

[Lyons launches PRONI's five-year strategy](#)

Communities Minister Gordon Lyons has launched the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland's (PRONI) five-year strategy for 2026-2031, 'Building our future by preserving our past'.

[Court Prosecutions, Convictions and Out of Court Disposals Statistics for Northern Ireland, 2025 published today](#)

The Department of Justice (DoJ) today published the Research and Statistical Bulletin 'Court Prosecutions, Convictions and Out of Court Disposals Statistics for Northern Ireland, 2025'. It is an Official Statistics Publication.

[A new Growth and Defence Partnership with Europe](#)

The world has changed in ways no one could have predicted a decade ago. Trump, Putin and Xi have made the world – and the UK – much less safe. Our economy hasn't grown, and the cost of living has soared.

Nigel Farage and Boris Johnson's Brexit experiment has failed. It is costing UK taxpayers £90 billion a year. That is money being taken away from our schools, hospitals and armed forces, and out of our pockets in higher taxes in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis.

We all know that this has to change. We have to act. We need peace, and we need prosperity.

The EU needs and wants greater cooperation with the UK on defence.

We will seize the initiative – from a position of strength – to form a bold new deal with Europe that strengthens both Britain's economy and our collective security.

Our new Growth and Defence Partnership with the EU – including joining the Single Market and a new Customs Union – will make the UK richer, safer and stronger.

This plan is the best hope our country has to stop the chaos and end the crisis, and the biggest step we can take back towards our long-term ambition of membership of the EU.

The Government knows that repairing our relationship with Europe is the biggest lever we could pull to secure growth, to make our country safer, and to end the cost-of-living crisis. But they would prefer to make tweaks around the edges of a bad deal, rather than showing the courage to be far more ambitious.

Our Growth and Defence Partnership with Europe would cut trade barriers to get businesses growing again, and the economy moving – creating jobs, boosting incomes, and giving the government more money to cut the cost of living, fix the NHS and care, and strengthen our Armed Forces.

And our plan would boost cooperation on defence, energy security, critical supply chains and new technologies to keep Britain and our allies safe in this increasingly dangerous world.

Our Plans for a new Growth and Defence Partnership:

Joining the Single Market and a Customs Union

The Conservatives wrecked our economy, wrapped business in red tape and sent prices higher with their botched Brexit deal. By ripping us out of the Single Market and Customs Union, the Conservatives – backed by Nigel Farage – blew an enormous hole in the UK economy, costing us roughly £90 billion in lost tax revenue in 2025 alone.



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Thanks to them, British exporters are stuck filing paperwork. Instead of jobs, business and growth, we have stagnation and bureaucracy. In the face of this, Labour have failed to act. They refuse to cut red tape, pull down trade barriers and generate the growth we desperately need. Instead of change, they buried their heads in the sand.

Ministers need to finally take their promise of growth seriously to tackle the cost-of-living crisis and put money back into people's pockets. We would break down the barriers to trade with Europe stopping us from fixing this.

In 2026, Europe faces different challenges and opportunities to those in 2016. That's why we're proposing a new partnership that will deliver safety, strength and prosperity for Britain.

We would join the Single Market and a UK-EU Customs Union – boosting British businesses and generating a Growth Dividend to cut the cost of living, fix the NHS and care, and strengthen our Armed Forces.



An ambitious defence deal, making use of the UK's strengths

We can only be prosperous if we are safe. But when people read the paper or watch the news, they see war in Europe that threatens our way of life. They don't feel safe.

Trump is abandoning European security. Meanwhile Putin is testing NATO's resolve. His threats to Europe and the UK remind us that – in security and in trade – geography matters. Our interests are entwined with those of our European allies because Russia has the capability to threaten us directly.

That's why we need to expand our defence cooperation with Europe – allies on whom we can depend, and who share our interests and principles. That's how we keep our country safe, create jobs across the UK, and defend British values against those who would threaten us.

It is time for Ministers to show ambition when it comes to rebuilding and reimagining our security ties with the EU – to ensure that the UK, with our dependable allies, can guarantee Europe's security through NATO, even as the US draws back.

The EU needs and wants greater cooperation from the UK on defence. That puts us in a strong position to get a better deal for Britain on both trade and security.

Closer defence cooperation would support high-skilled jobs in British shipbuilding, aerospace, advanced manufacturing and defence technology.

Our new partnership would create a UK-EU defence pact, making Britain safer in the face of Vladimir Putin's expansionism and Donald Trump's unpredictability, by improving the coordination of Europe's rearmament drive and the ability of allies to deliver NATO's operational requirements.

Taken together, our new Growth and Defence Partnership will help to make the UK richer, safer and stronger – the biggest step we can take back towards membership of the EU, which remains our long-term goal.

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Author:

Roco invests £2.5m in new factory and doubles headcount in Crossmaglen

Economy Minister Dr Caoimhe Archibald has announced that mobile crushing and screening equipment manufacturer, Roco, is investing £2.5m in a factory expansion and 30 new jobs.

Oral Statement to the Northern Ireland Assembly – Update on the Affordable Rent Programme

I welcome the opportunity to update Members today on progress with the affordable rent programme. I am pleased to announce that I have now made an award of £61.5m Financial Transactions Capital loan funding to Maple and May. I can also now provide more information on the locations where we will see the first affordable homes of this type delivered here in Northern Ireland.