

# TRÁCHT NÁISIÚNTA

Occasional Bulletin

Comhdháil Náisiúnta na hÉireann-Irish National Congress

No. 1, 15th May 2024



## THE RUSSIAN ----- UKRAINIAN WAR



The roots of the current conflict in Ukraine go back to 1922 when a Ukrainian state was set up as part of the Soviet Union. The government in Moscow, effectively at the direction of Vladimir Lenin, decided to allocate certain Russian ethnic areas as the east and south of the new state and thus place them under the governance of Kyiv. This was designed to place a break on feared 'bourgeois' nationalism in Ukraine. There was no consultation of the peoples in question such as by way of plebiscite along the lines of what was taking place elsewhere in Europe at the time following the First World War.

Then, in 1954, the Ukrainian-raised Nikita Khrushchev decided to transfer Crimea from the Russian Federation to Ukraine. This occurred as part of his campaign to obtain the widest support for establishing himself securely as leader of the USSR. Again, there was no consultation of the people concerned about their wishes in the matter.

In 1991, the Soviet Union was dissolved and Ukraine became an independent state. Once more, no consideration was given to the boundaries of that state and the question of who should be included within it, taking account, even if belatedly, of local ethnic attitudes and preferences.

It has been said that the agreement on A new dispensations reached by the presidents of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine was in accordance with international law. That is probably correct, but it highlights the situation of when international law at any particular time can be in conflict with ethnic rights. For example, it is arguable that the War of Independence in Ireland from 1919-21 was not in accordance with international law as it then was. However, we would hardly have accepted that so-called international law should have prevailed over Irish national rights.

Apart from the domestic Ukrainian situation, there is the international context. When the Soviet Union indicated its willingness to withdraw troops from Central and Eastern Europe in the late Eighties, it was promised to it that NATO would not move into that sphere. However, NATO then did so move, right up to the Russian frontier in the Baltic states and the frontier of Russia's effective adjunct, Belarus.

One can just imagine what the reaction of the USA would be if the CSTO<sup>1</sup> were to enrol Mexico in membership or that country

<sup>1</sup> Collective Security Treaty Organisation of six ex-soviet states.

joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.<sup>2</sup> Remember Cuba in 1962; and there was the CIA-inspired overthrow of Allende in Chile as well as invasions of Panama and Grenada, all in the last century, when American interests were thought to be threatened. There is to be an ongoing Monroe Doctrine for the Americans but no equivalent for the Russians.

Yet we should be clear that, under no circumstances, was Russia justified in actually invading Ukraine in 2022, while it is also clear that a situation was produced by NATO that was unnecessarily provocative to Russia and could have been avoided otherwise.

An alternative would have been to have had a cordon sanitaire of countries from the Baltic to the Black Sea which would have been neutral and armed nationally to defend themselves against allcomers, along with guarantees of that neutrality from both the West and Russia by way of assistance against any aggression from any direction.

It has been said that the new regimes in central and eastern Europe have the sovereign right to join NATO. They have the right to apply but there is no obligation that they should be accepted into membership if that is believed to be unwise in terms of international stability.

The question then arises, given NATO provocation, of what Russia could have done other than launch what has turned out to be a somewhat more successful Bay of Pigs type incursion. Firstly, it had it within its power, to threaten sanctions against Ukraine if it moved towards NATO, taking account of energy supplies. Secondly, it could have sought to mobilise a political lobby in the global south and east at the United Nations to oppose Euro-Atlantic in-

tentions and machinations.

However, we are where we are now and the main thing is to bring the fighting and suffering to an end in an equitable manner.

We therefore urge organisations in Ireland at all levels to consider supporting the motion set out below.

#### MOTION

We endorse the stance of the United Nations in condemning the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 by the Russian Federation.

We also deprecate the renegeing by NATO on promises given to Mikhail Gorbachev that it would not expand into central and eastern Europe following Soviet military disengagement from those regions.

We believe that such renegeing helped to create the conflict in Ukraine which exists today.

We note the statement that an aim of the United States in the Ukraine war is, through NATO, to weaken Russia, rather than just support Ukraine.

We would also note that actions of governments in Kyiv in not granting local autonomy to ethnic Russians in Ukraine and denying their cultural and linguistic rights have contributed to the negative state of affairs.

