

Ireland is moving against neoliberalism

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Wales [rocked the power of neoliberalism yesterday](#).

Ireland might also do so today. [As the FT has noted](#):

Ireland looks set to elect a hard-left independent as president on Friday, dealing a blow to the two parties that have dominated Irish politics for a century after their own campaigns for the figurehead role backfired.

Catherine Connolly, a 68-year-old independent legislator and vocal defender of Irish neutrality, has a commanding lead in the race.

The former barrister and clinical psychologist has blasted the EU's military build-up in response to Russia's war in Ukraine, saying the bloc "has lost its moral compass" and that German rearmament spending was reminiscent of the 1930s.

The message, if it is fulfilled, will be somewhat like that from Caerphilly. The two major Irish political parties that have dominated its politics since 1922 have become profoundly neoliberal, intensely conservative and anti-democratic in their desire to hold anyone but themselves out of power so that the status quo in the country might be maintained for the Irish elite, which most definitely exists.

Past Presidents have rocked the boat - usually very successfully in recent years - albeit in a role that is more symbolic than official, but this move may be significant. The Irish electorate might be saying they are fed up with being taken for granted. In particular, they may well be expressing their annoyance that the largest party in the country - Sinn Féin - is now perpetually held out of power by coalitions between the traditional parties, and that they will no longer tolerate this.

However it is looked at, the demise of neoliberal thinking appears to be on the horizon. We can live in hope.