

# THE AZURE FORUM

## Newsletter

April-June 2022

*The Azure Forum Newsletter features announcements for its applied policy research, seminars and public engagement activities on peace, security, transnational crime and defence.*

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## Latest Research Seminars and Briefings

[Strife on the Streets: Responding to Kinetic Info-Wars, Ministry of External Affairs of India/Observer Research Foundation \(ORF\) Raisina Dialogue, New Delhi | Public diplomacy and communication, 25 April 2022](#)



Azure Forum Executive Director **Caitriona Heintz** was moderator of a high-level panel on 'Strife on the Streets: Responding to Kinetic Info-Wars' at the **Ministry of External Affairs of India/Observer Research Foundation (ORF) Raisina Dialogue**, held in New Delhi on 25 April 2022. The panel theme focused on the manipulation of information by state and non-state actors as a weapon of war. Discussants were asked to consider the blurring of lines between fact and fiction where information warfare is 'set to be the 21st century's most devastating and consequential digital battleground'. Questions addressed included: What are the significant vulnerabilities and limitations of the information ecosystem that make it susceptible to bad actors? How can states and corporations limit offline harms of online disinformation wars fuelled by bots? Without endangering free speech, how can they address the social divisions and subversion engendered by manipulated content? Speakers included: **Lt. Gen. (Rtd.) Rajesh Pant, National Cyber Security Coordinator at the Prime Minister's Office, India; Henri Verdier, Ambassador for Digital Affairs, at the Ministry for Europe and**

Foreign Affairs, France; Jeremy Quin, Minister of State (Minister for Defence Procurement), United Kingdom; Erin Saltman, Director of Programming at the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT), United States; and Janka Oertel, Director of the Asia Programme at the European Council on Foreign Relations, Germany.

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[Joint ESIWA-ORF Roundtable, Enhancing Global Cybersecurity Cooperation, Raisina Dialogue, New Delhi | Policy Dialogue, 27 April 2022](#)



The EU's [Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia \(ESIWA\)](#) project together with the Indian think-tank [Observer Research Foundation \(ORF\)](#) hosted a Track 1.5 Dialogue between the EU and India at the [Raisina Dialogue in April 2022](#). Participants exchanged information and discussed the respective EU and Indian positions on key global cybersecurity cooperation questions. The conclusions of the roundtable discussions were submitted to the respective officials for consideration during the formal EU–India cybersecurity dialogue meetings. This first roundtable set the scene regarding the Indian and EU respective positions on multilateral cooperation on stability in cyberspace and on cybercrime, notably on the Budapest Convention and UN discussions in the First Committee including the OEWG and the Programme of Action. The roundtable format enabled EU and Indian representatives to openly discuss and better understand the reasons for convergent and divergent positions and

consider the prospects for the EU and India to agree and promote common positions. Azure Forum Executive Director **Caitríona Heini** was a member of the ESIWA team of subject matter experts for this project, coordinated by **Cormac Callanan (ESIWA)** and developed by the EU, supported by the German Federal Foreign Office and the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

[Hearts, Minds and Influence Operations: Information Warfare in the 21st Century, 2022 Asian Forum on Global Governance, Policy Dialogue, 28 April 2022](#)



**Caitríona Heini** together with fellow discussants discussed the following abstract for the 2022 Asian Forum on Global Governance: The battle for “hearts and minds” is described as old as conflict itself – so how has technology disrupted information warfare? The advent of the digital public sphere, powered by the rapid rise of social media and its potential to amplify a message exponentially and immediately has seriously challenged the scope of human intelligence and its ability to question, verify and then publish information. The impact of this is evident – communities are more polarised, positions are more hardened, and the online ‘mob’ can dictate both the content and the tone of legitimate debate. In



this new era of communication, how can the public distinguish news from fake news, facts from alternate facts and information from disinformation? How can free societies arm themselves against the weaponisation of communication tools, and how can we manage their disruptive effects on social cohesion and vulnerable groups?



World Order and the Ukraine Crisis: India's position and future relationship with Russia? | Azure Forum International Security Dialogues, 28 April 2022



**Expert discussant Professor Harsh V. Pant** examined India's position on the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine. Professor Pant and other roundtable experts also discussed India's current and likely future relationship with Russia, including its defence partnership. Discussions focused on what this might mean in future for the international environment where India might aspire to, or be viewed as, a significant leading power. This was particularly noteworthy given that there has been much debate in India surrounding the possible transformation of the 'Western dominated world order' and ushering in of a new world order because of the Ukraine conflict. India has for some time argued for reform of the multilateral world order, continuing to take a middle ground while pursuing a 'nation first' theory and long-established connections with Russia. This continues to be the case despite the invasion of Ukraine and 'Western countries....attempting to persuade India to stop purchasing Russian oil and armaments', together with apparent warnings of severe consequences for Delhi if India remains unmoved.

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[Cyber diplomacy and governance: Opportunities, challenges and ways forward for the Arab countries, Chatham House | Policy Dialogue, Jordan, 16-17 May 2022](#)



**Caitríona Heintl** addressed delegates in a conference on 'Cyber diplomacy and governance: Opportunities, challenges and ways forward for the Arab countries' on 16-17 May 2022 at the Dead Sea, Jordan. The **conference was organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan together with the Jordanian National Cybersecurity Centre and the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House)**. A group of stakeholders from the Arab region were convened including diplomats, policymakers in charge of cyber affairs and a select group of international experts to provide a space to facilitate a structured discussion between Arab stakeholders on challenges and opportunities to international cyber governance from their vantage point; identify ways in which Arab countries can enhance their coordination to support their future engagements in the UN Open-ended Working Group and related forums; and identify concrete steps that Arab countries can take to operationalize the agreements they have endorsed at the UN and to reflect them in national policies and initiatives. Caitríona provided analysis on lessons from other regions, focusing in particular on regional groupings in Asia such as ASEAN. She examined practical mechanisms to enhance coordination that are being developed in such regional groupings, focusing on concrete ways to build consensus, develop regional positions on cyber diplomacy and



operationalise norms of responsible state behaviour with a view to providing good practice examples for a future 'unified Arab cybersecurity governance outlook'.



[Consequences for nuclear arms control in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine War: Is there a long term risk of renewed nuclear weapons proliferation? | Azure Forum International Security Dialogues, 25 May 2022](#)



On 25 May 2022, expert discussants John Bassett, [University of Bristol](#) and [Dr. Tytti Erästö](#), Senior Researcher, [Stockholm International](#)



[Peace Research Institute \(SIPRI\)](#) examined the long term prospects for arms control and nuclear non-proliferation as well as Sweden's recent NATO membership application. Almost thirty years ago, experts remarked that "[Ukrainian nuclear weapons are the only reliable deterrent to Russian aggression](#)." Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, some analysts argue that Ukraine may now regret its decision to give up its nuclear weapons, and that the war will now result in [increased nuclear proliferation](#). Others, however, argue that (so far) the conflict instead shows that nuclear weapons are not [militarily useful](#) and that increased proliferation is [not a foregone conclusion](#). At the roundtable, experts explored these questions and analysed whether a consequence of the war in Ukraine could be a sparking of global appetite for a nuclear deterrent. Will there be renewed nuclear proliferation and what is the probability that countries will in fact seek nuclear weapons? Discussions followed the trajectory of the nuclear disarmament and proliferation framework, including the [Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons \(NPT\)](#), [Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty \(CTBT\)](#), and dissenters to this framework. Roundtable experts were invited to examine whether current arms control structures are fit for purpose for the coming decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Does the West need to modify its expectations and seek a new dialogue with the Global South, and what should the global paradigm for nuclear arms control look like? Given fast-moving developments, experts were invited to further examine ongoing discussions surrounding fears of a growing nuclear risk in the context of what Sweden's application for NATO membership means for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation from both a Swedish and global perspective. **Informal invited contributors** at the roundtable included **Former Ambassador Rajiv Bhatia of Gateway House, India, and officials from the Irish Government's Department of Foreign Affairs Disarmament Unit.**

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[National Security as a Limit to Sovereign-Driven Investment, 2022 CELIS Forum on Investment Screening, Uppsala University | Research conference, Sweden, 2 June 2022](#)



The Azure Forum continued its prior 2021 engagement with the CELIS Institute on the important topic of national security and strategic investment screening at the [CELIS Forum on Investment Screening \(CFIS 22\)](#) held at Uppsala University, Sweden. The conference brought together European Union officials, national experts, diplomats, academics, business leaders, and representatives of civil society and the media from across Europe and globally. **Caitríona Heini** co-moderated a panel with **Jens Hillebrand Pohl** of **Maastricht University** on ‘**National Security as a Limit to Sovereign-Driven Investment**’. **Speakers included: Alejandra Torres Camprubí**, Associate, **Foley Hoag LLP**; **Athanasios Drougkas**, Network and Information Security Expert, **European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA)**; **Alessandro Lazari**, Senior Key Account Manager, **F24 AG**; **John Lash**, Founder, **Darkhorse Global**; and **Peter Muchlinski**, Professor of International Commercial Law, **SOAS University of London**. The panel theme focused on how national security concerns could serve as a limit on sovereign-driven investment. In addressing the topic, speakers discussed delimiting the concept of national security, cybersecurity investments in critical sectors, the protection of critical resources and strategic assets, assessment methodologies for national security threats, and inward foreign direct investment (FDI) regulation in the United Kingdom.

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[Mastercard Threatcasting Workshop 2022, Mastercard Technology Hub, Dublin](#)  
[| Capacity building, 14-15 June 2022](#)



**Azure Forum Advisory Council Member Paddy McGuinness** addressed delegates at the **Mastercard Threatcasting Workshop** at the Mastercard Technology Hub in Dublin on 14-15 June 2022. **Research Fellow Mark Williams** also participated in the workshop. Over the course of two days, participants from across industry, academia, and the public sector heard expert insights into the challenges society faces from cyber and hybrid threats. Participants took part in a series of threatcasting workshops, in which attendees were asked to envisage future scenarios involving misinformation, information warfare and large-scale destabilizations, and to identify specific actions, indicators and concrete steps that could be taken to disrupt, mitigate and recover from these potential future threats. Speakers included: **Ron Green, Chief Security Officer, Mastercard; Alissa "Dr. Jay" Abdullah, Deputy Chief Security Officer, Mastercard and former White House Deputy CIO; and Brian David Johnson, Professor of Practice, Arizona State University.**

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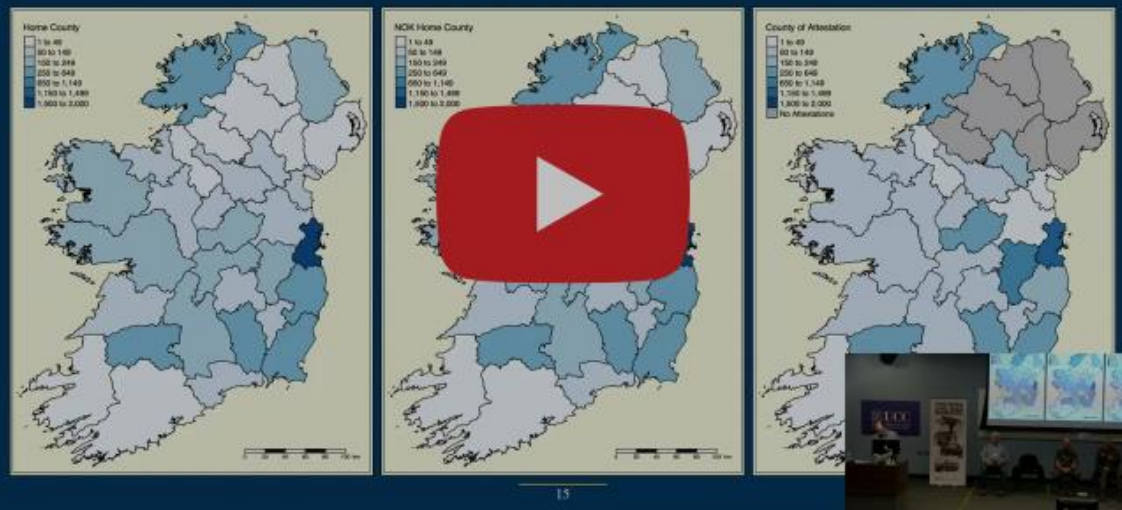


[The Irish Civil War National Conference, University College Cork | Research conference, 15-18 June 2022](#)

Azure Forum Adjunct Senior Research Fellow Edward Burke and Adjunct Senior Fellow Gareth Prendergast addressed delegates at '[The Irish Civil War National Conference](#)' at University College Cork (UCC) on 15-18 June 2022. The conference was organised by UCC to mark the centenary of the Irish Civil War and was supported with funding from the Irish Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media as part of Ireland's Decade of Centenaries Programme for 2022. During the four-day conference, over 130 scholars discussed the political, social, cultural, military, and economic dimensions of the Irish Civil War. Edward presented his paper on 'Donegal Loyalists and the Civil War: Fear, Adaptation and Resistance' on Thursday 16 June as part of a panel discussion on the impact of the Irish Civil War across borders. On Friday 17 June, Gareth discussed his research on 'The National Army and the counter-insurgency campaign in Cork, 1922-23', as part of a panel on 'War, Fighting and The National Army'. Recordings of both Edward's and Gareth's panel discussions are **available at the links below**.



## National Army Recruitment — July 1922



[Joint Azure Forum-Belgian Embassy Ireland Seminar on 'EU-NATO collaboration on hybrid threats, emerging technologies and cyber: What has been achieved so far and what lies ahead?' | Public diplomacy and communication, 23 June 2022](#)



On 23 June 2022, the Azure Forum for Contemporary Security Strategy and the [Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium in Ireland](#) co-hosted a high-level seminar on 'EU-NATO collaboration on hybrid threats, emerging technologies and cyber: What has been achieved so far and what lies ahead?'. Senior experts were invited to discuss EU-NATO collaboration in tackling hybrid threats, and the challenges posed by emerging technologies and cyber. Discussions focused on the progress made so far in this regard and what the future may hold, including the potential implications of the conflict in Ukraine. Senior Irish experts provided their insights in the Irish and international context. Approximately fifty experts from a range of disciplines across the diplomatic corps, academia/research institutes, government agencies, the private sector, and members of the media participated in the event. Speakers included: **H.E. Karen Van Vlierberge,**



Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to Ireland; Christian-Marc Lifländer, Head, Cyber and Hybrid Policy Section, Emerging Security Challenges Division, [NATO HQ](#); Wolfgang Röhrig, Head of Unit, Information Superiority, Capability, Armament and Planning Directorate, [European Defence Agency](#); Margaret Stanley, Head of Office of Emergency Planning, [Department of Defence, Ireland](#) and David Brück, Director (EU Common Security and Defence Policy, NATO/Partnership for Peace, Cybersecurity, Hybrid Threats), International Security Policy Unit, [Department of Foreign Affairs, Ireland](#).



## Research and Policy Reports

[Matthew O'Neill, Mark Williams & Caitriona Heintz, "Republic of Ireland" chapter in 'Tending the tech-ecosystem: who should be the tech-regulator\(s\)?' Australian National University Tech Policy Design Centre, Policy Report, May 2022](#)

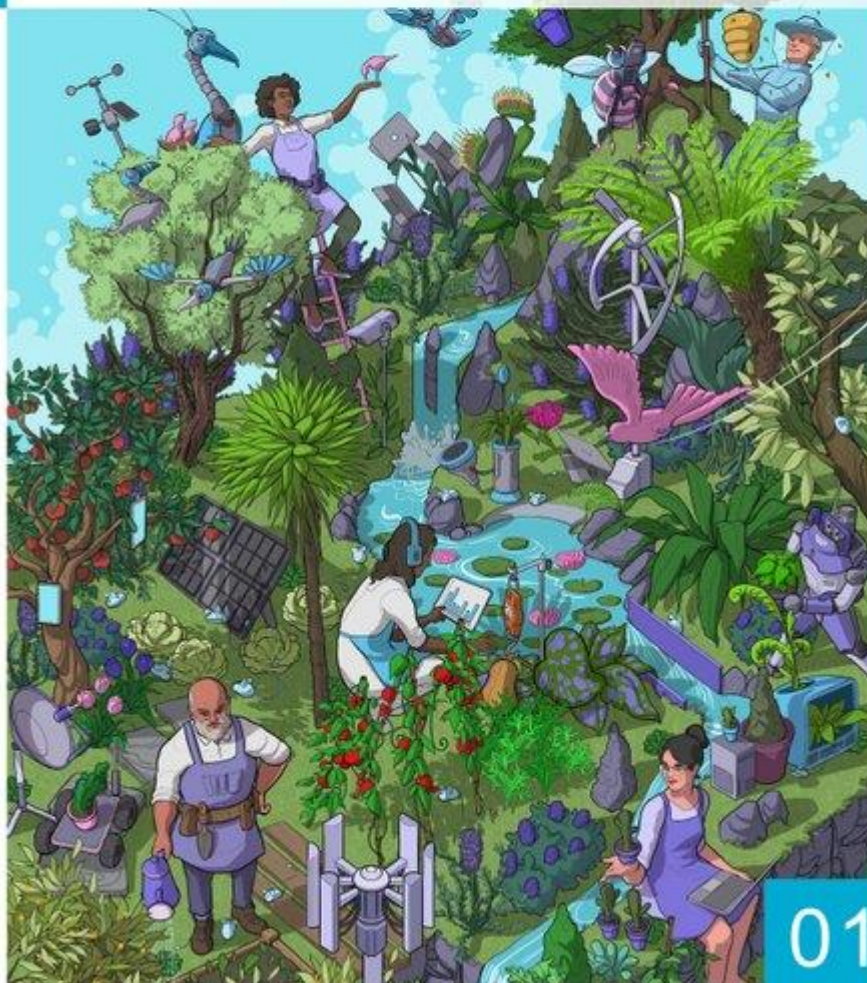
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MAY 2022

# Tending the Tech-Ecosystem

who should be the tech-regulator(s)?



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**Azure Forum Research Fellows Matthew O'Neill and Mark Williams**, alongside Executive Director, **Caitríona Heintz**, contributed a chapter on the Irish ecosystem to the inaugural report by the **Australian National University's Tech Policy Design Centre** entitled 'Tending the tech-ecosystem: who should be the tech-regulator(s)?'. The report draws upon international comparisons to consider who is best placed to implement and oversee a new era of tech regulation. The report found that formal coordination mechanisms among tech regulators and policymakers are in their infancy globally. To address this gap, the authors propose a Tech Policy and Regulation Coordination Model in response to calls for political leadership, strengthened coordination, increased transparency, access to independent technical expertise, and regularised, meaningful input by industry and civil society into the tech regulation process. **The question of who should be the regulator(s) of the tech-ecosystem warrants close attention.** The report and its findings are informed by interviews with 32 heads and senior representatives of Australian regulators, the Australian Government, industry, and civil society, as well as a comparative study of 14 jurisdictions globally. In Phase Two of this project, the proposed TPRC Model will be tested with a broader group of stakeholders in Australia and abroad. The full report can be found [here](#).

[Read more](#)

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[The EU, Irish Defence Forces, and Contemporary Security | Jonathan Carroll, Mark Williams & Matthew O'Neill \(Eds.\) | Edited volume, Palgrave MacMillan, Forthcoming 2022](#)

**Azure Forum Research Fellows Matthew O'Neill and Mark Williams**, alongside Jonathan Carroll, are co-editors of a forthcoming Palgrave Macmillan edited volume on the Irish Defence Forces entitled "The EU, Irish Defence Forces, and Contemporary Security." The volume aims to aid researchers, policymakers, and military personnel in researching small states and militaries, European defence, and security policy as well as contemporary and emerging threats. It gathers academic commentators on Irish defence policy, military



leaders from across the service components of the Irish Defence Forces, the British Armed Forces, the German Bundeswehr, the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and European Union defence experts to contribute in-depth conversation and analysis on modern Irish defence. The aim of the volume is to ascertain what capabilities are robust, which are lacking, what future threats need to be catered for, and what action is needed to ensure those threats will be addressed going forward. The book will explore emerging issues and applications of modern and contemporary threats within the context of Ireland, Europe, and Western institutions. Submissions were invited from scholars, commentators, policymakers, and military practitioners to evaluate the Irish Defence Forces and to illustrate the complexities facing small nations in formulating and resourcing defence and national security policy.

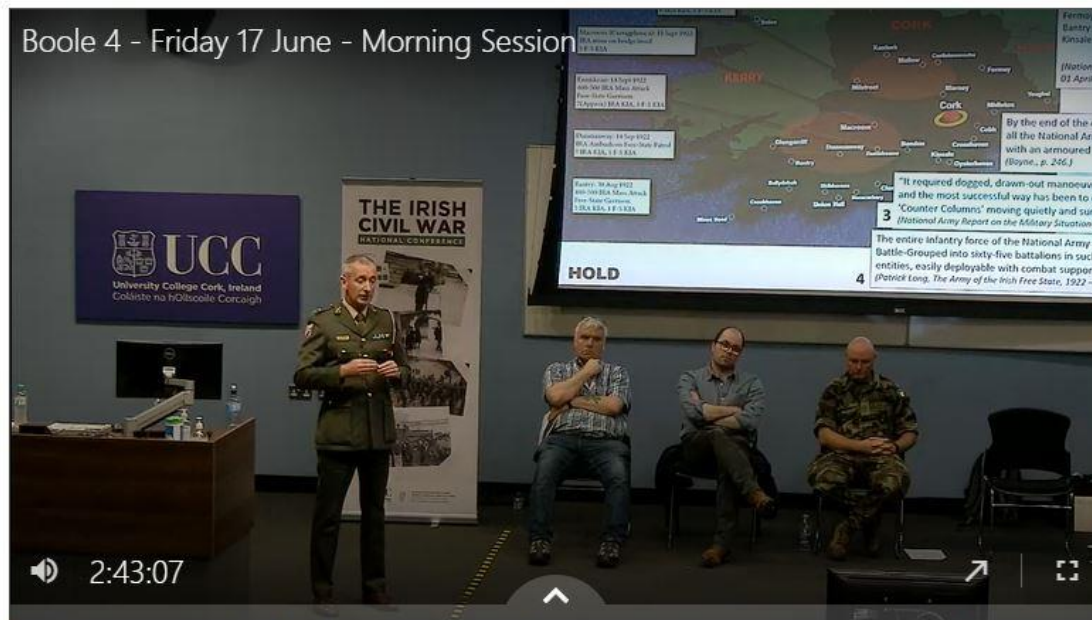
**The volume will feature chapters from several analysts in the Azure Forum network including:**

- **“Irish Cyber Security”, Matthew O’Neill and Mark Williams.**
- **“Ensuring the Jungle Doesn’t Grow Back: The Obligations Inherent to Irish Defence Policy”, Vice Admiral (Rtd.) Mark Mellett, Chair of the Azure Forum Advisory Council.**
- **“Decolonisation, Conflict, and Independence: The Impact of History on Ireland’s Approach to Peacekeeping”, Neil Dee, Research Associate.**
- **"The Defence Forces Research Technology Initiative", Sharon McManus, Adjunct Senior Fellow and Sharon Breen, Department of Defence, Ireland.**

The edited volume will be **launched towards the end of 2022 at an event hosted by the Azure Forum**. Further details will be announced closer to the time.

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[Clear Hold Rebuild: The National Army Counterinsurgency Campaign in Cork during the Irish Civil War, PhD Thesis, University College Cork | Gareth Prendergast, Forthcoming 2022](#)



Azure Forum Adjunct Senior Fellow **Gareth Prendergast** recently submitted his PhD research thesis on counterinsurgency in Cork during the Irish Civil War. His research analyses the counterinsurgency strategy practiced by the National Army in Cork during the Civil War period and how it compares to modern military doctrine. Using the lens of a serving military practitioner and modern student of Military Arts and Science, Gareth examined the counterinsurgency campaign in Cork using primary research material obtained from archives in Ireland and the UK. His research adds to the overall narrative of the Civil War and offers an alternative viewpoint of this contentious period of Irish history.

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## Commentaries & Azure Forum *Strategic Insights*

[‘Debating the Tech Sanctions on Russia: Is ‘Splinternet’ Upon Us?’, Raisina Edit, Caitríona Heintl | April 2022](#)



There has been much debate over the years about the likelihood of a ‘splinternet’ and so-called ‘balkanization’ or fragmentation of the global Internet. A [key concern has been](#) that the “open, globally connected Internet we all use splinters into a collection of fragmented networks controlled by governments or corporations”. In fact, several countries, such as China, Iran, and Russia, have previously taken steps in this direction, albeit not completely disconnecting from the global Internet.

[Read more](#)



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## New Members of the Azure Forum Network

[Giovanni Parente, Junior Research Fellow](#)



**Giovanni Parente** is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Military History and Strategic Studies at Maynooth University Ireland. He is a Graduate Teaching Assistant at the Irish Military College, located in the Curragh Camp. His primary research areas include maritime security, European Union foreign policy, and the Common Security and Defence Policy. His current doctoral research investigates the European Union's maritime operations from strategic, historical, and geopolitical points of view. Giovanni holds a BSc in Economics from the University of Naples, an MA in Politics from the University of Essex and an MSc in International Public Management and Policy from the Erasmus University of Rotterdam.

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## In the News

- [Air and sea transport links make Ireland a 'key target' for international human trafficking](#)
- [Ireland considering closer Nato co-operation in hybrid and cyber spheres](#)

- [HSE-style cyberattacks on Ireland are 'here to stay'](#)