

Weekly Intelligence Brief

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Ireland Government Maintains Power Amid Fuel Protests

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On 14 APR, Ireland's government withstood a no-confidence vote, winning by a margin of 92-78. The vote was called in response to the government's handling of recent fuel protests. Following the results, demonstrators gathered outside parliament in Dublin, chanting "sell out" and "get them out".

Protests began on 07 APR with slow-moving convoys blocking roadways and creating substantial traffic jams. Demonstrators blocked access to key oil supplies, which led to shortages at over a

third of gas pumps. Protests escalated as information spread on social media. Demonstrators demanded price caps and tax cuts to reduce rising fuel prices.

In response, Prime Minister Micheál Martin announced tax cuts. On 14 APR, lawmakers also approved a €505 million (\$595 million) fuel support package. The package includes direct payments to truckers and school bus operators, as well as fuel subsidies for agricultural and fishing sectors. Political opposition parties argue the measures are too late and insufficient, stating they fail to address a broader cost-of-living crisis. Several political groups, including Social Democrats, the Green Party, and Independent

Ireland, supported the opposition's stance.

Martin defended the tax cuts, stating they were among the largest offered in Europe. He also stated that the government could learn from the protests but supported the response of police and military forces to clear roadblocks at the country's only oil refinery.

Despite the government securing support in the vote, we can assess with high confidence that it is likely that strong opposition and protests will continue. We can also assess with high confidence that it is likely the opposition will further political instability in Ireland.

Syrians in Lebanon Face Rising Conflict-Driven Displacement

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On 08 APR 2026, Israel conducted roughly 100 airstrikes in locations it suspected were Hezbollah-affiliated areas across Beirut and other parts of Lebanon. The strikes killed 350 people, roughly 115 of them women and children. This marked the deadliest day in six weeks of fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.

Lebanon's Health Ministry reported that at least 39 of the deceased casualties were Syrian. Fighting

between Hezbollah, an Iranian-backed militant group based in Lebanon, and Israel puts around 530,000 displaced and documented Syrians in danger, as well as hundreds of thousands of estimated undocumented Syrians. The majority of the Syrian refugees residing in Lebanon migrated due to the 14-year-long civil war in Syria, which saw former President Bashar al-Assad ousted in DEC 2024.

In recent weeks, between 100,000 and 200,000 Syrians have crossed the border back to their home country, adding to the roughly 600,000

Syrians in total who have returned since the end of the war. However, many are reluctant to move back due to unresolved ethnic/religious conflicts that fueled the Syrian Civil War, on top of the already destroyed economy and job market.

We assess with high confidence that as fighting between Hezbollah and Israel continues amidst the war in the Middle East, it is likely that Syrian's residing in Lebanon will continue to cross the Syrian border, possibly leading to unresolved tensions reigniting.

United States Report Suggests Cuba Aiding Russian War Effort

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On 08 APR, a United States (U.S.) Department of State report to Congress suggested that officials in Havana, Cuba, may be working with Russia to send its citizens to the war in Ukraine. Although the report does not prove that Cuban authorities explicitly sent citizens, there are significant indicators that the Cuban government knowingly enabled or facilitated the deployment of Cuban nationals.

Estimates claim that at any given time throughout the war, there are between 1,000 and 5,000 Cuban fighters in Ukraine, with Ukrainian intelligence indicating several

thousand of these fighters are directly involved on the front. In 2023, Cuban law enforcement uncovered a human trafficking ring that was sending Cuban nationals to fight for Russia. The Cuban government declared that it had no prior knowledge of the ring and stated that human trafficking is illegal under Cuban law. Upon these findings, Cuba launched an investigation that prosecuted nine criminal cases and 40 defendants for trafficking their citizens to fight for Russia. The U.S. Department of State, however, believes that because of the Cuban government's secretive judicial system, these claims are unverifiable.

In OCT 2025, the U.S. cited these Cuban fighters in Ukraine as a

reason to oppose a United Nations (UN) resolution that called for the lifting of the current embargo on Cuba. Furthermore, the recent report is amid increasing U.S. efforts to remove President Miguel Díaz-Canel from power, to which he responded, stating that Cuba will defend itself and die before they allow U.S. interference.

We can assess with moderate confidence that the embargo on Cuba will likely remain in place and tensions between the U.S. and Cuba will continue to rise. We can also assess with high confidence that it is very likely that Cuba will continue to allow the deployment of their citizens to aid the Russian war effort in Ukraine.

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