We would urge the following policy In the situation that now exists:-

- (i) an immediate ceasefire and end to the material destruction and human slaughter;
- (ii) the withdrawal of all Russian and Ukrainian forces from the five provinces now involved<sup>3</sup> and their replacement by UN peace-keeping forces;
- (iii) the holding of plebiscites in the five provinces concerned, giving them three op-

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<sup>2</sup> Eight states ranging from China through central and southern Asia to Russia.

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<sup>3</sup> Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, Kherson, Crimea.

tions to choose from:

[a] to be part of a Ukrainian state on a locally autonomous basis;

[b] to be part of the Russian Federation on a locally autonomous basis;

[c] to be independent.

**We hold that this is a just and fair policy for all democratic and left-wing groups to adopt and that it rejects Russian aggression, NATO proxy warfare, and Kyivian internal hegemony, while leaving the question of neutrality in the area to be subsequently negotiated.**

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## IMMIGRATION TO THE FORE

**Immigration is an issue that has been increasingly discussed in Ireland, ‘north’ and ‘south’, in recent years. It has arisen under various headings: growth in numbers; origin of incomers; role of immigrants; implications for finance.**

Traditionally, we have been accustomed to the valuable contributions made to Irish society by welcome immigrants who serve in our health and other welfare services.

Since we joined the EU and it has expanded,

we have also become used to persons coming here from other member countries in order to seek work, even if it has not been guaranteed in advance. This they are entitled to do, without permits or visas, for at least six months. In fact, most of those who have so arrived have actually filled needs in Irish society, whether it be further in hospitals et cetera or taking up jobs in the likes of building and construction, thus making up deficiencies in the Irish labour supply.

What has arisen more recently in the economic area is the number of immigrants from beyond the EU also seeking employment out-

side the traditional categories. This is particularly noticeable in bars, restaurants, and shops. Such persons are awarded permits, given indication of actual employment offers.

Then there are others outside the EU who want to come to Ireland to search for work and, unable to obtain a permit according to the rules, enter illegally. Some of them may then succeed in getting a job while others may not. These persons thus leave themselves open to exploitation by certain employers who will only pay them less than the minimum wage, yet that often turns out to be more than they could achieve in their countries of origin.

A particular feature of the past half decade or so has been the number of asylum seekers coming to Ireland. There was of course a significant influx from Ukraine, following on the war that broke out there. However, many of these may return to their country in due course and some are already doing so.

Then there are other asylum seekers from places such as Afghanistan and like places of insecurity. But there are also people arriving and seeking asylum who are in fact not under threat in their countries of origin, but rather endeavouring to circumvent the permit regulations in connection with getting employment.

There are a number of questions which arise about the intake of various categories.

In the matter of illegal economic immigrants, they are of course liable for deportation. However, if it is found that some of them have obtained legitimate employment, even though they did not enter according to the law, their situation could be examined with a view to letting them stay legally.

The same state of affairs could arise in the case of persons looking for work and invalidly

claiming asylum for that purpose.

Otherwise, it is quite legitimate that illegal entrants and invalid asylum seekers not being advantageously reviewed in this manner should be deported.

There is also the consideration of how far illegals and ungentrue asylum seekers end up placing demands upon the welfare system while they are in Ireland.

Even in the case of genuine asylum seekers, there is the question of how far Ireland should be expected to accept and accommodate them. Ireland is a medium-sized European country geographically and on the smaller side when it comes to population and financial capacity. There are just over 7 million people on the island with almost 2 million in the 'North' and just above 5 million in the 'South'. That contrasts with countries much larger geographically and having much larger populations: e.g. re the latter in millions - Germany 85, Britain 65.5, France 65, Spain 45. Moreover, several of these countries have been responsible, in regard to colonialism and neocolonialism, for generating the migration problem.

Therefore, it is not unfair to suggest that those countries should take most of the migrants coming from outside the EU, for whatever reason. This is not just so in equity, but also taking account realistically of the ability of Irish resources to cope beyond a certain limit with immigrants in need of State expenditure. This has also to be set in the context of the obligation of the Irish State primarily to meet the needs of its own citizens under headings such as housing, health, and education, for instance. And, in all of these, there is underfunding present. It is very simple: money spent on one thing cannot be spent on another.

What has been said so far in this article is, it is maintained, a reasonable and equitable

assessment of the position on immigration which Irish citizens can be expected to affirm.

