



IRELAND UNITED STATES
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Ireland U.S. Alumni Association Lunch Series

**TOPIC: IRELAND'S PRESIDENCY OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND
THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP**

DATE: THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026

TIME: 12:30 PM

**VENUE: KILDARE STREET AND UNIVERSITY
CLUB DUBLIN 2, D02 ND68**

TICKET:

Regular:
€60

Student:
€40

Dress code: Business attire only

Event



The Irish U.S. Alumni Association is delighted to welcome you to the first IUSA Spring Lunch. As Ireland navigates an ever-changing political environment, it takes up the European Presidency in July 2026. This, at a time when war continues in the Ukraine and the Middle East, global trade is challenged, and there are many polarising factors influencing the life and living standards of all Europeans in many different ways.

We are delighted to have a panel of distinguished speakers who will take us through Ireland's roadmap for a successful EU Presidency as well as the challenges that may lie ahead. Our moderator, experienced and award-winning Journalist, Paul Allen, will probe the Transatlantic relationship, past, current and future with our panellists. We look forward to an insightful discussion!

We look forward to welcoming you and your guest to the beautiful Kildare Street and University Club on Stephen's Green on the 23rd of April at 12.30pm, to participate in what promises to be a wonderful event!

Where & when

12:30pm until 2:30pm, 23rd of April in the Kildare Street and University Club on Stephens Green, D02ND68. Dress code is business attire only.

Lunch at Kildare Street and University Club

A fantastic three course lunch awaits in the Kildare Street and University Club

How do you register

Please confirm your tickets and attendance at irishusalumni@gmail.com

How Much

€60 per person, €40 per student

Programme

TIME

12.30pm Welcome Reception in the Drawing Room and Registration

12.45pm Lunch Bell will sound to commence Spring Lunch
Introduction, President of the IUSA Alumni, Ms. Julia Carmichael

1.00pm **Lightning Talks**

- ▶ Moderator, Paul Allen
- ▶ Minister with special responsibility for European Affairs, Thomas Byrne TD
- ▶ Member of the European Parliament, Barry Andrews
- ▶ Head of Communications, European Movement, Ms. Aisling Brady
- ▶ Permanent Representative to Brussels in 2013 for Ireland European Presidency, Mr Rory Montgomery

1.45pm Lunch will be served

3.00 pm Event concludes

Our Moderator and Speaker Panel for the IUSA Spring Lunch



Thomas Byrne is Minister of State for European Affairs and Defence at the Department of the Taoiseach, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Department of Defence. Minister Byrne previously served as Minister of State for Sport and Physical Education from December 2022 until January 2025.

He also held the role of Minister of State for the Gaeltacht from April 2024 until January 2025. Minister Byrne represents the Meath East constituency in Dáil Éireann and has served as a member of the Houses of the Oireachtas since 2007. From July 2020 until December 2022, he served as Minister of State for European Affairs at the Department of the Taoiseach and at the Department of Foreign Affairs.



Barry Andrews is a Member of the European Parliament, representing Dublin since 2019. A member of the Fianna Fáil party in Ireland who is part of Renew Europe, they are under the ALDE Party umbrella in Europe.

Before being elected as an MEP in 2019, Barry was Minister for Children in the Irish Government from 2008-2011 and was a TD (Member of Parliament) from 2002-2011. From 1999-2002, he was a Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council member in Co. Dublin. Professionally he has also served as CEO of GOAL, a global humanitarian response agency, and Director General of the Institute of International & European Affairs.

Barry's work in the European Parliament since 2024 includes several high-profile positions, including, Chair of the Committee on International Development, Co-chair of the Democracy Support Group, Vice Chair of the Palestine Delegation, Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, and Delegation of relations with the UK.



Aisling Brady, is the dynamic Head of Communications at European Movement Ireland with a proven track record in delivering impactful global, national, and local campaigns, having previously worked for RTÉ, Newstalk and Oireachtas TV in Leinster House and at the European Parliament. An expert in Irish and US politics, specialising in European affairs, she is a regular contributor in the Irish language to RTÉ and Newstalk and a regular fixture on US-Irish relations at the Kennedy Summer School. A US IVLP alumni, Aisling represented Ireland as part of a delegation of journalists from across Europe and Central Asia during the US Presidential Election in 2024.



During his career as an Irish diplomat between 1983 and 2019, **Rory Montgomery** served as Political Director, Permanent Representative to the European Union during Ireland's last EU Presidency in 2013. Subsequently he was appointed as Ambassador to France, and Second Secretary General at the Departments of the Taoiseach and of Foreign Affairs during Brexit negotiations.

He is currently Chairperson of the Press Council of Ireland and an honorary professor at Queen's University Belfast, as well as a member of the board of Cancer Trials Ireland. He is a member of the steering committee of the RIA/University of Notre Dame ARINS project and hosts its monthly podcast.



Paul Allen is Managing Director of the award-winning firm, Paul Allen and Associates, and has over 35 years of experience in all aspects of public relations and marketing communications. His firm specialises in crisis and reputation management. Paul is a graduate of DIT and a former RTE newsroom journalist. Paul is former chairman of the Public Relations Consultants Association and is a regular contributor to media columns and television and radio programmes.

He has consulted and advised seven Taoisigh, visiting heads of state and noted high-profile individuals and organisations. His work experience extends to the USA and the UK where he has worked directly with two British Prime Ministers - Major and Blair, and three U.S. Presidents - Clinton, Obama and Biden, during their terms. He also has experience of working in Northern Ireland during several stages of the peace process, including the Good Friday Agreement and the Downing Street Declaration over 25-year period.



Julia Carmichael is the current President of the Ireland US Alumni Association. Julia has been involved with the IUSA over the past 15 years working with the IUSA in continuing to build networks and relationships with Irish and US representatives in all spheres of industry. She has worked in Finance, Insurance, University Research Security and Banking as a member of Executive Management teams and non-executive Director.

Her focus has been in protecting and securing the reputation of firms through effective Financial and Regulatory Risk and Compliance Management. Her previous roles include being the first Chief Risk Officer in Trinity College Dublin, Chief Compliance Officer for IPB Insurance, Group Chief Compliance Officer for Aviva Ireland Ltd and Head of Enterprise Risk and Awareness in Ulster Bank Group. She is also currently Head of Compliance for Northern Trust Fund Services Ireland Limited and a non-executive Director for several public bodies and charities. She has also worked with Respond Housing as Head of Compliance to support the development of compliance frameworks within a social housing setting.



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