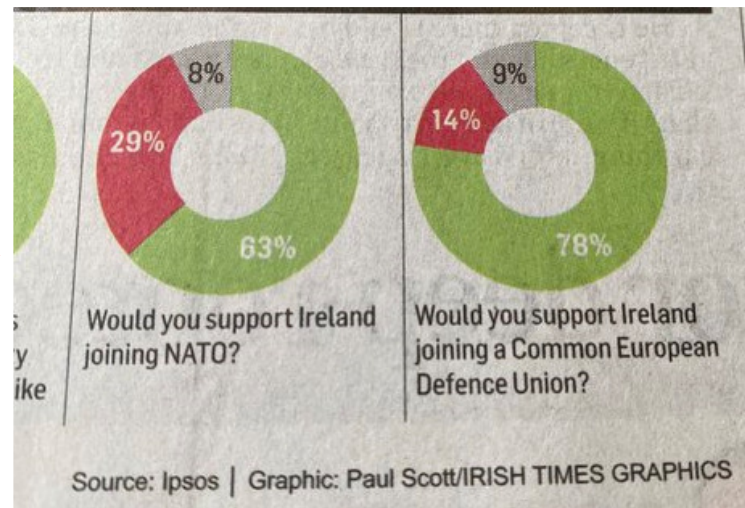


# 13-14% of people in Ireland are willing for Ireland to join NATO - 1996 to 2023. Only biased polls claim otherwise

A 1996 MRBI opinion poll conducted for the Irish Times showed that just 13% of people in Ireland would be willing for Ireland to join NATO. (Poll shows a symbolic support for neutrality, Irish Times, 5 March 1996)

An IPSOS opinion poll conducted recently (June 11th-13<sup>th</sup> 2023) for the Irish Times showed that just 14% of people in Ireland would be willing for Ireland to join NATO.\*

Example of wilfully biased, inaccurate reporting of data: “The base for these graphs is all those in favour of a change. Though that’s clear in the copy we should have made it clear in the graphs too. Sorry.” (Irish Times Political Editor via Twitter, 16 April 2022)



\*just more than a quarter (26 per cent) said they would like to see it change- of these 56 per cent support joining Nato = 14%

# Government already eradicated 'Military Neutrality:' now it's 4 in 5 people in Ireland & NGOs vs. vested interests

## The Binary: "Military Neutrality" vs Active (Positive) Neutrality....

Successive Irish Governments  
European Commission

The Military Industrial Complex/Arms Corporations

EU-funded 'Think Tanks'  
Mass Media

EU-funded/ "Jean Monnet" embedded lecturers in Universities



17 TDs/MEPs/Senators

4 in 5 people in Ireland

NGOs

President of Ireland



# How to reclaim Irish [active positive] neutrality and to stop future government attempts to eradicate neutrality

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- 1) Make neutrality an electoral issue, as important as housing, health, infrastructure, agriculture, support services, education, etc. and tell your local Councillors, TDs, Senators, and MEPs that you will not vote for them unless they agree to re-instate active neutrality and safeguard it legally as follows:
- 2) Obtain an opt-out from EU Security and Defence Policy, PESCO, and all EU militarisation activities **through a legally binding protocol in the EU Treaties** that additionally recognises, that in the event of war, Ireland's neutrality is conducted in accordance with the international law in the Hague Conventions
- 3) Enshrine neutrality in Bunreacht na hÉireann, the Irish Constitution, noting that the provision cannot be overridden by any international agreement/Treaty.

# Conclusions

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4 in 5 people in Ireland want to retain neutrality – that is ‘active’, ‘positive’ neutrality. This is consistent across five decades of opinion polling (since the 1980s to the present day)

Irish people define neutrality as not being involved in wars, and maintaining Ireland’s independence, identity, and independent foreign policy decision-making particularly in the context of “big power” pressure, and not taking sides in wars (impartiality) whilst the concept also embodies characteristics such as peace promotion, nonaggression, the primacy of the UN, and the confinement of state military activity to UN peacekeeping

Only 1% of people in Ireland define neutrality as simply ‘non membership of a military alliance’

Successive governments of Ireland speak only of ‘military neutrality’, meaning non membership of a military alliance’ but eradicated ‘military neutrality’ by ratifying the Lisbon Treaty that amended the Treaty on European Union, joining Ireland into a European Union military alliance and a mutual defence clause

A 1996 MRBI opinion poll conducted for the Irish Times showed that just 13% of people in Ireland would be willing for Ireland to join NATO. The most recent opinion poll (June 2023) conducted by IPSOS for the Irish Times showed that just 14% of people in Ireland would be willing for Ireland to join NATO

Government, media, universities (especially the EU’s embedded ‘Jean Monnet’ lecturers), think tanks, and the European Union are colluding to lie, cajole and threaten the people of Ireland into participation in wars and eventually official membership of NATO

The so-called Forum on International Security is simply a PR / propaganda exercise to achieve those goals

Irish neutrality can be re-instated by 1) making it an electoral issue, 2) obtaining a legally binding protocol to the EU treaties opting out of CSDP as part of neutrality, and enshrining neutrality in the Irish Constitution