There are those who will assert that some of the things that have been stated above amount to racism or xenophobia. Of course, that is wokish and ultraleftist nonsense.

There *are* contemptible racist and xenophobic bigots in the country (the “far right”) who judge people on the basis of their colour or foreignness. It is only proper that they should be denounced unequivocally and the groups and organisations that they populate should be identified and condemned. In fact, the description “far right” is almost a euphemism for what is in reality fascism.

It is ridiculous that some ‘politically correct’ people cannot see the difference between these creatures and sincere citizens who have perfectly reasonable worries about the extent to which we can handle immigration overall, while still doing our fair share and maintaining a humane outlook. It is not racism or xenophobia to say that there is only so much that we can do and that we should not be called upon to do more to the detriment of Irish citizens.

Ireland is not full and that is not the point. We are not a piece of real estate. The issues, as outlined above, have nothing to do with density of population. Another consideration is that Ireland is not just an economic entity; it is a homeland for the Irish who wish to preserve and develop their culture in all its dimensions, Gaelic and Hibernic<sup>4</sup>. After all, we left the UK as part of a process of cultural re-assertion. Therefore, even those whom we do accept to live here permanently should be inducted in Irish history and culture. The criteria for citizenship should not just be material. That does not mean that new citizens have to forget their original cultures. There is no reason why they cannot retain their links with them while in Ireland. Indeed, an oppor-

tunity could thus be offered for valuable cultural interaction.

On immigration, it is necessary to listen to the people and not to deprecate them for their concerns. The danger is that if persons, particularly of a progressive and left-wing disposition, do not accurately gauge what is going on, other unsavoury and irrational elements will try to make advances in the light of that. Too often, the Left in particular is self-righteous and ironically disdainful of the mass of people whose interests they are supposed to represent and promote. Should such an attitude be persisted in, there will be a day of electoral reckoning in the not too distant future.

#### **Notes on [1] A Borderless Ireland & [2] Irish Emigration**

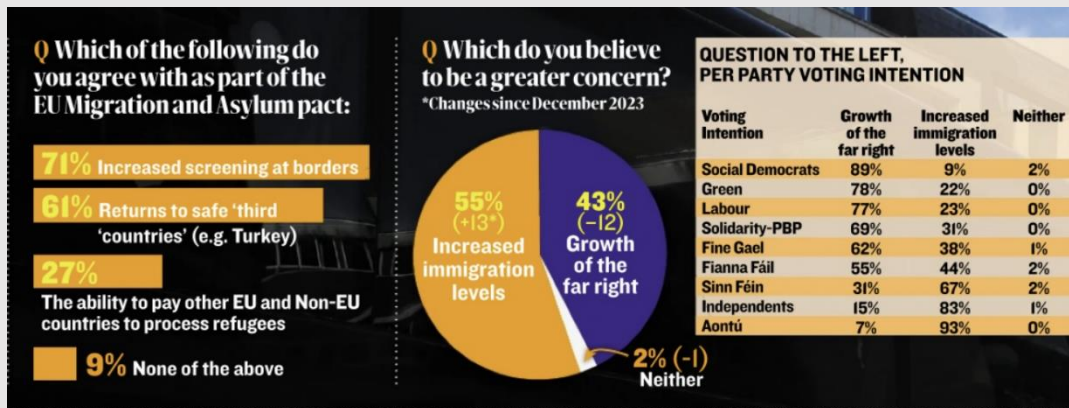
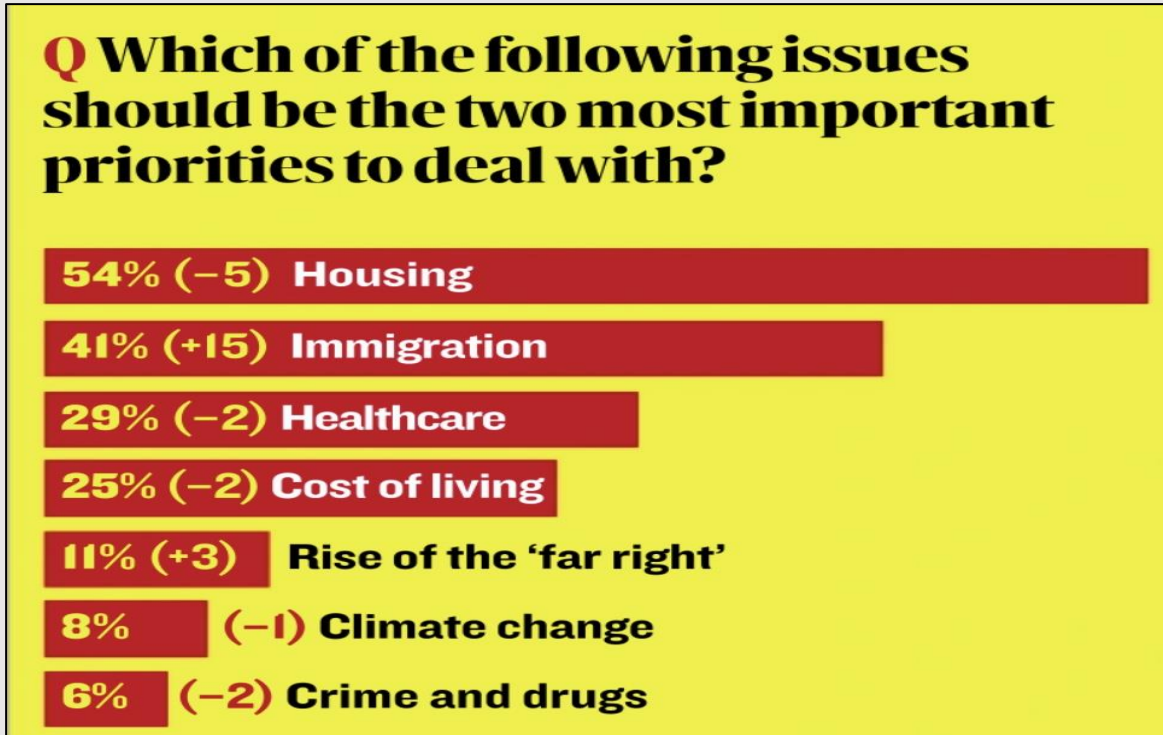
[1] A lot of ignorant nonsense is being talked about the border in Ireland. It is being suggested that those calling for occasional identity checks at the frontier between ‘north’ and ‘south’ (as part of controlling immigration) are reneging on the position of a borderless island. The accusers in question have obviously not read the documents regarding the Common Travel Area and the Windsor Framework. A “borderless Ireland” refers to no customs barriers or technical barriers to trade (different product specifications) - also no passport desks. It does not mean no identity checks on trains and buses when necessary, which have always been possible and can be fulfilled by showing a PSSC card or driving licence etc. Therefore, it is quite legitimate to use identity checks at the jurisdictional frontier as part of immigration control while still adhering to the principle of a borderless Ireland.

[2] A ridiculous assertion is that because colonialism caused emigration from Ireland, we should feel obliged to significantly accommodate the results of emigration that colonialism and neocolonialism has caused elsewhere in the world. That is just an absurd non sequitur. ▲

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<sup>4</sup> A term for those Irish not using Gaelic as first language.

SUNDAY INDEPENDENT Ireland Thinks poll:



IRISH TIMES poll:

**Immigration**

When it comes to immigration are you in favour of a more open policy to allow more people to come to Ireland are you in favour of a more closed policy to reduce the numbers coming here or is the current policy just right?

Just right More open More closed Don't know/no opinion

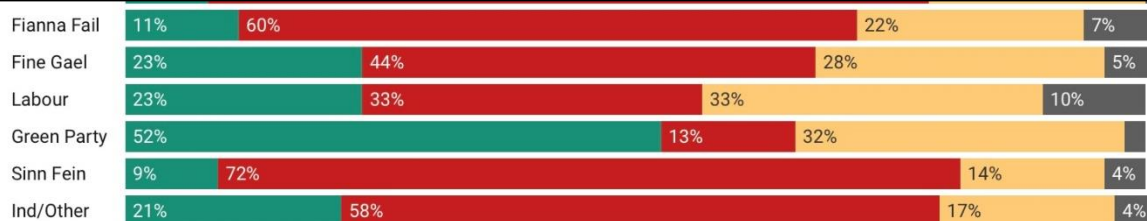


Chart: IRISH TIMES GRAPHICS • Source: Ipsos B&A • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper