[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About" \o "Template:About) [Template:Pp-semi-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-semi-indef) [Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates) [Template:Infobox islands](/wiki/Template:Infobox_islands)

**Ireland** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en); [Template:Lang-ga](/wiki/Template:Lang-ga) [Template:IPA-ga](/wiki/Template:IPA-ga); [Ulster-Scots](/wiki/Ulster_Scots_dialects): [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang) [Template:IPA-sco](/wiki/Template:IPA-sco)) is an [island](/wiki/Island) in the [North Atlantic](/wiki/North_Atlantic). It is separated from [Great Britain](/wiki/Great_Britain) to its east by the [North Channel](/wiki/North_Channel_(Great_Britain_and_Ireland)), the [Irish Sea](/wiki/Irish_Sea), and [St George's Channel](/wiki/St_George's_Channel). Ireland is the [second-largest island](/wiki/List_of_islands_of_the_British_Isles) of the [British Isles](/wiki/British_Isles), the [third-largest](/wiki/List_of_European_islands_by_area) in [Europe](/wiki/Europe), and the [twentieth-largest](/wiki/List_of_islands_by_area) on [Earth](/wiki/Earth).[[1]](#cite_note-1) Politically, Ireland is divided between the [Republic of Ireland](/wiki/Republic_of_Ireland) (officially [named Ireland](/wiki/Names_of_the_Irish_state)), which covers five-sixths of the island, and [Northern Ireland](/wiki/Northern_Ireland), which is part of the [United Kingdom](/wiki/United_Kingdom), in the northeast of the island. In 2011, the [population of Ireland](/wiki/Irish_population_analysis) was about 6.4 million, ranking it the [second-most populous island in Europe](/wiki/List_of_European_islands_by_population) after [Great Britain](/wiki/Great_Britain). Just under 4.6 million live in the Republic of Ireland and just over 1.8 million live in Northern Ireland.[[2]](#cite_note-2) The island's [geography](/wiki/Geography) comprises relatively low-lying mountains surrounding a central plain, with [several navigable rivers](/wiki/Rivers_of_Ireland) extending inland. The island has lush vegetation, a product of its mild but changeable climate which avoids extremes in temperature. Thick woodlands covered the island until the [Middle Ages](/wiki/Middle_Ages). As of 2013, the amount of land that is wooded in Ireland is about 11% of the total, compared with a European average of 35%.<ref name=guardexa>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref><ref name=epa2>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> There are twenty-six extant [mammal](/wiki/Mammal) species native to Ireland.[[3]](#cite_note-3) The [Irish climate](/wiki/Climate_of_Ireland) is very moderated and classified as [oceanic](/wiki/Oceanic_climate).[[4]](#cite_note-4) As a result, winters are milder than expected for such a northerly area. However, summers are cooler than those in [Continental Europe](/wiki/Continental_Europe). Rainfall and cloud cover are abundant.

The earliest evidence of human presence in Ireland is dated at 10,500 BC.<ref name=BBC2016-03-21>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref> [Gaelic Ireland](/wiki/Gaelic_Ireland) had emerged by the 1st century AD and lasted until the First World War. The island was [Christianised](/wiki/Christianised) from the 5th century onward. Following the [Norman invasion](/wiki/Norman_invasion_of_Ireland) in the 12th century, [England](/wiki/Kingdom_of_England) claimed sovereignty over Ireland. However, English rule did not extend over the whole island until the 16th–17th century [Tudor conquest](/wiki/Tudor_conquest_of_Ireland), which led to [colonisation by settlers from Britain](/wiki/Plantation_of_Ireland). In the 1690s, a system of [Protestant English rule](/wiki/Protestant_Ascendancy) was designed to materially disadvantage the [Catholic](/wiki/Catholic_Church) majority and Protestant [dissenters](/wiki/Dissenters), and was extended during the 18th century. With the [Acts of Union](/wiki/Acts_of_Union_1800) in 1801, Ireland became [a part of](/wiki/Countries_of_the_United_Kingdom) the [United Kingdom](/wiki/United_Kingdom_of_Great_Britain_and_Ireland). A [war of independence](/wiki/Irish_War_of_Independence) in the early 20th century was followed by the [partition of the island](/wiki/Partition_of_Ireland), creating the [Irish Free State](/wiki/Irish_Free_State), which became increasingly sovereign over the following decades, and Northern Ireland, which remained a part of the United Kingdom. Northern Ireland saw much [civil unrest from the late 1960s until the 1990s](/wiki/The_Troubles). This subsided following [a political agreement](/wiki/Good_Friday_Agreement) in 1998. In 1973, the Republic of Ireland joined the [European Economic Community](/wiki/European_Economic_Community) while the United Kingdom, and Northern Ireland, as part of it, did the same.

[Irish culture](/wiki/Irish_culture) has had a significant influence on other cultures, especially in the fields of [literature](/wiki/Irish_literature). Alongside mainstream [Western culture](/wiki/Western_culture), a strong indigenous culture exists, as expressed through [Gaelic games](/wiki/Gaelic_games), [Irish music](/wiki/Irish_music), and the [Irish language](/wiki/Irish_language). The culture of the island also shares many features with that of Great Britain, including the [English language](/wiki/English_language), and sports such as [association football](/wiki/Association_football), [rugby](/wiki/Rugby_union), [horse racing](/wiki/Horse_racing), and [golf](/wiki/Golf).

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Ireland consists of [Old Irish](/wiki/Old_Irish) *Eriu* + English *land*. *Eriu* derives from [Proto-Celtic](/wiki/Proto-Celtic) *\*Iveriu* (compare [Welsh](/wiki/Welsh_language) [*Iwerddon*](/wiki/Cy:Iwerddon)), which is also the source of Latin [*Hibernia*](/wiki/Hibernia). *Iveriu* derives from a root meaning "fat, prosperous".[[5]](#cite_note-5) The earliest evidence of human presence in Ireland is dated at 10,500 BC.[[6]](#cite_note-6) Until recently the earliest evidence of humans in Ireland were [Mesolithic](/wiki/Mesolithic) people who arrived by boat from Britain between 8000 BC and 7000 BC.[[7]](#cite_note-7) From about 4500 BC , [Neolithic](/wiki/Neolithic) settlers arrived introducing cereal cultivars, a housing culture (similar to those of the same period in Scotland) and stone monuments. A more advanced agriculture was to develop. At the [Céide Fields](/wiki/Céide_Fields), preserved beneath a blanket of peat in present-day [County Mayo](/wiki/County_Mayo), is an extensive [field system](/wiki/Field_system), arguably the oldest in the world,[[8]](#cite_note-8) dating from not long after this period. Consisting of small divisions separated by [dry-stone walls](/wiki/Dry-stone_wall), the fields were farmed for several centuries between 3500 BC and 3000 BC. [Wheat](/wiki/Wheat) and [barley](/wiki/Barley) were the principal crops imported from the [Iberian Peninsula](/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula).

The [Bronze Age](/wiki/Bronze_Age) – defined by the use of metal – began around 2500 BC, with technology changing people's everyday lives during this period through innovations such as the [wheel](/wiki/Wheel), harnessing [oxen](/wiki/Oxen), [weaving textiles](/wiki/Weaving), brewing [alcohol](/wiki/Alcohol), and skilful [metalworking](/wiki/Metalworking), which produced new weapons and tools, along with fine [gold](/wiki/Gold) decoration and jewellery, such as [brooches](/wiki/Brooch) and [torcs](/wiki/Torc). According to [John T. Koch](/wiki/John_T._Koch) and others, Ireland in the Late Bronze Age was part of a maritime trading-networked culture called the [Atlantic Bronze Age](/wiki/Atlantic_Bronze_Age) that also included Britain, western France and Iberia, and that this is where [Celtic languages](/wiki/Celtic_languages) developed.<ref name=Koch>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref><ref name=Koch2009>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref>[[9]](#cite_note-9)[[10]](#cite_note-10) This contrasts with the traditional view that their origin lies in mainland Europe with the [Hallstatt culture](/wiki/Hallstatt_culture).

#### Emergence of Celtic Ireland[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

During the [Iron Age](/wiki/Iron_Age), a [Celtic language](/wiki/Celtic_languages) and culture emerged in Ireland. How and when the island of Ireland became Celtic has been debated for close to a century, with the migrations of the Celts being one of the more enduring themes of archaeological and linguistic studies. Today, there is more than one school of thought on how this occurred in Ireland.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[thumb|left|upright|](/wiki/File:Uragh_Stone_Circle.jpg)[The Uragh Stone Circle](/wiki/Uragh_Stone_Circle), a [Neolithic](/wiki/Neolithic) [stone circle](/wiki/Stone_circle) in Gleninchaquin Park, [County Kerry](/wiki/County_Kerry) The long-standing traditional view, once widely accepted,[Template:By whom](/wiki/Template:By_whom) is that Celtic language, [Ogham](/wiki/Ogham) script and culture were brought to Ireland by waves of invading or migrating [Celts](/wiki/Celts) from mainland Europe. This theory draws on the [*Lebor Gabála Érenn*](/wiki/Lebor_Gabála_Érenn), a medieval Christian pseudo-history of Ireland along with the presence of Celtic culture, language and artefacts found in Ireland such as Celtic bronze spears, shields, torcs and other finely crafted Celtic associated possessions. The theory holds that there were four separate Celtic invasions of Ireland. The [Priteni](/wiki/Priteni) were said to be the first, followed by the Belgae from northern Gaul and Britain. Later, Laighin tribes from Armorica (present-day Brittany) were said to have invaded Ireland and Britain more or less simultaneously. Lastly, the [Milesians](/wiki/Milesians_(Irish)) ([Gaels](/wiki/Gaels)) were said to have reached Ireland from either northern Iberia or southern Gaul.[[11]](#cite_note-11) It was claimed that a second wave named the Euerni, belonging to the [Belgae](/wiki/Belgae) people of northern Gaul, began arriving about the sixth century BC. They were said to have given their name to the island.[[12]](#cite_note-12)[[13]](#cite_note-13) A more recent theory, with broad support among archaeologists, is that Celtic culture and language arrived in Ireland as a result of cultural diffusion. This theory proposes that the Celticisation of Ireland may have been the culmination of a long process of social and economic interaction between Ireland, Britain and adjacent parts of Continental Europe.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

The theory was advanced in part because of lack of archeological evidence for large-scale Celtic [immigration](/wiki/Immigration), though it is accepted that such movements are notoriously difficult to identify. Some proponents of this theory hold that it is likely that there was migration of smaller groups of Celts to Ireland, with sufficiently regular traffic to constitute a "migration stream," but that this was not the fundamental cause of Insular Celticisation.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Historical linguists are sceptical that this method alone could account for the absorption of the Celtic language, with some saying that an assumed processional view of Celtic linguistic formation is 'an especially hazardous exercise'.[[14]](#cite_note-14)[[15]](#cite_note-15) Genetic lineage investigation into the area of Celtic migration to Ireland has led to findings that showed no significant differences in [mitochondrial DNA](/wiki/Mitochondrial_DNA) between Ireland and large areas of continental Europe, in contrast to parts of the Y-chromosome pattern. When taking both into account a recent study drew the conclusion that modern Celtic speakers in Ireland could be thought of as European "Atlantic Celts" showing a shared ancestry throughout the Atlantic zone from northern Iberia to western Scandinavia rather than substantially central European.[[16]](#cite_note-16)

### Late antiquity and early medieval times[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [right|thumb|160px|The](/wiki/File:Dalriada.png) [Scoti](/wiki/Scoti) were [Gaelic](/wiki/Gaels)-speaking people from Ireland who settled in western Scotland in the 6th century The earliest written records of Ireland come from classical [Greco-Roman](/wiki/Greco-Roman_world) geographers. [Ptolemy](/wiki/Ptolemy) in his [*Almagest*](/wiki/Almagest) refers to Ireland as *Mikra Brettania* (*Little Britain*), in contrast to the larger island, which he called *Megale Brettania* (*Great Britain*).[[17]](#cite_note-17) In his later work, [*Geography*](/wiki/Geography_(Ptolemy)), Ptolemy refers to Ireland as [*Iouernia*](/wiki/Hibernia) and to Great Britain as *Albion*. These "new" names were likely to have been the local names for the islands at the time. The earlier names, [in contrast](/wiki/Exonym_and_endonym), were likely to have been coined before direct contact with local peoples was made.[[18]](#cite_note-18) The [Romans](/wiki/Ancient_Romans) would later refer to Ireland by this name too in its [Latinised](/wiki/Latinised) form, [*Hibernia*](/wiki/Hibernia),[[19]](#cite_note-19) or [Scotia](/wiki/Scotia).[[20]](#cite_note-20) Ptolemy records sixteen nations inhabiting every part of Ireland in 100 AD.[[21]](#cite_note-21) The relationship between the Roman Empire and the kingdoms of ancient Ireland is unclear. However, a number of finds of Roman coins have been made, for example at the Iron Age settlement of Freestone Hill near [Gowran](/wiki/Gowran) and [Newgrange](/wiki/Newgrange).[[22]](#cite_note-22) Ireland continued as a patchwork of rival kingdoms but, beginning in the 7th century AD, a concept of national kingship gradually became articulated through the concept of a [High King of Ireland](/wiki/High_King_of_Ireland). [Medieval Irish literature](/wiki/Medieval_Irish_literature) portrays an almost unbroken sequence of High Kings stretching back thousands of years but modern historians believe the scheme was constructed in the 8th century to justify the status of powerful political groupings by projecting the origins of their rule into the remote past.[[23]](#cite_note-23) The High King was said to preside over the provincial kingdoms that together formed Ireland. All of these kingdoms had their own kings but were at least nominally subject to the High King. The High King was drawn from the ranks of the provincial kings and ruled also the royal [kingdom of Meath](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Meath), with a ceremonial capital at the [Hill of Tara](/wiki/Hill_of_Tara). The concept only became a political reality in the [Viking Age](/wiki/Viking_Age#Ireland) and even then was not a consistent one.[[24]](#cite_note-24) Ireland did have a culturally unifying rule of law: the early written judicial system, the [Brehon Laws](/wiki/Brehon_Laws), administered by a professional class of jurists known as the *brehons*.[[25]](#cite_note-25) However, a united kingdom of Gaelic Ireland was never achieved. [thumb|](/wiki/File:Gallarus_Oratory_-_geograph.org.uk_-_17678.jpg)[Gallarus Oratory](/wiki/Gallarus_Oratory), one of the earliest churches built in Ireland

[*The Chronicle of Ireland*](/wiki/The_Chronicle_of_Ireland) records that in 431 AD Bishop [Palladius](/wiki/Palladius_(bishop_of_Ireland)) arrived in Ireland on a mission from [Pope Celestine I](/wiki/Pope_Celestine_I) to minister to the Irish "already believing in Christ".[[26]](#cite_note-26) The same chronicle records that [Saint Patrick](/wiki/Saint_Patrick), Ireland's best known [patron saint](/wiki/Patron_saints_of_places), arrived the following year. There is continued debate over the missions of Palladius and Patrick but the consensus is that they both took place[[27]](#cite_note-27) and that the older [druid](/wiki/Druid) tradition collapsed in the face of the new religion.[[28]](#cite_note-28) Irish Christian scholars excelled in the study of [Latin](/wiki/Latin) and Greek learning and Christian theology. In the monastic culture that followed the Christianisation of Ireland, Latin and Greek learning was preserved in Ireland during the [Early Middle Ages](/wiki/Middle_Ages) in contrast to elsewhere in Europe, where the [Dark Ages](/wiki/Early_Middle_Ages) followed the [decline of the Roman Empire](/wiki/Decline_of_the_Roman_Empire).[[28]](#cite_note-28)[[29]](#cite_note-29) The arts of [manuscript illumination](/wiki/Illuminated_manuscript), metalworking and sculpture flourished and produced treasures such as the [*Book of Kells*](/wiki/Book_of_Kells), ornate jewellery and the many carved stone crosses[[30]](#cite_note-30) that still dot the island today. A mission founded in 563 on [Iona](/wiki/Iona) by the Irish monk Saint [Columba](/wiki/Columba) began [a tradition of Irish missionary](/wiki/Hiberno-Scottish_mission) work that spread [Celtic Christianity](/wiki/Celtic_Christianity) and learning to [Scotland](/wiki/Scotland), [England](/wiki/Anglo-Saxon_England) and the [Frankish Empire](/wiki/Frankish_Empire) on [Continental Europe](/wiki/Continental_Europe) after the [fall of Rome](/wiki/Fall_of_Rome).[[31]](#cite_note-31) These missions continued until the [late Middle Ages](/wiki/Late_Middle_Ages), establishing [monasteries](/wiki/Monasteries) and centres of learning, producing scholars such as [Sedulius Scottus](/wiki/Sedulius_Scottus) and [Johannes Eriugena](/wiki/Johannes_Eriugena) and exerting much influence in Europe.

From the 9th century, waves of [Viking](/wiki/Viking) raiders plundered Irish monasteries and towns.[[32]](#cite_note-32) These raids added to a pattern of raiding and [endemic warfare](/wiki/Endemic_warfare) that was already deep-seated in Ireland. The Vikings also were involved in establishing most of the major coastal settlements in Ireland: [Dublin](/wiki/Dublin), [Limerick](/wiki/Limerick), [Cork](/wiki/County_Cork), [Wexford](/wiki/Wexford), [Waterford](/wiki/Waterford), and also Carlingford, Strangford, Annagassan, Arklow, Youghal, Lough Foyle and Lough Ree.[[33]](#cite_note-33)

### Norman and English invasions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|Remains of the 12th-century](/wiki/File:Trim_Castle_6.jpg) [Trim Castle](/wiki/Trim_Castle) in [County Meath](/wiki/County_Meath), the largest [Norman castle](/wiki/Norman_architecture) in Ireland On 1 May 1169, an expedition of [Cambro](/wiki/Wales)-[Norman](/wiki/Norman_people) knights with an army of about six hundred landed at [Bannow Strand](/wiki/Bannow) in present-day [County Wexford](/wiki/County_Wexford). It was led by [Richard de Clare](/wiki/Richard_de_Clare,_2nd_Earl_of_Pembroke), called *Strongbow* due to his prowess as an archer.[[34]](#cite_note-34) The invasion, which coincided with a period of renewed Norman expansion, was at the invitation of [Dermot Mac Murrough](/wiki/Diarmait_Mac_Murchada), the [king of Leinster](/wiki/Kings_of_Leinster).[[35]](#cite_note-35) In 1166, Mac Murrough had fled to [Anjou](/wiki/Anjou), France, following a war involving [Tighearnán Ua Ruairc](/wiki/Tighearnán_Ua_Ruairc), of [Breifne](/wiki/Breifne), and sought the assistance of the [Angevin](/wiki/Angevin_Empire) king, [Henry II](/wiki/King_Henry_II_of_England), in recapturing his kingdom. In 1171, Henry arrived in Ireland in order to review the general progress of the expedition. He wanted to re-exert royal authority over the invasion which was expanding beyond his control. Henry successfully re-imposed his authority over Strongbow and the Cambro-Norman warlords and persuaded many of the [Irish](/wiki/Gaelic_Ireland) kings to accept him as their overlord, an arrangement confirmed in the 1175 [Treaty of Windsor](/wiki/Treaty_of_Windsor_1175).

The invasion was legitimised by the provisions of the [Papal Bull](/wiki/Papal_Bull) [*Laudabiliter*](/wiki/Laudabiliter), issued by [Adrian IV](/wiki/Pope_Adrian_IV) in 1155. The bull encouraged Henry to take control in Ireland in order to oversee the financial and administrative reorganisation of the [Irish Church](/wiki/Celtic_Church) and its integration into the Roman Church system.[[36]](#cite_note-36) Some restructuring had already begun at the ecclesiastical level following the [Synod of Kells](/wiki/Synod_of_Kells) in 1152.[[37]](#cite_note-37) There has been significant controversy regarding the authenticity of *Laudabiliter*,[[38]](#cite_note-38) and there is no general agreement as to whether the bull was genuine or a forgery.[[39]](#cite_note-39)[[40]](#cite_note-40) In 1172, the new pope, [Alexander III](/wiki/Pope_Alexander_III), further encouraged Henry to advance the integration of the Irish Church with Rome. Henry was authorised to impose a [tithe](/wiki/Tithe) of one penny per hearth as an annual contribution. This church levy, called [Peter's Pence](/wiki/Peter's_Pence), is extant in Ireland as a voluntary donation. In turn, Henry accepted the title of [Lord of Ireland](/wiki/Lord_of_Ireland) which Henry conferred on his younger son, [John Lackland](/wiki/John_Lackland), in 1185. This defined the Irish state as the [Lordship of Ireland](/wiki/Lordship_of_Ireland).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) When Henry's successor died unexpectedly in 1199, [John](/wiki/John_of_England) inherited the crown of England and retained the Lordship of Ireland.

[thumb|Irish soldiers, 1521 – by](/wiki/File:Galloglass-circa-1521.jpg) [Albrecht Dürer](/wiki/Albrecht_Dürer) Over the century that followed, Norman feudal law gradually replaced the Gaelic Brehon Law so that by the late 13th century the [Norman-Irish](/wiki/Hiberno-Norman) had established a feudal system throughout much of Ireland. Norman settlements were characterised by the establishment of baronies, manors, towns and the seeds of the modern county system. A version of the [Magna Carta](/wiki/Magna_Carta) (the [Great Charter of Ireland](/wiki/Great_Charter_of_Ireland)), substituting *Dublin* for *London* and *Irish Church* for *Church of England*, was published in 1216 and the [Parliament of Ireland](/wiki/Parliament_of_Ireland) was founded in 1297.

From the mid-14th century, after the [Black Death](/wiki/Black_Death), Norman settlements in Ireland went into a period of decline. The Norman rulers and the Gaelic Irish elites intermarried and the areas under Norman rule became [Gaelicised](/wiki/Gaelicisation). In some parts, a hybrid Hiberno-Norman culture emerged. In response, the [Irish parliament](/wiki/Parliament_of_Ireland) passed the [Statutes of Kilkenny](/wiki/Statutes_of_Kilkenny) in 1367. These were a set of laws designed to prevent the assimilation of the Normans into Irish society by requiring English subjects in Ireland to speak English, follow English customs and abide by English law.[[41]](#cite_note-41) By the end of the 15th century central English authority in Ireland had all but disappeared and a renewed Irish culture and language, albeit with Norman influences, was dominant again. English Crown control remained relatively unshaken in an amorphous foothold around Dublin known as [The Pale](/wiki/The_Pale), and under the provisions of [Poynings' Law](/wiki/Poynings'_Law) of 1494, the Irish Parliamentary legislation was subject to the approval of the [English Parliament](/wiki/English_Parliament).[[42]](#cite_note-42)

### The Kingdom of Ireland[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[thumb|left|A scene from](/wiki/File:The_Image_of_Irelande_-_plate03.jpg) [*The Image of Irelande*](/wiki/The_Image_of_Irelande,_with_a_Discoverie_of_Woodkarne) (1581) showing a chieftain at a feast

The title of [*King of Ireland*](/wiki/King_of_Ireland) was re-created in 1542 by [Henry VIII](/wiki/Henry_VIII), then [King of England](/wiki/King_of_England), of the [Tudor dynasty](/wiki/Tudor_dynasty). English rule of law was reinforced and expanded in Ireland during the latter part of the 16th century, leading to the [Tudor conquest of Ireland](/wiki/Tudor_conquest_of_Ireland). A near complete conquest was achieved by the turn of the 17th century, following the [Nine Years' War](/wiki/Nine_Years'_War_(Ireland)) and the [Flight of the Earls](/wiki/Flight_of_the_Earls).

This control was further consolidated during the wars and conflicts of the 17th century, which witnessed English and Scottish colonisation in the [Plantations of Ireland](/wiki/Plantations_of_Ireland), the [Wars of the Three Kingdoms](/wiki/Wars_of_the_Three_Kingdoms) and the [Williamite War](/wiki/Williamite_War_in_Ireland). Irish losses during the Wars of the Three Kingdoms (which, in Ireland, included the [Irish Confederacy](/wiki/Irish_Confederacy) and the [Cromwellian conquest of Ireland](/wiki/Cromwellian_conquest_of_Ireland)) are estimated to include 20,000 battlefield casualties. 200,000 civilians are estimated to have died as a result of a combination of war-related famine, displacement, guerrilla activity and pestilence over the duration of the war. A further 50,000[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn) were sent into [indentured servitude](/wiki/Indentured_servitude) in the [West Indies](/wiki/West_Indies). Some historians estimate that as much as half of the pre-war population of Ireland may have died as a result of the conflict.[[43]](#cite_note-43) The religious struggles of the 17th century left a deep sectarian division in Ireland. Religious allegiance now determined the perception in law of loyalty to the Irish King and Parliament. After the passing of [the Test Act 1672](/wiki/Test_Act#1672_Act), and with the victory of the forces of the dual monarchy of [William](/wiki/William_III_of_England) and [Mary](/wiki/Mary_II_of_England) over the [Jacobites](/wiki/Jacobitism), Roman Catholics and nonconforming Protestant Dissenters were barred from sitting as members in the [Irish Parliament](/wiki/Parliament_of_Ireland). Under the emerging [Penal Laws](/wiki/Penal_Laws_(Ireland)), Irish Roman Catholics and Dissenters were increasingly deprived of various and sundry civil rights even to the ownership of hereditary property. Additional regressive punitive legislation followed 1703, 1709 and 1728. This completed a comprehensive systemic effort to materially disadvantage Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters, while enriching a new ruling class of Anglican conformists.[[44]](#cite_note-44) The new Anglo-Irish ruling class became known as the [Protestant Ascendancy](/wiki/Protestant_Ascendancy).

[thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Hanging.gif)[Half-hanging](/wiki/Half-hanging) of suspected [United Irishmen](/wiki/United_Irishmen) An extraordinary climatic shock known as the "[Great Frost](/wiki/Irish_Famine_(1740–1741)#Cause)" struck Ireland and the rest of Europe between December 1739 and September 1741, after a decade of relatively mild winters. The winters destroyed stored crops of potatoes and other staples and the poor summers severely damaged harvests.[[45]](#cite_note-45) This resulted in the [famine of 1740](/wiki/Irish_Famine_(1740–1741)). An estimated 250,000 people (about one in eight of the population) died from the ensuing pestilence and disease.[[46]](#cite_note-46) The Irish government halted export of corn and kept the army in quarters but did little more.[[46]](#cite_note-46)[[47]](#cite_note-47) Local gentry and charitable organisations provided relief but could do little to prevent the ensuing mortality.[[46]](#cite_note-46)[[47]](#cite_note-47) In the aftermath of the famine, an increase in industrial production and a surge in trade brought a succession of construction booms. The population soared in the latter part of this century and the [architectural legacy of Georgian](/wiki/Georgian_architecture) Ireland was built. In 1782, [Poynings' Law](/wiki/Poynings'_Law) was repealed, giving Ireland legislative independence from Great Britain for the first time since 1495. The British government, however, still retained the right to nominate the government of Ireland without the consent of the Irish parliament. In 1798, members of the Protestant Dissenter tradition (mainly [Presbyterian](/wiki/Presbyterianism)) made common cause with Roman Catholics in a republican rebellion inspired and led by the [Society of United Irishmen](/wiki/Society_of_United_Irishmen), with the aim of creating an independent Ireland. Despite assistance from France the [rebellion](/wiki/Irish_Rebellion_of_1798) was put down by British and Irish government and yeomanry forces. In 1800, the British and Irish parliaments both passed [Acts of Union](/wiki/Acts_of_Union_1800) that, with effect from 1 January 1801, merged the [Kingdom of Ireland](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Ireland) and the [Kingdom of Great Britain](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Great_Britain) to create a [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland](/wiki/United_Kingdom_of_Great_Britain_and_Ireland).[[48]](#cite_note-48)

### Union with Great Britain[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

The passage of the Act in the Irish Parliament was ultimately achieved with substantial majorities, having failed on the first attempt in 1799. According to contemporary documents and historical analysis, this was achieved through a considerable degree of bribery, with funding provided by the British Secret Service Office, and the awarding of peerages, places and honours to secure votes.[[48]](#cite_note-48) Thus, Ireland became part of an extended United Kingdom, ruled directly by a [united parliament at Westminster](/wiki/Parliament_of_the_United_Kingdom) in [London](/wiki/London), though resistance remained, as evidenced by [Robert Emmet's](/wiki/Robert_Emmet) failed [Irish Rebellion of 1803](/wiki/Irish_Rebellion_of_1803).

Aside from the development of the [linen](/wiki/Linen) industry, Ireland was largely passed over by the [industrial revolution](/wiki/Industrial_revolution), partly because it lacked coal and iron resources[[49]](#cite_note-49)[[50]](#cite_note-50) and partly because of the impact of the sudden union with the structurally superior economy of England,[[51]](#cite_note-51) which saw Ireland as a source of agricultural produce and capital.[[52]](#cite_note-52)[[53]](#cite_note-53) [thumb|*Emigrants Leave Ireland* engraving by Henry Doyle depicting the emigration to America following the](/wiki/File:Emigrants_Leave_Ireland_by_Henry_Doyle_1868.jpg) [Great Famine](/wiki/Great_Famine_(Ireland)) in Ireland The [Great Famine](/wiki/Great_Famine_(Ireland)) of the 1840s caused the deaths of one million Irish people and over a million more emigrated to escape it.[[54]](#cite_note-54) By the end of the decade, half of all [immigration to the United States](/wiki/Immigration_to_the_United_States) was from Ireland. The period of civil unrest that followed until the end of the 19th century is referred to as the [Land War](/wiki/Land_War). Mass emigration became deeply entrenched and the population continued to decline until the mid-20th century. Immediately prior to the famine the population was recorded as 8.2 million by the [1841 census](/wiki/Demography_of_the_United_Kingdom#United_Kingdom).[[55]](#cite_note-55) The population has never returned to this level since.[[56]](#cite_note-56) The population continued to fall until 1961 and it was not until the 2006 census that the last county of Ireland ([County Leitrim](/wiki/County_Leitrim)) to record a rise in population since 1841 did so.

The 19th and early 20th centuries saw the rise of modern [Irish nationalism](/wiki/Irish_nationalism), primarily among the Roman Catholic population. The pre-eminent Irish political figure after the Union was [Daniel O'Connell](/wiki/Daniel_O'Connell). He was elected as Member of Parliament for [Ennis](/wiki/Ennis_(UK_Parliament_constituency)) in a surprise result and despite being unable to take his seat [as a Roman Catholic](/wiki/The_Test_Act). O'Connell spearheaded a vigorous campaign that was taken up by the Prime Minister, the Irish-born soldier and statesman, the [Duke of Wellington](/wiki/Arthur_Wellesley,_1st_Duke_of_Wellington). Steering the [Catholic Relief Bill](/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Relief_Act_1829) through Parliament, aided by future prime minister [Robert Peel](/wiki/Robert_Peel), Wellington prevailed upon a reluctant [George IV](/wiki/George_IV_of_the_United_Kingdom) to sign the Bill and proclaim it into law. [George's father](/wiki/George_III_of_the_United_Kingdom) had opposed the plan of the earlier Prime Minister, [Pitt the Younger](/wiki/William_Pitt_the_Younger), to introduce such a bill following the Union of 1801, fearing [Catholic Emancipation](/wiki/Catholic_Emancipation) to be in conflict with the [Act of Settlement 1701](/wiki/Act_of_Settlement_1701).

Daniel O'Connell led a subsequent campaign, for the repeal of the Act of Union, which failed. Later in the century, [Charles Stewart Parnell](/wiki/Charles_Stewart_Parnell) and others campaigned for autonomy within the Union, or "[Home Rule](/wiki/Irish_Home_Rule_Bills)". Unionists, especially those located in Ulster, were strongly opposed to Home Rule, which they thought would be dominated by Catholic interests.[[57]](#cite_note-57) After several attempts to pass a Home Rule bill through parliament, it looked certain that one would finally pass in 1914. To prevent this from happening, the [Ulster Volunteers](/wiki/Ulster_Volunteers) were formed in 1913 under the leadership of [Edward Carson](/wiki/Edward_Carson).[[58]](#cite_note-58) Their formation was followed in 1914 by the establishment of the [Irish Volunteers](/wiki/Irish_Volunteers), whose aim was to ensure that the [Home Rule Bill](/wiki/Third_Home_Rule_Act) was passed. The Act was passed but with the "temporary" exclusion of the six counties of Ulster that would become Northern Ireland. Before it could be implemented, however, the Act was suspended for the duration of the [First World War](/wiki/World_War_I). The Irish Volunteers split into two groups. The majority, approximately 175,000 in number, under [John Redmond](/wiki/John_Redmond), took the name [National Volunteers](/wiki/National_Volunteers) and supported [Irish involvement](/wiki/Ireland_and_World_War_I) in the war. A minority, approximately 13,000, retained the Irish Volunteers' name, and opposed Ireland's involvement in the war.[[58]](#cite_note-58) [thumb|Sackville Street (now](/wiki/File:Sackville_Street_(Dublin)_after_the_1916_Easter_Rising.JPG) [O'Connell Street](/wiki/O'Connell_Street)), Dublin, after the 1916 [Easter Rising](/wiki/Easter_Rising) The [Easter Rising](/wiki/Easter_Rising) of 1916 was carried out by the latter group together with a smaller socialist militia, the [Irish Citizen Army](/wiki/Irish_Citizen_Army). The British response, executing fifteen leaders of the Rising over a period of ten days and imprisoning or interning more than a thousand people, turned the mood of the country in favour of the rebels. Support for [Irish republicanism increased](/wiki/Physical_force_Irish_republicanism) further due to the ongoing war in Europe, as well as the [Conscription Crisis of 1918](/wiki/Conscription_Crisis_of_1918).[[59]](#cite_note-59) The pro-independence republican party, [Sinn Féin](/wiki/Sinn_Féin), received overwhelming endorsement in the [general election of 1918](/wiki/Irish_general_election,_1918), and in 1919 proclaimed an [Irish Republic](/wiki/Irish_Republic), setting up its own parliament ([Dáil Éireann](/wiki/First_Dáil)) and government. Simultaneously the Volunteers, which became known as the [Irish Republican Army](/wiki/Irish_Republican_Army) (IRA), launched a [three-year guerrilla war](/wiki/Irish_War_of_Independence), which ended in a truce in July 1921 (although violence continued until June 1922, mostly in Northern Ireland).[[59]](#cite_note-59) In December 1921, the [Anglo-Irish Treaty](/wiki/Anglo-Irish_Treaty) was concluded between the British Government and representatives of the [Second Dáil](/wiki/Second_Dáil). It gave Ireland complete independence in its home affairs and practical independence for foreign policy, but an opt-out clause allowed [Northern Ireland](/wiki/Northern_Ireland) to remain within the United Kingdom, which it immediately exercised as expected. Additionally, an oath of allegiance to the King was to be taken.[[60]](#cite_note-60) Disagreements over these provisions led to a split in the nationalist movement and a subsequent [Irish Civil War](/wiki/Irish_Civil_War) between the new government of the [Irish Free State](/wiki/Irish_Free_State) and those opposed to the treaty, led by [Éamon de Valera](/wiki/Éamon_de_Valera). The civil war officially ended in May 1923 when de Valera issued a cease-fire order.[[61]](#cite_note-61)

### Partition[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

#### Independence[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|Annotated page from the](/wiki/File:Anglo-Irish_Treaty_Griffith_annotated2.gif) [Anglo-Irish Treaty](/wiki/Anglo-Irish_Treaty) that established the [Irish Free State](/wiki/Irish_Free_State) and independence for 26 out of 32 [Irish counties](/wiki/Counties_of_Ireland) During its first decade, the newly formed [Irish Free State](/wiki/Irish_Free_State) was governed by the victors of the civil war. When de Valera achieved power, he took advantage of the [Statute of Westminster](/wiki/Statute_of_Westminster_1931) and [political circumstances](/wiki/Edward_VIII_abdication_crisis) to build upon inroads to greater sovereignty made by the previous government. The oath was abolished and in 1937 a new constitution was adopted.[[59]](#cite_note-59) This completed a process of gradual separation from the British Empire that governments had pursued since independence. However, it was not until 1949 that the state was declared, officially, to be the [Republic of Ireland](/wiki/Republic_of_Ireland).

[The state was neutral](/wiki/Irish_neutrality) during [World War II](/wiki/The_Emergency_(Ireland)), but offered [clandestine assistance to the Allies](/wiki/Irish_neutrality_during_World_War_II), particularly in the potential defence of Northern Ireland. Despite their country's neutrality, approximately 50,000[[62]](#cite_note-62) volunteers from independent Ireland joined the British forces during the war, four being awarded [Victoria Crosses](/wiki/Victoria_Crosses).

The [Abwehr](/wiki/Abwehr) was also active in Ireland.[[63]](#cite_note-63) German intelligence operations effectively ended in September 1941 when [police](/wiki/Garda_Síochána) made arrests on the basis of surveillance carried out on the key diplomatic legations in Dublin, including that of the United States. To the authorities, counterintelligence was a fundamental line of defence. With a regular army of only slightly over seven thousand men at the start of the war, and with limited supplies of modern weapons, the state would have had great difficulty in defending itself from invasion from either side in the conflict.[[63]](#cite_note-63)[[64]](#cite_note-64) Large-scale emigration marked most of the post-WWII period (particularly during the 1950s and 1980s), but beginning in 1987 the economy improved, and the 1990s saw the beginning of substantial economic growth. This period of growth became known as the [*Celtic Tiger*](/wiki/Celtic_Tiger).<ref name=clancy3>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> The Republic's real GDP grew by an average of 9.6% per annum between 1995 and 1999,[[65]](#cite_note-65) in which year the Republic joined the [euro](/wiki/Euro). In 2000, it was the sixth-richest country in the world in terms of GDP per capita.[[66]](#cite_note-66) Social changes also occurred in this time, most markedly with the decline in authority of the Catholic Church. The [financial crisis](/wiki/Post-2008_Irish_economic_downturn) that began in 2008 dramatically ended this period of boom. GDP fell by 3% in 2008 and by 7.1% in 2009, the worst year since records began (although earnings by foreign-owned businesses continued to grow).[[67]](#cite_note-67) The state has since experienced deep recession, with unemployment, which doubled during 2009, remaining above 14% in 2012.[[68]](#cite_note-68)

#### Northern Ireland[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) Northern Ireland was created as a division of the United Kingdom by the [Government of Ireland Act 1920](/wiki/Government_of_Ireland_Act_1920) and until 1972 it was a self-governing jurisdiction within the United Kingdom with its own parliament and prime minister. Northern Ireland, as part of the United Kingdom, was not neutral during the Second World War and [Belfast suffered four bombing raids](/wiki/Belfast_Blitz) in 1941. [Conscription](/wiki/Conscription) was not extended to Northern Ireland and roughly an equal number volunteered from Northern Ireland as volunteered from the south. One, [James Joseph Magennis](/wiki/James_Joseph_Magennis), received the Victoria Cross for valour.

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Carson_signing_Solemn_League_and_Covenant.jpg)[Edward Carson](/wiki/Edward_Carson) signing the [Solemn League and Covenant](/wiki/Ulster_Covenant) in 1912, declaring opposition to [Home Rule](/wiki/Irish_Home_Rule_bills) "using all means which may be found necessary"

Although Northern Ireland was largely spared the strife of the civil war, in decades that followed partition there were sporadic episodes of inter-communal violence. Nationalists, mainly Roman Catholic, wanted to unite Ireland as an independent republic, whereas unionists, mainly Protestant, wanted Northern Ireland to remain in the United Kingdom. The Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland voted largely along [sectarian](/wiki/Sectarian) lines, meaning that the Government of Northern Ireland (elected by ["first-past-the-post"](/wiki/Plurality_electoral_system) from 1929) was controlled by the [Ulster Unionist Party](/wiki/Ulster_Unionist_Party). Over time, the minority Catholic community felt increasingly alienated with further disaffection fuelled by practices such as [gerrymandering](/wiki/Gerrymandering) and [discrimination](/wiki/Discrimination) in housing and employment.<ref name=whyte>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>[[69]](#cite_note-69)[[70]](#cite_note-70) In the late 1960s, nationalist grievances were aired publicly in mass [civil rights](/wiki/Civil_rights) protests, which were often confronted by [loyalist](/wiki/Ulster_loyalism) counter-protests.[[71]](#cite_note-71) The government's reaction to confrontations was seen to be one-sided and heavy-handed in favour of unionists. Law and order broke down as unrest and inter-communal violence increased.[[72]](#cite_note-72) The Northern Ireland government requested the [British Army](/wiki/British_Army) to aid the police, who were exhausted after several nights of [serious rioting](/wiki/1969_Northern_Ireland_riots). In 1969, the [paramilitary](/wiki/Paramilitary) [Provisional IRA](/wiki/Provisional_Irish_Republican_Army), which favoured the creation of a [united Ireland](/wiki/United_Ireland), emerged from a split in the [Irish Republican Army](/wiki/Irish_Republican_Army_(1922–1969)) and began a campaign against what it called the "British occupation of the six counties".

Other groups, on both the unionist side and the nationalist side, participated in violence and a period known as [the Troubles](/wiki/The_Troubles) began. Over 3,600 deaths resulted over the subsequent three decades of conflict.[[73]](#cite_note-73) Owing to the civil unrest during the Troubles, the [British government](/wiki/British_government) suspended home rule in 1972 and imposed [direct rule](/wiki/Direct_rule). There were several unsuccessful attempts to end the Troubles politically, such as the [Sunningdale Agreement](/wiki/Sunningdale_Agreement) of 1973. In 1998, following a ceasefire by the Provisional IRA and multi-party talks, the [Good Friday Agreement](/wiki/Good_Friday_Agreement) was concluded as a treaty between the [British](/wiki/Her_Majesty's_Government) and [Irish](/wiki/Government_of_Ireland) governments, annexing the text agreed in the multi-party talks.

The substance of the Agreement (formally referred to as the Belfast Agreement) was later endorsed by referendums in both parts of Ireland. The Agreement restored self-government to Northern Ireland on the basis of power-sharing in a regional [Executive](/wiki/Northern_Ireland_Executive) drawn from the major parties in a new [Northern Ireland Assembly](/wiki/Northern_Ireland_Assembly), with entrenched protections for the two main communities. The Executive is jointly headed by a [First Minister and deputy First Minister](/wiki/First_Minister_and_deputy_First_Minister) drawn from the unionist and nationalist parties. Violence had decreased greatly after the Provisional IRA and loyalist ceasefires in 1994 and in 2005 the Provisional IRA announced the end of its armed campaign and an [independent commission](/wiki/Independent_International_Commission_on_Decommissioning) supervised its disarmament and that of other nationalist and unionist paramilitary organisations.[[74]](#cite_note-74) The Assembly and power-sharing Executive were suspended several times but were restored again in 2007. In that year the British government officially ended its military support of the police in Northern Ireland ([Operation Banner](/wiki/Operation_Banner)) and began withdrawing troops. On 27 June 2012, Northern Ireland's deputy first minister and former IRA commander, Martin McGuinness, shook hands with Queen Elizabeth II in Belfast, symbolising reconciliation between the two sides.

## Politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[thumb|right|Political map of Ireland, showing the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland](/wiki/File:Ireland-Capitals.PNG) [Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

Politically, the island is divided between the Republic of Ireland, an independent [state](/wiki/Sovereign_state), and Northern Ireland (a constituent country of the [United Kingdom](/wiki/United_Kingdom)). They share an [open border](/wiki/Irish_border) and both are part of the [Common Travel Area](/wiki/Common_Travel_Area).

Both the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom are members of the [European Union](/wiki/European_Union), and as a consequence there is [free movement of people, goods, services and capital](/wiki/Internal_market) across the border.

### Republic of Ireland[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Áras_an_Uachtaráin_2010.jpg)[Áras an Uachtaráin](/wiki/Áras_an_Uachtaráin), the official residence of the [President of Ireland](/wiki/President_of_Ireland)

The Republic of Ireland is a [parliamentary democracy](/wiki/Parliamentary_democracy) based on the British model, with a [written constitution](/wiki/Constitution_of_Ireland) and a popularly elected president who has mostly ceremonial powers. The [government](/wiki/Government_of_Ireland) is headed by a prime minister, the [Taoiseach](/wiki/Taoiseach), who is appointed by the [President](/wiki/President_of_Ireland) on the nomination of the lower house of parliament, the [Dáil](/wiki/Dáil_Éireann). Members of the government are chosen from both the Dáil and the upper house of parliament, the [Seanad](/wiki/Seanad_Éireann). Its capital is [Dublin](/wiki/Dublin).

The Republic today ranks amongst the wealthiest countries in the world in terms of [GDP per capita](/wiki/GDP_per_capita)[[75]](#cite_note-75) and in 2012 was ranked the seventh most developed nation in the world by the United Nations' [Human Development Index](/wiki/Human_Development_Index).[[76]](#cite_note-76) A period of rapid economic expansion from 1995 onwards became known as the [Celtic Tiger](/wiki/Celtic_Tiger) period, was brought to an end in 2008 with an unprecedented [financial crisis](/wiki/Post-2008_Irish_economic_downturn) and an economic depression in 2009.

### Northern Ireland[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:StormontCarson.jpg)[Parliament Buildings](/wiki/Parliament_Buildings_(Northern_Ireland)), in [Stormont Estate](/wiki/Stormont_Estate), seat of the [Northern Ireland Assembly](/wiki/Northern_Ireland_Assembly)

Northern Ireland is a part of the [United Kingdom](/wiki/United_Kingdom) with a local [executive](/wiki/Northern_Ireland_Executive) and [assembly](/wiki/Northern_Ireland_Assembly) which exercise devolved powers. The executive is jointly headed by the first and deputy-first minister, with the ministries being allocated in proportion with each party's representation in the assembly. Its capital is Belfast.

Ultimately political power is held by the [UK government](/wiki/UK_government), from which Northern Ireland has gone through intermittent periods of direct rule during which devolved powers have been suspended. Northern Ireland elects 18 of the UK [House of Commons'](/wiki/House_of_Commons_of_the_United_Kingdom) 650 MPs. The [Northern Ireland Secretary](/wiki/Northern_Ireland_Secretary) is a cabinet-level post in the British government.

Along with [England, Wales](/wiki/England_and_Wales) and [Scotland](/wiki/Scotland), Northern Ireland forms one of the three separate legal jurisdictions of the UK, all of which share the [Supreme Court of the United Kingdom](/wiki/Supreme_Court_of_the_United_Kingdom) as their court of final appeal.

### All-island institutions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

As part of the [Good Friday Agreement](/wiki/Good_Friday_Agreement), the British and Irish governments agreed on the creation of all-island institutions and areas of cooperation.

[thumb|The offices of the](/wiki/File:North-South_Ministerial_Council_Offices.jpg) [North/South Ministerial Council](/wiki/North/South_Ministerial_Council) on Upper English Street, [Armagh](/wiki/Armagh)

The [North/South Ministerial Council](/wiki/North/South_Ministerial_Council) is an institution through which ministers from the [Government of Ireland](/wiki/Government_of_Ireland) and the [Northern Ireland Executive](/wiki/Northern_Ireland_Executive) agree all-island policies. At least six of these policy areas must have an associated all-island "implementation bodies" and at least six others must be implemented separately in each jurisdiction. The implementation bodies are: [Waterways Ireland](/wiki/Waterways_Ireland), the [Food Safety Promotion Board](/wiki/Food_Safety_Promotion_Board), [InterTradeIreland](/wiki/InterTradeIreland), the [Special European Union Programmes Body](/wiki/Special_European_Union_Programmes_Body), [the North/South Language Body](/wiki/The_North/South_Language_Body) and the [Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission](/wiki/Commissioners_of_Irish_Lights).

The [British–Irish Intergovernmental Conference](/wiki/British–Irish_Intergovernmental_Conference) provides for co-operation between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom on all matter of mutual interest, especially Northern Ireland. In light of the Republic's particular interest in the governance of Northern Ireland, "regular and frequent" meetings co-chaired by the ROI Minister for Foreign Affairs and the UK Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, dealing with non-devolved matters to do with Northern Ireland and non-devolved [all-Ireland](/wiki/All-Ireland) issues, are required to take place under the establishing treaty.

The [North/South Inter-Parliamentary Association](/wiki/North/South_Inter-Parliamentary_Association) is a joint parliamentary forum for the island of Ireland. It has no formal powers but operates as a forum for discussing matters of common concern between the respective legislatures.

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

Despite the two jurisdictions using two distinct currencies (the [euro](/wiki/Euro) and [pound sterling](/wiki/Pound_sterling)), a growing amount of commercial activity is carried out on an all-Ireland basis. This has been facilitated by the two jurisdictions' shared membership of the [European Union](/wiki/European_Union), and there have been calls from members of the business community and policymakers for the creation of an "all-Ireland economy" to take advantage of [economies of scale](/wiki/Economies_of_scale) and boost competitiveness.[[77]](#cite_note-77) There are two multi-city regions on the island of Ireland:

1. [Dublin-Belfast corridor](/wiki/Dublin-Belfast_corridor) - 3.3 m
2. [Cork-Limerick-Galway corridor](/wiki/Cork-Limerick-Galway_corridor) - 1 m

Below is a comparison of the Regional GDP on the island of Ireland.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Republic of Ireland: [Border Midlands & West](/wiki/NUTS_2_statistical_regions_of_the_Republic_of_Ireland) | Republic of Ireland: [Southern & Eastern](/wiki/NUTS_2_statistical_regions_of_the_Republic_of_Ireland) | United Kingdom: Northern Ireland |
| €30 bn[[78]](#cite_note-78) | €142 bn (Dublin €72.4bn)[[78]](#cite_note-78) | €43.4 bn (Belfast €20.9 bn)[[79]](#cite_note-79) |
| €23,700 per person[[79]](#cite_note-79) | €39,900 per person[[79]](#cite_note-79) | €21,000 per person[[79]](#cite_note-79) |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Area** | **Population** | **Country** | **City** | **GDP €** | **GDP per person €** |
| [Dublin Region](/wiki/Dublin_Region) | 1.3 m | ROI | Dublin | €72.4 bn | €57,200 |
| [South-West Region](/wiki/South-West_Region,_Ireland) | 670,000 | ROI | Cork | €32.3 bn | €48,500 |
| Greater Belfast | 720,000 | NI | Belfast | €20.9 bn | €33,550 |
| [West Region](/wiki/West_Region,_Ireland) | 380,000 | ROI | Galway | €13.8 bn | €31,500 |
| [Mid-West Region](/wiki/Mid-West_Region,_Ireland) | 340,000 | ROI | Limerick | €11.4 bn | €30,300 |
| [South-East Region](/wiki/South-East_Region,_Ireland) | 460,000 | ROI | Waterford | €12.8 bn | €25,600 |
| [Mid-East Region](/wiki/Mid-East_Region,_Ireland) | 475,000 | ROI | Bray | €13.3 bn | €24,700 |
| [Border Region](/wiki/Border_Region,_Ireland) | 430,000 | ROI | Drogheda | €10.7 bn | €21,100 |
| East of Northern Ireland | 430,000 | NI | Ballymeena | €9.5 bn | €20,300 |
| [Midlands Region](/wiki/Midlands_Region,_Ireland) | 280,000 | ROI | Athlone | €5.7 bn | €20,100 |
| West and South of Northern Ireland | 400,000 | NI | Newry | €8.4 bn | €19,300 |
| North of Northern Ireland | 280,000 | NI | Derry | €5.5 bn | €18,400 |
| **| 6.4 m** | **|** |  |  |  |  |

[[80]](#cite_note-80)

* The BMW region of the Republic of Ireland (consisting of [Connacht](/wiki/Connacht), Counties [Laois](/wiki/County_Laois), [Offaly](/wiki/County_Offaly), [Westmeath](/wiki/County_Westmeath), [Longford](/wiki/County_Longford), [Donegal](/wiki/County_Donegal), [Monaghan](/wiki/County_Monaghan), [Cavan](/wiki/County_Cavan), [Louth](/wiki/County_Louth))
* The S&E region of the Republic of Ireland (consisting of [Munster](/wiki/Munster), Counties [Dublin](/wiki/Dublin), [Wicklow](/wiki/County_Wicklow), [Meath](/wiki/County_Meath), [Kildare](/wiki/County_Kildare), [Kilkenny](/wiki/County_Kilkenny), [Carlow](/wiki/County_Carlow), [Wexford](/wiki/County_Wexford)).

### Energy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

Ireland has an ancient industry based on [peat](/wiki/Peat) (known locally as "turf") as a source of energy for home fires. A form of [biomass](/wiki/Biomass) energy, this source of heat is still widely used in [rural](/wiki/Rural) areas. However, due to the ecological importance of peatlands in storing carbon and their rarity, the EU is attempting to protect this habitat by fining Ireland if they are dug up. In cities, heat is generally supplied by [heating oil](/wiki/Heating_oil), although some urban suppliers distribute "sods of turf" as "smokeless fuel".

An area in which the island operates as a single market is [electricity](/wiki/Electricity).[[81]](#cite_note-81) For much of their existence [electricity networks](/wiki/Electricity_network) in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland were entirely separate. Both networks were designed and constructed independently post partition. However, as a result of changes over recent years they are now connected with three interlinks[[82]](#cite_note-82) and also connected through Great Britain to mainland Europe. The situation in Northern Ireland is complicated by the issue of private companies not supplying [Northern Ireland Electricity](/wiki/Northern_Ireland_Electricity) (NIE) with enough power. In the Republic of Ireland, the [ESB](/wiki/ESB_Group) has failed to modernise its power stations and the availability of power plants has recently averaged only 66%, one of the worst such rates in Western Europe. [EirGrid](/wiki/EirGrid) is building a [HVDC](/wiki/High-voltage_direct_current) transmission line between Ireland and Great Britain with a capacity of 500 MW, about 10% of Ireland's peak demand.[[83]](#cite_note-83) As with electricity, the [natural gas](/wiki/Natural_gas) distribution network is also now all-island, with a pipeline linking [Gormanston, County Meath](/wiki/Gormanston,_County_Meath), and [Ballyclare](/wiki/Ballyclare), [County Antrim](/wiki/County_Antrim) completed in 2007.[[84]](#cite_note-84) Most of Ireland's gas comes through interconnectors between [Twynholm](/wiki/Twynholm) in [Scotland](/wiki/Scotland) and [Ballylumford](/wiki/Ballylumford_power_station), County Antrim and [Loughshinny](/wiki/Loughshinny), [County Dublin](/wiki/County_Dublin). A decreasing supply is coming from the Kinsale gas field off the County Cork coast[[85]](#cite_note-85)[[86]](#cite_note-86) and the [Corrib Gas Field](/wiki/Corrib_Gas_Field) off the coast of [County Mayo](/wiki/County_Mayo) has yet to come on-line. The County Mayo field is facing some localised opposition over [a controversial decision](/wiki/Corrib_gas_controversy) to refine the gas onshore.

The Republic of Ireland has shown a strong commitment to renewable energy, ranking as one of the top 10 markets for cleantech investment in the 2014 Global Green Economy Index.<ref name=ggei>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Research and development in Ireland in [renewable energy](/wiki/Renewable_energy) such as [wind power](/wiki/Wind_power) has increased since 2004. Large [wind farms](/wiki/Wind_farm) are being constructed in coastal counties such as Cork, Donegal, Mayo and Antrim. The construction of wind farms has in some cases been delayed by opposition from local communities, some of whom overall consider the [wind turbines](/wiki/Wind_turbine) to be unsightly. The Republic of Ireland is also hindered by an ageing network that was not designed to handle the varying availability of power that comes from wind farms. The ESB's [Turlough Hill](/wiki/Turlough_Hill) facility is the only power-storage facility in the state.[[87]](#cite_note-87)

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [right|thumb|upright=1.5|Physical features of Ireland](/wiki/File:Ireland_physical_large.png)

The island of Ireland is located in the [north-west of Europe](/wiki/North-West_Europe), between latitudes [51°](/wiki/51st_parallel_north) and [56° N](/wiki/56th_parallel_north), and longitudes [11°](/wiki/11th_meridian_west) and [5° W](/wiki/5th_meridian_west). It is separated from the neighbouring island of Great Britain by the [Irish Sea](/wiki/Irish_Sea) and the [North Channel](/wiki/North_Channel_(Great_Britain_and_Ireland)), which has a width of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)[[88]](#cite_note-88) at its narrowest point. To the west is the northern [Atlantic Ocean](/wiki/Atlantic_Ocean) and to the south is the [Celtic Sea](/wiki/Celtic_Sea), which lies between Ireland and [Brittany](/wiki/Brittany), in France. Ireland has a total area of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)[[89]](#cite_note-89)[[90]](#cite_note-90)[Template:Dubious](/wiki/Template:Dubious). Ireland and Great Britain, together with many nearby smaller islands, are known collectively as the [British Isles](/wiki/British_Isles). As [the term British Isles is controversial](/wiki/British_Isles_naming_dispute) in relation to Ireland, the alternate term *Britain and Ireland* is often used as a neutral term for the islands.

A ring of coastal mountains surround low [plains](/wiki/Plain) at the centre of the island. The highest of these is [Carrauntoohil](/wiki/Carrauntoohil) ([Template:Lang-ga](/wiki/Template:Lang-ga)) in [County Kerry](/wiki/County_Kerry), which rises to [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) above sea level.[[91]](#cite_note-91) The most arable land lies in the province of [Leinster](/wiki/Leinster).[[92]](#cite_note-92) Western areas can be mountainous and rocky with green [panoramic vistas](/wiki/Panorama). The [River Shannon](/wiki/River_Shannon), the island's longest river at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) long, rises in [County Cavan](/wiki/County_Cavan) in the north west and flows [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) to [Limerick](/wiki/Limerick) city in the mid west.[[93]](#cite_note-93)[[94]](#cite_note-94) The island's lush vegetation, a product of its mild climate and frequent rainfall, earns it the [sobriquet](/wiki/Sobriquet) *the Emerald Isle*. Overall, Ireland has a mild but changeable [oceanic climate](/wiki/Oceanic_climate) with few extremes. The climate is typically insular and is [temperate](/wiki/Temperateness) avoiding the extremes in temperature of many other areas in the world at similar latitudes.[[95]](#cite_note-95) This is a result of the moderating moist winds which ordinarily prevail from the South-Western [Atlantic](/wiki/Atlantic_Ocean).

Precipitation falls throughout the year but is light overall, particularly in the east. The west tends to be wetter on average and prone to Atlantic storms, especially in the late autumn and winter months. These occasionally bring destructive winds and higher total rainfall to these areas, as well as sometimes snow and hail. The regions of north [County Galway](/wiki/County_Galway) and east [County Mayo](/wiki/County_Mayo) have the highest incidents of recorded lightning annually for the island, with lightning occurring approximately five to ten days per year in these areas.[[96]](#cite_note-96) [Munster](/wiki/Munster), in the south, records the least snow whereas [Ulster](/wiki/Ulster), in the north, records the most.

[thumb|Pasture near Ballyieragh,](/wiki/File:Pasture_near_Ballyieragh_-_geograph.org.uk_-_15185.jpg) [County Cork](/wiki/County_Cork). Inland areas are warmer in summer and colder in winter. Usually around 40 days of the year are below freezing [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap) at inland [weather stations](/wiki/Weather_station), compared to 10 days at coastal stations. Ireland is sometimes affected by heat waves, most recently in 1995, [2003](/wiki/2003_European_heat_wave), [2006](/wiki/2006_European_heat_wave#Ireland) and 2013. In common with the rest of Europe, Ireland experienced unusually cold weather during [the winter of 2009/10](/wiki/Winter_of_2009–10_in_Europe). Temperatures fell as low as −17.2 °C (1 °F) in County Mayo on 20 December[[97]](#cite_note-97) and up to a metre (3 ft) of snow fell in mountainous areas.

The island consists of varied [geological provinces](/wiki/Geologic_province). In the far west, around County Galway and [County Donegal](/wiki/County_Donegal), is a medium to high grade metamorphic and igneous complex of [Caledonide](/wiki/Caledonides) affinity, similar to the [Scottish Highlands](/wiki/Scottish_Highlands). Across southeast Ulster and extending southwest to [Longford](/wiki/Longford) and south to [Navan](/wiki/Navan) is a province of Ordovician and Silurian rocks, with similarities to the [Southern Uplands](/wiki/Southern_Uplands) province of [Scotland](/wiki/Scotland). Further south, along the [County Wexford](/wiki/County_Wexford) coastline, is an area of granite [intrusives](/wiki/Intrusion) into more Ordovician and Silurian rocks, like that found in [Wales](/wiki/Wales).[[98]](#cite_note-98)[[99]](#cite_note-99) In the southwest, around [Bantry Bay](/wiki/Bantry_Bay) and the mountains of [Macgillicuddy's Reeks](/wiki/Macgillicuddy's_Reeks), is an area of substantially deformed, but only lightly [metamorphosed](/wiki/Metamorphic_rock), Devonian-aged rocks.[[100]](#cite_note-100) This partial ring of "hard rock" geology is covered by a blanket of Carboniferous limestone over the centre of the country, giving rise to a comparatively fertile and lush landscape. The west-coast district of [the Burren](/wiki/The_Burren) around [Lisdoonvarna](/wiki/Lisdoonvarna) has well-developed [karst](/wiki/Karst) features.[[101]](#cite_note-101) Significant stratiform lead-zinc mineralisation is found in the limestones around [Silvermines](/wiki/Silvermines) and [Tynagh](/wiki/Tynagh).

[Hydrocarbon exploration](/wiki/Hydrocarbon_exploration) is ongoing following the first major find at the [Kinsale Head gas field](/wiki/Kinsale_Head_gas_field) off [Cork](/wiki/Cork_(city)) in the mid-1970s.[[102]](#cite_note-102)[[103]](#cite_note-103) In 1999, economically significant finds of [natural gas](/wiki/Natural_gas) were made in the [Corrib Gas Field](/wiki/Corrib_Gas_Field) off the [County Mayo](/wiki/County_Mayo) coast. This has increased activity off the west coast in parallel with the "[West of Shetland](/wiki/North_Sea_oil#West_of_Shetland)" step-out development from the [North Sea hydrocarbon province](/wiki/North_Sea_oil). The Helvick oil field, estimated to contain over [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of oil, is another recent discovery.[[104]](#cite_note-104) <gallery class="center" widths="250" heights="180" caption="Landscapes" > File:Twelve pins.JPG|The rugged hills of [Connemara](/wiki/Connemara), [County Galway](/wiki/County_Galway) File:Ireland - Plains of South Kildare.jpg|[South Kildare](/wiki/County_Kildare) countryside </gallery>

### Places of interest[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|Typical scenery on](/wiki/File:Inishmaan_Gardens.jpg) [Inisheer](/wiki/Inisheer) (Inis Oírr), [Aran Islands](/wiki/Aran_Islands). There are three [World Heritage Sites](/wiki/World_Heritage_Site) on the island: the [Brú na Bóinne](/wiki/Brú_na_Bóinne), [Skellig Michael](/wiki/Skellig_Michael) and the [Giant's Causeway](/wiki/Giant's_Causeway).[[105]](#cite_note-105) A number of other places are on the tentative list, for example [the Burren](/wiki/The_Burren), the Ceide Fields[[106]](#cite_note-106) and [Mount Stewart](/wiki/Mount_Stewart).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Some of the most visited sites in Ireland include [Bunratty Castle](/wiki/Bunratty_Castle), the [Rock of Cashel](/wiki/Rock_of_Cashel), the [Cliffs of Moher](/wiki/Cliffs_of_Moher), [Holy Cross Abbey](/wiki/Holy_Cross_Abbey) and [Blarney Castle](/wiki/Blarney_Castle).[[107]](#cite_note-107) Historically important monastic sites include [Glendalough](/wiki/Glendalough) and [Clonmacnoise](/wiki/Clonmacnoise), which are maintained as [national monuments](/wiki/National_Monument_(Ireland)) in the Republic of Ireland.[[108]](#cite_note-108) [Dublin](/wiki/Dublin) is the most heavily touristed region[[107]](#cite_note-107) and home to several of the most popular attractions such as the [Guinness Storehouse](/wiki/Guinness_Storehouse) and [Book of Kells](/wiki/Book_of_Kells).[[107]](#cite_note-107) The west and south west, which includes the [Lakes of Killarney](/wiki/Lakes_of_Killarney) and the [Dingle peninsula](/wiki/Dingle_peninsula) in County Kerry and [Connemara](/wiki/Connemara) and the [Aran Islands](/wiki/Aran_Islands) in [County Galway](/wiki/County_Galway), are also popular tourist destinations.[[107]](#cite_note-107) [Achill Island](/wiki/Achill_Island) lies off the coast of [County Mayo](/wiki/County_Mayo) and is Ireland's largest island. It is a popular tourist destination for surfing and contains 5 [Blue Flag beaches](/wiki/Blue_Flag_beach) and [Croaghaun](/wiki/Croaghaun) one of the worlds highest sea cliffs. [Stately homes](/wiki/Stately_home), built during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries in [Palladian](/wiki/Palladian), [Neoclassical](/wiki/Neoclassical_architecture) and [neo-Gothic](/wiki/Neo-Gothic) styles, such as, [Castle Ward](/wiki/Castle_Ward), [Castletown House](/wiki/Castletown_House), [Bantry House](/wiki/Bantry_House), [Glenveagh Castle](/wiki/Glenveagh_Castle) are also of interest to tourists. Some have been converted into hotels, such as [Ashford Castle](/wiki/Ashford_Castle), [Castle Leslie](/wiki/Castle_Leslie) and [Dromoland Castle](/wiki/Dromoland_Castle).

<gallery class="center" widths="210" heights="200" caption="World Heritage Sites" > File:Causeway-code poet-4.jpg|[Giant's Causeway](/wiki/Giant's_Causeway), [County Antrim](/wiki/County_Antrim) File:Klosteranlage Skellig Michael.jpg|[Skellig Michael](/wiki/Skellig_Michael), [County Kerry](/wiki/County_Kerry) File:Newgrange\_ireland\_750px.jpg|[*Brú na Bóinne*](/wiki/Brú_na_Bóinne), [County Meath](/wiki/County_Meath) </gallery>

## Flora and fauna[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Irl-female_red_deer_Killarney.jpg)[Red deer](/wiki/Red_deer) (*Cervus elaphus*) in [Killarney National Park](/wiki/Killarney_National_Park) Because Ireland became isolated from [mainland Europe](/wiki/Mainland_Europe) by rising sea levels before the last ice age had completely finished, it has fewer land animal and plant species than Great Britain, which separated later, or mainland Europe. There are [55 mammal species](/wiki/List_of_mammals_of_Ireland) in Ireland and of them only 26 land [mammal](/wiki/Mammal) species are considered native to Ireland.[[3]](#cite_note-3) Some species, such as, the [red fox](/wiki/Red_fox), [hedgehog](/wiki/Hedgehog) and [badger](/wiki/Badger), are very common, whereas others, like the [Irish hare](/wiki/Mountain_hare), [red deer](/wiki/Red_deer) and [pine marten](/wiki/Pine_marten) are less so. Aquatic wildlife, such as species of [sea turtle](/wiki/Sea_turtle), [shark](/wiki/Shark), [seal](/wiki/Earless_seal), [whale](/wiki/Whale), and [dolphin](/wiki/Dolphin), are common off the coast. About 400 species of birds have been recorded in Ireland. Many of these are migratory, including the [barn swallow](/wiki/Barn_swallow).

Several different [habitat](/wiki/Habitat_(ecology)) types are found in Ireland, including farmland, open woodland, [temperate broadleaf and mixed forests](/wiki/Temperate_broadleaf_and_mixed_forests), [conifer](/wiki/Conifer) plantations, [peat](/wiki/Peat) [bogs](/wiki/Bogs) and a variety of coastal habitats. However, agriculture drives current land use patterns in Ireland, limiting natural habitat preserves,[[109]](#cite_note-109) particularly for larger wild mammals with greater territorial needs. With no large [apex predators](/wiki/Apex_predator) in Ireland other than humans and dogs, such populations of animals as semi-wild deer that cannot be controlled by smaller predators, such as the fox, are controlled by annual [culling](/wiki/Culling).

There are no snakes in Ireland and only one species of reptile (the [common lizard](/wiki/Viviparous_lizard)) is native to the island. Extinct species include the [Irish elk](/wiki/Irish_elk), the [great auk](/wiki/Great_auk) and the [wolf](/wiki/Wolves_in_Ireland). Some previously extinct birds, such as the [golden eagle](/wiki/Golden_eagle), been reintroduced in about the year 2000 after decades of [extirpation](/wiki/Local_extinction).[[110]](#cite_note-110) Until medieval times Ireland was heavily forested with [oak](/wiki/Oak), [pine](/wiki/Pine) and [birch](/wiki/Birch). Forests today cover about 12.6% of Ireland,<ref name=epa2/> of which 4,450 km² or one million acres is owned by [Coillte](/wiki/Coillte), the Republic's forestry service.[[111]](#cite_note-111) As of 2012 the Republic is one of the least forested countries in Europe.[[112]](#cite_note-112)[[113]](#cite_note-113) Much of the land is now covered with pasture and there are many species of wild-flower. Gorse ([*Ulex europaeus*](/wiki/Ulex_europaeus)), a wild [furze](/wiki/Furze), is commonly found growing in the uplands and ferns are plentiful in the more moist regions, especially in the western parts. It is home to hundreds of plant species, some of them unique to the island, and has been "invaded" by some grasses, such as [*Spartina anglica*](/wiki/Spartina_anglica).[[114]](#cite_note-114) [thumb|Furze (](/wiki/File:Gorse-Ulex_europaeus.jpg)[*Ulex europaeus*](/wiki/Ulex_europaeus)) The [algal](/wiki/Algae) and seaweed flora is that of the cold-temperate variety. The total number of species is 574[[115]](#cite_note-115) and is distributed as follows:

* 264 [Rhodophyta](/wiki/Rhodophyta) (red algae)
* 152 [Phaeophyceae](/wiki/Phaeophyceae) (brown algae including kelps)
* 114 [Chloropyta](/wiki/Green_algae) (green algae)
* 31 [Cyanophyta](/wiki/Cyanophyta) (Blue-green algae)

Rarer species include:[[115]](#cite_note-115)\* *Itonoa marginifera* (J.Agardh) Masuda & Guiry

* [*Schmitzia hiscockiana*](/wiki/Schmitzia_hiscockiana) Maggs & Guiry
* [*Gelidiella calcicola*](/wiki/Gelidiella_calcicola) Maggs & Guiry
* *Gelidium maggsiae* Rico & Guiry
* *Halymenia latifolia* P.L.Crouan & H.M.Crouan ex Kützing.

The island has been invaded by some algae, some of which are now well established. For example:[[116]](#cite_note-116)\* *Asparagopsis armara* Harvey, which originated in Australia and was first recorded by M. De Valera in 1939

* [*Colpomenia peregrina*](/wiki/Colpomenia_peregrina) Sauvageau, which is now locally abundant and first recorded in the 1930s
* [*Sargassum*](/wiki/Sargassum) *muticum* (Yendo) Fensholt, now well established in a number of localities on the south, west, and north-east coasts
* [*Codium fragile*](/wiki/Codium_fragile) ssp. *fragile* (formerly reported as ssp. *tomentosum*), now well established.

*Codium fragile* ssp. *atlanticum* has been established to be native, although for many years it was regarded as an alien species.

Because of its mild climate, many species, including [sub-tropical](/wiki/Subtropics) species such as [palm trees](/wiki/Arecaceae), are grown in Ireland. [Phytogeographically](/wiki/Phytogeography), Ireland belongs to the Atlantic European province of the [Circumboreal Region](/wiki/Circumboreal_Region) within the [Boreal Kingdom](/wiki/Boreal_Kingdom). The island itself can be subdivided into two [ecoregions](/wiki/Ecoregion): the Celtic broadleaf forests and North Atlantic moist mixed forests.

### Impact of agriculture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[thumb|Rolling green pastures near](/wiki/File:Pasture_at_the_Viewpoint_-_geograph.org.uk_-_15065.jpg) [Bantry](/wiki/Bantry), [County Cork](/wiki/County_Cork) The long history of agricultural production, coupled with modern intensive agricultural methods such as pesticide and fertiliser use and runoff from contaminants into streams, rivers and lakes, impact the natural fresh-water ecosystems and have placed pressure on biodiversity in Ireland.[[117]](#cite_note-117)[[118]](#cite_note-118) A land of green fields for crop cultivation and cattle rearing limits the space available for the establishment of native wild species. Hedgerows, however, traditionally used for maintaining and demarcating land boundaries, act as a refuge for native wild flora. This ecosystem stretches across the countryside and acts as a network of connections to preserve remnants of the ecosystem that once covered the island. Subsidies under the [Common Agricultural Policy](/wiki/Common_Agricultural_Policy), which supported agricultural practices that preserved hedgerow environments, are undergoing reforms. The Common Agricultural Policy had in the past subsidised potentially destructive agricultural practices, for example by emphasising production without placing limits on indiscriminate use of fertilisers and pesticides; but reforms have gradually decoupled subsidies from production levels and introduced environmental and other requirements.[[119]](#cite_note-119) Forest covers about 12.6% of the country, most of it designated for commercial production.[[109]](#cite_note-109) Forested areas typically consist of monoculture plantations of non-native species, which may result in habitats that are not suitable for supporting native species of invertebrates. Remnants of native forest can be found scattered around the island, in particular in the [Killarney National Park](/wiki/Killarney_National_Park). Natural areas require fencing to prevent over-grazing by [deer](/wiki/Deer_of_Ireland) and sheep that roam over uncultivated areas. Grazing in this manner is one of the main factors preventing the natural regeneration of forests across many regions of the country.[[120]](#cite_note-120)

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|350px|A](/wiki/File:Population_density_of_Ireland_map2002.svg) [Population density](/wiki/Population_density) map of Ireland 2002 showing the heavily weighted eastern seaboard and Ulster [thumb|350px|Proportion of respondents to the Ireland census 2011 or the Northern Ireland census 2011 who stated they were Catholic. Areas in which Catholics are in the majority are blue. Areas in which Catholics are in a minority are red.](/wiki/File:Catholicism_in_Ireland.png)

People have lived in Ireland for over 9,000 years. The different eras are termed [mesolithic](/wiki/Mesolithic), [neolithic](/wiki/Neolithic), [Bronze Age](/wiki/Bronze_Age), and [Iron Age](/wiki/Iron_Age).

Early historical and genealogical records note the existence of major groups such as the [Cruthin](/wiki/Cruthin), [Corcu Loígde](/wiki/Corcu_Loígde), [Dál Riata](/wiki/Dál_Riata), [Dáirine](/wiki/Dáirine), [Deirgtine](/wiki/Deirgtine), [Delbhna](/wiki/Delbhna), [Érainn](/wiki/Érainn), [Laigin](/wiki/Laigin), [Ulaid](/wiki/Ulaid). Slightly later major groups included the [Connachta](/wiki/Connachta), [Ciannachta](/wiki/Ciannachta), [Eóganachta](/wiki/Eóganachta).

Smaller groups included the aithechthúatha (see [Attacotti](/wiki/Attacotti)), [Cálraighe](/wiki/Cálraighe), [Cíarraige](/wiki/Cíarraige), [Conmaicne](/wiki/Conmaicne), [Dartraighe](/wiki/Dartraighe), [Déisi](/wiki/Déisi), [Éile](/wiki/Éile), [Fir Bolg](/wiki/Fir_Bolg), [Fortuatha](/wiki/Fortuatha), [Gailenga](/wiki/Gailenga), [Gamanraige](/wiki/Gamanraige), [Mairtine](/wiki/Mairtine), [Múscraige](/wiki/Múscraige), [Partraige](/wiki/Partraige), [Soghain](/wiki/Soghain), [Uaithni](/wiki/Uaithni), [Uí Maine](/wiki/Uí_Maine), [Uí Liatháin](/wiki/Uí_Liatháin). Many survived into late medieval times, others vanished as they became politically unimportant.

Over the past 1200 years, [Vikings](/wiki/Vikings), [Normans](/wiki/Normans), [Welsh](/wiki/Welsh_people), [Flemings](/wiki/Flemings), [Scots](/wiki/Scottish_people), [English](/wiki/English_people), [Africans](/wiki/Africans), [Eastern Europeans](/wiki/Eastern_Europeans) and [South Americans](/wiki/South_Americans) have all added to the population and have had significant influences on Irish culture.

Ireland's largest religious group is [Christianity](/wiki/Christianity). The largest denomination is [Roman Catholicism](/wiki/Roman_Catholicism) representing over 73% for the island (and about 87% of the Republic of Ireland). Most of the rest of the population adhere to one of the various [Protestant](/wiki/Protestant) denominations (about 48% of Northern Ireland).[[121]](#cite_note-121) The largest is the [Anglican](/wiki/Anglicanism) [Church of Ireland](/wiki/Church_of_Ireland). The [Muslim community](/wiki/Islam_in_Ireland) is growing in Ireland, mostly through increased immigration, with a 50% increase in the republic between the 2006 and 2011 census.[[122]](#cite_note-122) The island has a small [Jewish community](/wiki/History_of_the_Jews_in_Ireland). About 4% of the Republic's population and about 14% of the Northern Ireland population[[121]](#cite_note-121) describe themselves as of no religion. In a 2010 survey conducted on behalf of the [Irish Times](/wiki/Irish_Times), 32% of respondents said they went to a religious service more than once a week.

The population of Ireland rose rapidly from the 16th century until the mid-19th century, but a devastating [famine](/wiki/Great_Famine_(Ireland)) in the 1840s caused one million deaths and forced over one million more to emigrate in its immediate wake. Over the following century the population was reduced by over half, at a time when the general trend in European countries was for populations to rise by an average of three-fold.

### Divisions and settlements[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further)

Traditionally, Ireland is subdivided into [four provinces](/wiki/Provinces_of_Ireland): [Connacht](/wiki/Connacht) (west), [Leinster](/wiki/Leinster) (east), [Munster](/wiki/Munster) (south), and [Ulster](/wiki/Ulster) (north). In a system that developed between the 13th and 17th centuries,[[123]](#cite_note-123) Ireland has [32 traditional counties](/wiki/Counties_of_Ireland). Twenty-six of these counties are in the Republic of Ireland and [six are in Northern Ireland](/wiki/Counties_of_Northern_Ireland). The six counties that constitute Northern Ireland are all in the province of Ulster (which has nine counties in total). As such, *Ulster* is often used as a synonym for Northern Ireland, although the two are not coterminous.

In the Republic of Ireland, counties form the basis of the system of local government. Counties [Dublin](/wiki/County_Dublin), [Cork](/wiki/County_Cork), [Limerick](/wiki/County_Limerick), [Galway](/wiki/County_Galway), [Waterford](/wiki/County_Waterford) and [Tipperary](/wiki/County_Tipperary) have been broken up into smaller administrative areas. However, they are still treated as counties for cultural and some official purposes, for example postal addresses and by the [Ordnance Survey Ireland](/wiki/Ordnance_Survey_Ireland). Counties in Northern Ireland are no longer used for local governmental purposes,[[124]](#cite_note-124) but, as in the Republic, their traditional boundaries are still used for informal purposes such as sports leagues and in cultural or tourism contexts.[[125]](#cite_note-125) City status in Ireland is decided by [legislative](/wiki/Legislation) or [royal charter](/wiki/Royal_charter). [Dublin](/wiki/Dublin), with over 1 million residents in the [Greater Dublin Area](/wiki/Greater_Dublin_Area), is the largest city on the island. Belfast, with 579,726 residents, is the largest city in Northern Ireland. City status does not directly equate with population size. For example, [Armagh](/wiki/Armagh), with 14,590 is the seat of the [Church of Ireland](/wiki/Church_of_Ireland) and the [Roman Catholic](/wiki/Roman_Catholic) [Primate of All Ireland](/wiki/Primate_of_All_Ireland) and was re-granted [city status](/wiki/City_status_in_the_United_Kingdom#Northern_Ireland) by [Queen Elizabeth II](/wiki/Elizabeth_II_of_the_United_Kingdom) in 1994 (having lost that status in [local government reforms of 1840](/wiki/Municipal_Corporations_(Ireland)_Act_1840)). In the Republic of Ireland, [Kilkenny](/wiki/Kilkenny), seat of the [Butler dynasty](/wiki/Butler_dynasty), while no longer a city for administrative purposes (since the 2001 [Local Government Act](/wiki/Local_Government_Act_2001)), is entitled by law to continue to use the description.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Cities and towns by populations** | | | | | | |
| **rowspan=21|** [**150px**](/wiki/File:Grafton_St,_Dublin.jpg)[**Dublin**](/wiki/Dublin)[**border|150px**](/wiki/File:Halla_na_Cathrach_i_gCorcaigh.jpg)[**Cork**](/wiki/Cork_(city)) | **#** | **Settlement** | **Urban Area Population** | **Metro population** | **rowspan=21|** [**150px**](/wiki/File:Belfast_City_Hall_2.jpg)[**Belfast**](/wiki/Belfast)[**150px**](/wiki/File:Cannon_on_Derry_City_Walls_SMC_2007.jpg)[**Derry**](/wiki/Derry) |  |
| 1 | [**Dublin**](/wiki/Dublin) | 1,110,627 | 1,801,040 [Greater Dublin](/wiki/Greater_Dublin_Area) |  |  |  |
| 2 | [**Belfast**](/wiki/Belfast) | 333,000<ref name=NorthernIrelandUAs>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> | [Metropolitan area](/wiki/Belfast_Metropolitan_Area): 579,276[[126]](#cite_note-126) |  |  |  |
| 3 | [**Cork**](/wiki/Cork_(city)) | 198,582 | 300,0000 [Cork Metro](/wiki/Metropolitan_Cork) |  |  |  |
| 4 | [**Limerick**](/wiki/Limerick) | 102,164 |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | [**Derry**](/wiki/Derry) | 93,512 |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | [**Galway**](/wiki/Galway) | 76,778 |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | [**Waterford**](/wiki/Waterford) | 65,928 |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | [**Craigavon**](/wiki/Craigavon) | 57,651<ref name=NorthernIrelandUAs/> |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | [**Drogheda**](/wiki/Drogheda) | 38,578 |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | [**Dundalk**](/wiki/Dundalk) | 37,816 |  |  |  |  |

[Template:Clear](/wiki/Template:Clear)

### Migration[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[thumb|upright=1.5|right|The population of Ireland since 1603 showing the consequence of the](/wiki/File:Population_of_Ireland_since_1500.png) [Great Famine (1845–49)](/wiki/Great_Famine_(Ireland)) (Note: figures before 1841 are contemporary estimates)

The population of Ireland collapsed dramatically during the second half of the 19th century. A population of over 8 million in 1841 was reduced to slightly more than 4 million by 1921. In part, the fall in population was due to death from the [Great Famine](/wiki/Great_Famine_(Ireland)) of 1845 to 1852, which took about 1 million lives. However, by far the greater cause of population decline was the dire economic state of the country which led to an entrenched culture of emigration lasting until the 21st century.

Emigration from Ireland in the 19th century contributed to the populations of England, the United States, Canada and Australia, where a large [Irish diaspora](/wiki/Irish_diaspora) lives. [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), 4.3 million Canadians, or 14% of the population, are of Irish descent.[[127]](#cite_note-127) [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), a total of 34.5 million Americans claim Irish ancestry.[[128]](#cite_note-128) With growing prosperity since the last decade of the 20th century, Ireland became a destination for immigrants. Since the [European Union](/wiki/European_Union) expanded to include [Poland](/wiki/Poland) in 2004, [Polish people](/wiki/Polish_people) have made up the largest number of immigrants (over 150,000)[[129]](#cite_note-129) from [Central Europe](/wiki/Central_Europe). There has also been significant immigration from [Lithuania](/wiki/Lithuania), the [Czech Republic](/wiki/Czech_Republic) and [Latvia](/wiki/Latvia).[[130]](#cite_note-130) The [Republic of Ireland](/wiki/Republic_of_Ireland) in particular has seen large-scale immigration, with 420,000 foreign nationals as of 2006, about 10% of the population.<ref name=autogenerated1>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> A quarter of births (24 percent) in 2009 were to mothers born outside Ireland.[[131]](#cite_note-131) [Chinese](/wiki/Overseas_Chinese) and [Nigerians](/wiki/Nigerian), along with people from other African countries, have accounted for a large proportion of the non–[European Union](/wiki/European_Union) migrants to Ireland. Up to 50,000 eastern and central European migrant workers left Ireland in response to the Irish financial crisis.[[132]](#cite_note-132)

### Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|250px|Proportion of respondents who said they could speak Irish in the Ireland census in 2011 or the Northern Ireland census in 2011](/wiki/File:Irish_speakers_in_2011.png) Two main languages are spoken in Ireland: [Irish](/wiki/Irish_language) and [English](/wiki/Hiberno-English). Both languages have widely contributed to literature. Irish, now a minority but official language of the Republic of Ireland, was the vernacular of the Irish people for over two thousand years and was probably introduced by some sort of proto-Gaelic migration during the Iron Age, possibly earlier. It began to be written down after Christianisation in the 5th century and spread to Scotland and the Isle of Man where it evolved into the [Scottish Gaelic](/wiki/Scottish_Gaelic) and [Manx](/wiki/Manx_Language) languages respectively.

The Irish language has a vast treasure of written texts from many centuries, and is divided by linguists into [Old Irish](/wiki/Old_Irish) from the 6th to 10th century, [Middle Irish](/wiki/Middle_Irish) from the 10th to 13th century, Early Modern Irish until the 17th century, and the Modern Irish spoken today. It remained the dominant language of Ireland for most of those periods, having influences from [Latin](/wiki/Latin_Language), [Old Norse](/wiki/Old_Norse), [French](/wiki/Anglo-Norman) and English. It declined under British rule but remained the majority tongue until the early 19th century, and since then has been a minority language, although [revival efforts](/wiki/Gaelic_Revival) are continuing in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

[Gaeltacht](/wiki/Gaeltacht) or Irish-speaking areas are still seeing a decline in the language. The main Gaeltacht areas are down the west of the country, in Donegal, Mayo, Galway and Kerry with smaller Gaeltacht areas near [Dungarvan](/wiki/Dungarvan) in Waterford, [Navan](/wiki/Navan), in Meath,[[133]](#cite_note-133) and the [Shaw's Road](/wiki/Shaw's_Road) in Belfast. Irish language is a compulsory subject in the state education system in the Republic, and the [Gaelscoil](/wiki/Gaelscoil) movement has seen many Irish medium schools established in both jurisdictions.

[English](/wiki/Hiberno-English) was first introduced to Ireland in the Norman invasion. It was spoken by a few peasants and merchants brought over from England, and was largely replaced by Irish before the Tudor Conquest of Ireland. It was introduced as the official language with the Tudor and Cromwellian conquests. The Ulster plantations gave it a permanent foothold in Ulster, and it remained the official and upper-class language elsewhere, the Irish-speaking chieftains and nobility having been deposed. Language shift during the 19th century replaced Irish with English as the first language for a vast majority of the population.[[134]](#cite_note-134) Less than 10% of the population of the Republic of Ireland today speak Irish regularly outside of the education system[[135]](#cite_note-135) and 38% of those over 15 years are classified as "Irish speakers". In Northern Ireland, English is the de facto official language, but official recognition is afforded to Irish, including specific protective measures under Part III of the [European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages](/wiki/European_Charter_for_Regional_or_Minority_Languages). A lesser status (including recognition under Part II of the Charter) is given to [Ulster Scots dialects](/wiki/Ulster_Scots_dialects), which are spoken by roughly 2% of Northern Ireland residents, and also spoken by some in the Republic of Ireland.[[136]](#cite_note-136) Since the 1960s with the increase in immigration, many more languages have been introduced, particularly deriving from Asia and Eastern Europe.

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [upright|thumb|](/wiki/File:Ardboe_Cross.jpg)[Ardboe High Cross](/wiki/Ardboe_High_Cross), [County Tyrone](/wiki/County_Tyrone)|alt=Tall stone cross, with intricate carved patterns, protected by metal railings surrounded by short cut grass. Trees are to either side, cows in open countryside are in the middle distance. Ireland's culture comprises elements of the culture of ancient peoples, later immigrant and broadcast cultural influences (chiefly [Gaelic culture](/wiki/Gaels), [Anglicisation](/wiki/Anglicisation), [Americanisation](/wiki/Americanisation) and aspects of broader [European culture](/wiki/European_culture)). In broad terms, Ireland is regarded as one of the [Celtic nations](/wiki/Celtic_nations) of Europe, alongside [Scotland](/wiki/Scotland), [Wales](/wiki/Wales), [Cornwall](/wiki/Cornwall), [Isle of Man](/wiki/Isle_of_Man) and [Brittany](/wiki/Brittany). This combination of cultural influences is visible in the intricate designs termed *Irish* [*interlace*](/wiki/Interlace_(visual_arts)) or [*Celtic knotwork*](/wiki/Celtic_knot)*.* These can be seen in the ornamentation of medieval religious and secular works. The style is still popular today in jewellery and graphic art,[[137]](#cite_note-137) as is the distinctive style of [traditional Irish music](/wiki/Traditional_Irish_music) and dance, and has become indicative of modern "Celtic" culture in general.

[Religion](/wiki/Religion_in_Ireland) has played a significant role in the cultural life of the island since ancient times (and since the 17th century [plantations](/wiki/Plantations_of_Ireland), has been the focus of political identity and divisions on the island). Ireland's pre-Christian heritage fused with the [Celtic Church](/wiki/Celtic_Church) following the missions of [Saint Patrick](/wiki/Saint_Patrick) in the 5th century. The [Hiberno-Scottish missions](/wiki/Hiberno-Scottish_mission), begun by the Irish monk Saint [Columba](/wiki/Columba), spread the [Irish vision of Christianity](/wiki/Celtic_Christianity) to [pagan](/wiki/Pagan) [England](/wiki/Anglo-Saxon_England) and the [Frankish Empire](/wiki/Frankish_Empire). These missions brought written language to an illiterate population of Europe during the [Dark Ages](/wiki/Early_Middle_Ages) that followed the [fall of Rome](/wiki/Fall_of_Rome), earning Ireland the sobriquet, "the island of saints and scholars".

Since the 20th century the [Irish pubs](/wiki/Irish_pub) worldwide have become, especially those with a full range of cultural and gastronomic offerings, outposts of Irish culture.

The Republic of Ireland's national theatre is the [Abbey Theatre](/wiki/Abbey_Theatre), which was founded in 1904, and the national Irish-language theatre is [An Taibhdhearc](/wiki/An_Taibhdhearc), which was established in 1928 in [Galway](/wiki/Galway).[[138]](#cite_note-138)[[139]](#cite_note-139) Playwrights such as [Seán O'Casey](/wiki/Seán_O'Casey), [Brian Friel](/wiki/Brian_Friel), [Sebastian Barry](/wiki/Sebastian_Barry), [Conor McPherson](/wiki/Conor_McPherson) and [Billy Roche](/wiki/Billy_Roche) are internationally renowned.[[140]](#cite_note-140)

### Arts[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

[thumb|upright|Illustrated page from](/wiki/File:KellsFol032vChristEnthroned.jpg) [Book of Kells](/wiki/Book_of_Kells) Ireland has made a large contribution to world literature in all its branches, particularly in the English language. Poetry in Irish is among the oldest [vernacular poetry](/wiki/Vernacular_literature) in Europe, with the earliest examples dating from the 6th century. In English, [Jonathan Swift](/wiki/Jonathan_Swift), still often called the foremost [satirist](/wiki/Satirist) in the English language, was very popular in his day for works such as [*Gulliver's Travels*](/wiki/Gulliver's_Travels) and [*A Modest Proposal*](/wiki/A_Modest_Proposal), and [Oscar Wilde](/wiki/Oscar_Wilde) is known most for his often quoted witticisms.

In the 20th century, Ireland produced four winners of the [Nobel Prize for Literature](/wiki/Nobel_Prize_for_Literature): [George Bernard Shaw](/wiki/George_Bernard_Shaw), [William Butler Yeats](/wiki/William_Butler_Yeats), [Samuel Beckett](/wiki/Samuel_Beckett) and [Seamus Heaney](/wiki/Seamus_Heaney). Although not a [Nobel Prize](/wiki/Nobel_Prize) winner, [James Joyce](/wiki/James_Joyce) is widely considered to be one of the most significant writers of the 20th century. Joyce's 1922 novel [*Ulysses*](/wiki/Ulysses_(novel)) is considered one of the most important works of [Modernist literature](/wiki/Modernist_literature) and his life is celebrated annually on 16 June in Dublin as "[Bloomsday](/wiki/Bloomsday)".[[141]](#cite_note-141) Modern Irish literature is often connected with its rural heritage[[142]](#cite_note-142) through writers such as [John McGahern](/wiki/John_McGahern) and poets such as [Seamus Heaney](/wiki/Seamus_Heaney).

[thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Revolutionary_Joyce.jpg)[James Joyce](/wiki/James_Joyce) one of the most significant writers of the 20th century

Music has been in evidence in Ireland since prehistoric times.[[143]](#cite_note-143) Although in the [early Middle Ages](/wiki/Early_Middle_Ages) the church was "quite unlike its counterpart in continental Europe",[[144]](#cite_note-144) there was considerable interchange between monastic settlements in Ireland and the rest of Europe that contributed to what is known as [Gregorian chant](/wiki/Gregorian_chant). Outside religious establishments, musical genres in early Gaelic Ireland are referred to as a triad of weeping music (*goltraige*), laughing music (*geantraige*) and sleeping music (*suantraige*).[[145]](#cite_note-145) Vocal and instrumental music (e.g. for the harp, pipes, and various [string instruments](/wiki/String_instrument)) was transmitted orally, but the [Irish harp](/wiki/Irish_harp), in particular, was of such significance that it became Ireland's national symbol. Classical music following European models first developed in urban areas, in establishments of Anglo-Irish rule such as [Dublin Castle](/wiki/Dublin_Castle), [St Patrick's Cathedral](/wiki/St_Patrick's_Cathedral,_Dublin) and [Christ Church](/wiki/Christ_Church_Cathedral,_Dublin) as well as the country houses of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy, with the first performance of [Handel's](/wiki/George_Frideric_Handel) [*Messiah*](/wiki/Messiah_(Handel)) (1742) being among the highlights of the baroque era. In the 19th century, public concerts provided access to classical music to all classes of society. Yet, for political and financial reasons Ireland has been too small to provide a living to many musicians, so the names of the better-known [Irish composers](/wiki/List_of_Irish_classical_composers) of this time belong to emigrants.

Irish [traditional music](/wiki/Folk_music) and [dance](/wiki/Dance) has seen a surge in popularity and global coverage since the 1960s. In the middle years of the 20th century, as Irish society was modernising, traditional music had fallen out of favour, especially in urban areas.[[146]](#cite_note-146) However during the 1960s, there was a revival of interest in Irish traditional music led by groups such as [The Dubliners](/wiki/The_Dubliners), [The Chieftains](/wiki/The_Chieftains), [The Wolfe Tones](/wiki/The_Wolfe_Tones), the [Clancy Brothers](/wiki/Clancy_Brothers), [Sweeney's Men](/wiki/Sweeney's_Men) and individuals like [Seán Ó Riada](/wiki/Seán_Ó_Riada) and [Christy Moore](/wiki/Christy_Moore). Groups and musicians including [Horslips](/wiki/Horslips), [Van Morrison](/wiki/Van_Morrison) and [Thin Lizzy](/wiki/Thin_Lizzy) incorporated elements of Irish traditional music into contemporary [rock music](/wiki/Rock_music) and, during the 1970s and 1980s, the distinction between traditional and rock musicians became blurred, with many individuals regularly crossing over between these styles of playing. This trend can be seen more recently in the work of artists like [Enya](/wiki/Enya), [The Saw Doctors](/wiki/The_Saw_Doctors), [The Corrs](/wiki/The_Corrs), [Sinéad O'Connor](/wiki/Sinéad_O'Connor), [Clannad](/wiki/Clannad_(musical_group)), [The Cranberries](/wiki/The_Cranberries) and [The Pogues](/wiki/The_Pogues) among others. Since then there have been a number of stylistic fusions including [folk metal](/wiki/Folk_metal) and others, while some contemporary music groups stick closer to a "traditional" sound.

The earliest known Irish graphic art and sculpture are Neolithic carvings found at sites such as [Newgrange](/wiki/Newgrange)[[147]](#cite_note-147) and is traced through [Bronze age](/wiki/Bronze_age) artefacts and the religious carvings and [illuminated manuscripts](/wiki/Illuminated_manuscripts) of the medieval period. During the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, a strong tradition of painting emerged, including such figures as [John Butler Yeats](/wiki/John_Butler_Yeats), [William Orpen](/wiki/William_Orpen), [Jack Yeats](/wiki/Jack_Yeats) and [Louis le Brocquy](/wiki/Louis_le_Brocquy). Contemporary Irish visual artists of note include [Sean Scully](/wiki/Sean_Scully), [Kevin Abosch](/wiki/Kevin_Abosch), and [Alice Maher](/wiki/Alice_Maher).

### Science[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

[thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Robert_Boyle_0001.jpg)[Robert Boyle](/wiki/Robert_Boyle) formulated Boyle's Law. The Irish philosopher and theologian [Johannes Scotus Eriugena](/wiki/Johannes_Scotus_Eriugena) was considered one of the leading intellectuals of his early Middle Ages. Sir [Ernest Henry Shackleton](/wiki/Ernest_Henry_Shackleton), an Irish explorer, was one of the principal figures of Antarctic exploration. He, along with his expedition, made the first ascent of [Mount Erebus](/wiki/Mount_Erebus) and the discovery of the approximate location of the [South Magnetic Pole](/wiki/South_Magnetic_Pole). [Robert Boyle](/wiki/Robert_Boyle) was a 17th-century natural philosopher, chemist, physicist, inventor and early [gentleman scientist](/wiki/Gentleman_scientist). He is largely regarded one of the founders of modern chemistry and is best known for the formulation of [Boyle's law](/wiki/Boyle's_law).[[148]](#cite_note-148) 19th century physicist, [John Tyndall](/wiki/John_Tyndall), discovered the [Tyndall effect](/wiki/Tyndall_effect). [Father Nicholas Joseph Callan](/wiki/Father_Nicholas_Joseph_Callan), Professor of Natural Philosophy in [Maynooth College](/wiki/Maynooth_College), is best known for his invention of the [induction coil](/wiki/Induction_coil), [transformer](/wiki/Transformer) and he discovered an early method of [galvanisation](/wiki/Galvanisation) in the 19th century.

Other notable Irish [physicists](/wiki/Physicists) include [Ernest Walton](/wiki/Ernest_Walton), winner of the 1951 [Nobel Prize in Physics](/wiki/Nobel_Prize_in_Physics). With [Sir John Douglas Cockcroft](/wiki/Sir_John_Douglas_Cockcroft), he was the first to split the nucleus of the atom by artificial means and made contributions to the development of a new theory of [wave equation](/wiki/Wave_equation).[[149]](#cite_note-149) William Thomson, or [Lord Kelvin](/wiki/Lord_Kelvin), is the person whom the absolute temperature unit, the [Kelvin](/wiki/Kelvin), is named after. Sir [Joseph Larmor](/wiki/Joseph_Larmor), a physicist and mathematician, made innovations in the understanding of electricity, dynamics, thermodynamics and the electron theory of matter. His most influential work was Aether and Matter, a book on theoretical physics published in 1900.[[150]](#cite_note-150) [George Johnstone Stoney](/wiki/George_Johnstone_Stoney) introduced the term [*electron*](/wiki/Electron) in 1891. [John Stewart Bell](/wiki/John_Stewart_Bell) was the originator of [Bell's Theorem](/wiki/Bell's_Theorem) and a paper concerning the discovery of the [Bell-Jackiw-Adler anomaly](/wiki/Chiral_anomaly) and was nominated for a Nobel prize.[[151]](#cite_note-151) Notable mathematicians include Sir [William Rowan Hamilton](/wiki/William_Rowan_Hamilton), famous for work in [classical mechanics](/wiki/Hamiltonian_mechanics) and the invention of [quaternions](/wiki/Quaternions). [Francis Ysidro Edgeworth's](/wiki/Francis_Ysidro_Edgeworth) contribution of the [Edgeworth Box](/wiki/Edgeworth_Box) remains influential in neo-classical microeconomic theory to this day; while [Richard Cantillon](/wiki/Richard_Cantillon) inspired [Adam Smith](/wiki/Adam_Smith), among others. [John B. Cosgrave](/wiki/John_B._Cosgrave) was a specialist in [number theory](/wiki/Number_theory) and discovered a 2000-digit [prime number](/wiki/Prime_number) in 1999 and a record composite [Fermat number](/wiki/Fermat_number) in 2003. [John Lighton Synge](/wiki/John_Lighton_Synge) made progress in different fields of science, including mechanics and geometrical methods in general relativity. He had mathematician [John Nash](/wiki/John_Forbes_Nash,_Jr.) as one of his students.

Ireland has nine universities, seven in the Republic of Ireland and two in Northern Ireland, including [Trinity College, Dublin](/wiki/Trinity_College,_Dublin) and the [University College Dublin](/wiki/University_College_Dublin), as well as numerous third-level colleges and institutes and a branch of the Open University, the [Open University in Ireland](/wiki/Open_University_in_Ireland).

### Sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

The island of Ireland fields a single international team in most sports. One notable exception to this is association football, although both associations continued to field international teams under the name "Ireland" until the 1950s. An all-Ireland club competition for soccer, the [Setanta Cup](/wiki/Setanta_Cup), was created in 2005.

[Gaelic football](/wiki/Gaelic_football) is the most popular sport in Ireland in terms of match attendance and community involvement, with about 2,600 clubs on the island. In 2003 it represented 34% of total sports attendances at events in Ireland and abroad, followed by [hurling](/wiki/Hurling) at 23%, soccer at 16% and rugby at 8%[[152]](#cite_note-152) and the [All-Ireland Football Final](/wiki/All-Ireland_Football_Final) is the most watched event in the sporting calendar.[[153]](#cite_note-153) Soccer is the most widely played team game on the island, and the most popular in [Northern Ireland](/wiki/Northern_Ireland).[[152]](#cite_note-152)[[154]](#cite_note-154) Swimming, golf, aerobics, soccer, cycling, Gaelic football and billiards/snooker are the sporting activities with the highest levels of playing participation.[[155]](#cite_note-155) The sport is also the most notable exception where the [Republic of Ireland](/wiki/Republic_of_Ireland_national_football_team) and [Northern Ireland](/wiki/Northern_Ireland_national_football_team) field separate international teams. Northern Ireland has produced two World Snooker Champions.

Many other sports are also played and followed, including [basketball](/wiki/Basketball), [boxing](/wiki/Boxing), [cricket](/wiki/Cricket), [fishing](/wiki/Fishing), [greyhound racing](/wiki/Greyhound_racing), [handball](/wiki/Gaelic_handball), [hockey](/wiki/Hockey), [horse racing](/wiki/Horse_racing), [motor sport](/wiki/Motor_sport), [show jumping](/wiki/Show_jumping) and [tennis](/wiki/Tennis).

#### Field sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Tyrone_Blanket_Defence.jpg)[Tyrone](/wiki/Tyrone_GAA) v [Kerry](/wiki/Kerry_GAA) in the [2005 All-Ireland Senior Football Championship Final](/wiki/2005_All-Ireland_Senior_Football_Championship_Final) [Gaelic football](/wiki/Gaelic_football), [hurling](/wiki/Hurling) and [handball](/wiki/Gaelic_handball) are the best-known of the Irish traditional sports, collectively known as [Gaelic games](/wiki/Gaelic_games). Gaelic games are governed by the [Gaelic Athletic Association](/wiki/Gaelic_Athletic_Association) (GAA), with the exception of ladies' Gaelic football and camogie (women's variant of hurling), which are governed by separate organisations. The headquarters of the GAA (and the main stadium) is located at the 82,500[[156]](#cite_note-156) capacity [Croke Park](/wiki/Croke_Park) in north Dublin. Many major GAA games are played there, including the semi-finals and finals of the [All-Ireland Senior Football Championship](/wiki/All-Ireland_Senior_Football_Championship) and [All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship](/wiki/All-Ireland_Senior_Hurling_Championship). During the redevelopment of the [Lansdowne Road stadium](/wiki/Lansdowne_Road) in 2007–10, international rugby and soccer were played there.[[157]](#cite_note-157) All GAA players, even at the highest level, are amateurs, receiving no wages, although they are permitted to receive a limited amount of sport-related income from commercial sponsorship.

The [Irish Football Association](/wiki/Irish_Football_Association) (IFA) was originally the governing body for soccer across the island. The game has been played in an organised fashion in Ireland since the 1870s, with [Cliftonville F.C.](/wiki/Cliftonville_F.C.) in Belfast being Ireland's oldest club. It was most popular, especially in its first decades, around Belfast and in Ulster. However, some clubs based outside Belfast thought that the IFA largely favoured Ulster-based clubs in such matters as selection for the national team. In 1921, following an incident in which, despite an earlier promise, the IFA moved an [Irish Cup](/wiki/Irish_Cup) semi-final replay from Dublin to Belfast,[[158]](#cite_note-158) Dublin-based clubs broke away to form the Football Association of the Irish Free State. Today the southern association is known as the [Football Association of Ireland](/wiki/Football_Association_of_Ireland) (FAI). Despite being initially blacklisted by the [Home Nations'](/wiki/Home_Nations) associations, the FAI was recognised by [FIFA](/wiki/FIFA) in 1923 and organised its first international fixture in 1926 (against [Italy](/wiki/Italy_national_football_team)). However, both the IFA and FAI continued to select their teams from the whole of Ireland, with some players earning international caps for matches with both teams. Both also referred to their respective teams as *Ireland*.

[thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Paul_O'Connell_Ireland_Rugby.jpg)[Paul O'Connell](/wiki/Paul_O'Connell) reaching for the ball during a [line out](/wiki/Line-out_(rugby_union)) against [Argentina](/wiki/Argentina_national_rugby_union_team) in 2007. In 1950, FIFA directed the associations only to select players from within their respective territories and, in 1953, directed that the FAI's team be known only as "[Republic of Ireland](/wiki/Republic_of_Ireland_national_football_team)" and that the IFA's team be known as "[Northern Ireland](/wiki/Northern_Ireland_national_football_team)" (with certain exceptions). Northern Ireland qualified for the [World Cup](/wiki/FIFA_World_Cup) finals in [1958](/wiki/1958_FIFA_World_Cup) (reaching the quarter-finals), [1982](/wiki/1982_FIFA_World_Cup) and [1986](/wiki/1986_FIFA_World_Cup). The Republic qualified for the World Cup finals in [1990](/wiki/1990_FIFA_World_Cup) (reaching the quarter-finals), [1994](/wiki/1994_FIFA_World_Cup), [2002](/wiki/2002_FIFA_World_Cup) and the [European Championships](/wiki/UEFA_European_Championship) in [1988](/wiki/UEFA_Euro_1988) and [2012](/wiki/UEFA_Euro_2012). Across Ireland, there is significant interest in the [English](/wiki/Premier_League) and, to a lesser extent, [Scottish](/wiki/Scottish_Premier_League) soccer leagues.

Unlike soccer, Ireland continues to field a single [national rugby team](/wiki/Ireland_national_rugby_union_team) and a single association, the [Irish Rugby Football Union](/wiki/Irish_Rugby_Football_Union) (IRFU), governs the sport across the island. The Irish rugby team have played in every [Rugby World Cup](/wiki/Rugby_World_Cup), making the quarter-finals in four of them. Ireland also hosted games during the [1991](/wiki/1991_Rugby_World_Cup) and the [1999 Rugby World Cups](/wiki/1999_Rugby_World_Cup) (including a quarter-final). There are four professional Irish teams; all four play in the [Magners League](/wiki/Magners_League) (now called the RaboDirect Pro12) and at least three compete for the [Heineken Cup](/wiki/Heineken_Cup). Irish rugby has become increasingly competitive at both the international and provincial levels since the sport went professional in 1994. During that time, [Ulster](/wiki/Ulster_Rugby) ([1999](/wiki/1998–99_Heineken_Cup)),[[159]](#cite_note-159) [Munster](/wiki/Munster_Rugby) ([2006](/wiki/2005–06_Heineken_Cup)[[160]](#cite_note-160) and [2008](/wiki/2007-08_Heineken_Cup))[[159]](#cite_note-159) and [Leinster](/wiki/Leinster_Rugby) ([2009](/wiki/2008–09_Heineken_Cup), [2011](/wiki/2010–11_Heineken_Cup) and [2012](/wiki/2011–12_Heineken_Cup))[[159]](#cite_note-159) have won the Heineken Cup. In addition to this, the Irish International side has had increased success in the [Six Nations Championship](/wiki/Six_Nations_Championship) against the other European elite sides. This success, including [Triple Crowns](/wiki/Triple_Crown_(rugby_union)) in 2004, 2006 and 2007, culminated with a clean sweep of victories, known as a [Grand Slam](/wiki/Grand_Slam_(rugby_union)), in 2009.[[161]](#cite_note-161)

#### Other sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Irl-Sligo_horse_racing.jpg)[Horse racing](/wiki/Horse_racing) in [Sligo](/wiki/Sligo) [Horse racing](/wiki/Horse_racing) and [greyhound racing](/wiki/Greyhound_racing) are both popular in Ireland. There are frequent horse race meetings and greyhound stadiums are well-attended. The island is noted for the breeding and training of race horses and is also a large exporter of racing dogs.[[162]](#cite_note-162) The horse racing sector is largely concentrated in the [County Kildare](/wiki/County_Kildare).[[163]](#cite_note-163) Irish athletics has seen a heightened success rate since the year 2000, with [Sonia O'Sullivan](/wiki/Sonia_O'Sullivan) winning two medals at 5,000 metres on the track; gold at the 1995 [World Championships](/wiki/IAAF_World_Championships_in_Athletics) and silver at the [2000 Sydney Olympics](/wiki/2000_Summer_Olympics). [Gillian O'Sullivan](/wiki/Gillian_O'Sullivan) won silver in the 20k walk at the 2003 World Championships, while sprint hurdler [Derval O'Rourke](/wiki/Derval_O'Rourke) won gold at the 2006 World Indoor Championship in [Moscow](/wiki/Moscow). Olive Loughnane won a silver medal in the 20k walk in the World Athletics Championships in Berlin in 2009.

Ireland has won more medals in boxing than in any other Olympic sport. Boxing is governed by the [Irish Amateur Boxing Association](/wiki/Irish_Amateur_Boxing_Association). [Michael Carruth](/wiki/Michael_Carruth) won a [gold medal](/wiki/Gold_medal) and [Wayne McCullough](/wiki/Wayne_McCullough) won a [silver medal](/wiki/Silver_medal) in the [Barcelona Olympic Games](/wiki/1992_Summer_Olympics) and in 2008 Kenneth Egan won a silver medal in the Beijing Games.[[164]](#cite_note-164) [Paddy Barnes](/wiki/Paddy_Barnes) secured bronze in those games and gold in the [2010 European Amateur Boxing Championships](/wiki/2010_European_Amateur_Boxing_Championships) (where Ireland came 2nd in the overall medal table) and [2010 Commonwealth Games](/wiki/2010_Commonwealth_Games). [Katie Taylor](/wiki/Katie_Taylor) has won gold in every European and World championship since 2005. In August 2012 at the Olympic Games in London Katie Taylor created history by becoming the first Irish woman to win a gold medal in boxing in the 60 kg lightweight.[[165]](#cite_note-165) Golf is very popular and golf tourism is a major industry attracting more than 240,000 golfing visitors annually.[[166]](#cite_note-166) The [2006](/wiki/2006_Ryder_Cup) [Ryder Cup](/wiki/Ryder_Cup) was held at [The K Club](/wiki/The_Kildare_Hotel_and_Golf_Club) in [County Kildare](/wiki/County_Kildare).[[167]](#cite_note-167) [Pádraig Harrington](/wiki/Pádraig_Harrington) became the first Irishman since [Fred Daly](/wiki/Fred_Daly_(golfer)) in 1947 to win the [British Open](/wiki/The_Open_Championship) at [Carnoustie](/wiki/Carnoustie) in July 2007.[[168]](#cite_note-168) He successfully defended his title in July 2008[[169]](#cite_note-169) before going on to win the [PGA Championship](/wiki/PGA_Championship) in August.[[170]](#cite_note-170) Harrington became the first European to win the PGA Championship in 78 years and was the first winner from Ireland. Three golfers from Northern Ireland have been particularly successful. In 2010, [Graeme McDowell](/wiki/Graeme_McDowell) became the first Irish golfer to win the [U.S. Open](/wiki/U.S._Open_(golf)), and the first European to win that tournament since 1970. [Rory McIlroy](/wiki/Rory_McIlroy), at the age of 22, won the 2011 U.S. Open, while [Darren Clarke's](/wiki/Darren_Clarke) latest victory was the [2011 Open Championship](/wiki/2011_Open_Championship) at Royal St. George's. In August 2012, McIlroy won his 2nd major championship by winning the USPGA Championship by a record margin of 8 shots.

#### Recreation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]

The west coast of Ireland, [Lahinch](/wiki/Lahinch) and [Donegal Bay](/wiki/Donegal_Bay) in particular, have popular surfing beaches, being fully exposed to the [Atlantic Ocean](/wiki/Atlantic_Ocean). Donegal Bay is shaped like a funnel and catches west/south-west Atlantic winds, creating good surf, especially in winter. Since just before the year 2010, [Bundoran](/wiki/Bundoran) has hosted European championship surfing. [Scuba diving](/wiki/Scuba_diving) is increasingly popular in Ireland with clear waters and large populations of sea life, particularly along the western seaboard. There are also many shipwrecks along the coast of Ireland, with some of the best [wreck dives](/wiki/Wreck_dives) being in [Malin Head](/wiki/Malin_Head) and off the [County Cork](/wiki/County_Cork) coast.[[171]](#cite_note-171) With thousands of lakes, over [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of fish bearing rivers and over [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of coastline, Ireland is a popular [angling](/wiki/Angling) destination. The temperate Irish climate is suited to sport angling. While [salmon](/wiki/Salmon) and [trout](/wiki/Trout) fishing remain popular with anglers, salmon fishing in particular received a boost in 2006 with the closing of the salmon driftnet fishery. [Coarse fishing](/wiki/Coarse_fishing) continues to increase its profile. Sea angling is developed with many beaches mapped and signposted,[[172]](#cite_note-172) and the range of sea angling species is around 80.[[173]](#cite_note-173)

### Food and drink[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Cheese_61_bg_080106.jpg)[Gubbeen cheese](/wiki/Gubbeen_cheese), an example of the resurgence in Irish cheese making Food and cuisine in Ireland takes its influence from the [crops](/wiki/Crops) grown and animals farmed in the island's temperate climate and from the social and political circumstances of Irish history. For example, whilst from the Middle Ages until the arrival of the potato in the 16th century the dominant feature of the Irish economy was the herding of cattle, the number of cattle a person owned was equated to their social standing.[[174]](#cite_note-174) Thus herders would avoid slaughtering a milk-producing cow.[[174]](#cite_note-174) For this reason, pork and [white meat](/wiki/White_meat) were more common than beef and thick fatty strips of salted bacon (or [rashers](/wiki/Rashers)) and the eating of salted butter (i.e. a dairy product rather than beef itself) have been a central feature of the diet in Ireland since the Middle Ages.[[174]](#cite_note-174) The practice of bleeding cattle and mixing the blood with milk and butter (not unlike the practice of the [Maasai](/wiki/Maasai_people)) was common[[175]](#cite_note-175) and [black pudding](/wiki/Black_pudding), made from blood, grain (usually barley) and seasoning, remains a breakfast staple in Ireland. All of these influences can be seen today in the phenomenon of the "[breakfast roll](/wiki/Breakfast_roll)".

The introduction of the [potato](/wiki/Potato) in the second half of the 16th century heavily influenced cuisine thereafter. Great poverty encouraged a subsistence approach to food and by the mid-19th century the vast majority of the population sufficed with a diet of potatoes and milk.[[176]](#cite_note-176) A typical family, consisting of a man, a woman and four children, would eat [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of potatoes a week.[[174]](#cite_note-174) Consequently, dishes that are considered as national dishes represent a fundamental unsophistication to cooking, such as the [Irish stew](/wiki/Irish_stew), [bacon and cabbage](/wiki/Bacon_and_cabbage), [boxty](/wiki/Boxty), a type of potato pancake, or [colcannon](/wiki/Colcannon), a dish of [mashed potatoes](/wiki/Mashed_potatoes) and [kale](/wiki/Kale) or [cabbage](/wiki/Cabbage).[[174]](#cite_note-174) Since the last quarter of the 20th century, with a re-emergence of wealth in Ireland, a "New Irish Cuisine" based on traditional ingredients incorporating international influences[[177]](#cite_note-177) has emerged.[[178]](#cite_note-178) This cuisine is based on fresh vegetables, fish (especially [salmon](/wiki/Salmon), [trout](/wiki/Trout), [oysters](/wiki/Oyster), [mussels](/wiki/Mussel) and other shellfish), as well as traditional soda breads and the wide range of hand-made [cheeses](/wiki/List_of_Irish_cheeses) that are now being produced across the country. The potato remains however a fundamental feature of this cuisine and the Irish remain the highest per capita[[174]](#cite_note-174) consumers of potatoes in Europe. An example of this new cuisine is "Dublin Lawyer": lobster cooked in whiskey and cream.[[179]](#cite_note-179) Traditional regional foods can be found throughout the country, for example [coddle](/wiki/Coddle) in Dublin or [drisheen](/wiki/Drisheen) in Cork, both a type of sausage, or [blaa](/wiki/Blaa), a doughy white bread particular to [Waterford](/wiki/Waterford).

[thumb|The](/wiki/File:Distillerie_OldBushmills.jpg) [Old Bushmills Distillery](/wiki/Old_Bushmills_Distillery) in [County Antrim](/wiki/County_Antrim)

Ireland once dominated the world's market for [whiskey](/wiki/Whiskey), producing 90% of the world's whiskey at the start of the 20th century. However, as a consequence of bootleggers during the [prohibition in the United States](/wiki/Prohibition_in_the_United_States) (who sold poor-quality whiskey bearing Irish-sounding names thus eroding the pre-prohibition popularity for Irish brands)[[180]](#cite_note-180) and [tariffs](/wiki/Tariffs) on Irish whiskey across the [British Empire](/wiki/British_Empire) during the [Anglo-Irish Trade War](/wiki/Anglo-Irish_Trade_War) of the 1930s,[[181]](#cite_note-181) sales of Irish whiskey worldwide fell to a mere 2% by the mid-20th century.[[182]](#cite_note-182) In 1953, an Irish government survey, found that 50 per cent of whiskey drinkers in the United States had never heard of [Irish whiskey](/wiki/Irish_whiskey).[[183]](#cite_note-183) Irish whiskey, as researched in 2009 by the CNBC American broadcaster, remains popular domestically and has grown in international sales steadily over a few decades.[[184]](#cite_note-184) Typically CNBC states Irish whiskey is not as smoky as a [Scotch whisky](/wiki/Scotch_whisky), but not as sweet as [American](/wiki/American_whiskey) or [Canadian](/wiki/Canadian_whiskey) whiskies.[[184]](#cite_note-184) Whiskey forms the basis of traditional [cream liqueurs](/wiki/Irish_Cream), such as [Baileys](/wiki/Baileys_Irish_Cream), and the "[Irish coffee](/wiki/Irish_coffee)" (a [cocktail](/wiki/Cocktail) of coffee and whiskey reputedly invented at [Foynes flying-boat station](/wiki/Foynes)) is probably the best-known Irish cocktail.

[Stout](/wiki/Porter_(beer)), a kind of [porter beer](/wiki/Porter_beer), particularly [Guinness](/wiki/Guinness), is typically associated with Ireland, although historically it was more closely associated with [London](/wiki/London). Porter remains very popular, although it has lost sales since the mid-20th century to [lager](/wiki/Lager). [Cider](/wiki/Cider), particularly [*Magners*](/wiki/Magners) (marketed in the [Republic of Ireland](/wiki/Republic_of_Ireland) as *Bulmers*), is also a popular drink. [Red lemonade](/wiki/Red_lemonade), a soft-drink, is consumed on its own and as a mixer, particularly with whiskey.[[185]](#cite_note-185)

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=34)]

[Template:Portal](/wiki/Template:Portal)

* [Outline of Ireland](/wiki/Outline_of_Ireland)
* [Irish states since 1171](/wiki/Irish_states_since_1171)
* [List of divided islands](/wiki/List_of_divided_islands)
* [List of Ireland-related topics](/wiki/List_of_Ireland-related_topics)
* [List of islands of Ireland](/wiki/List_of_islands_of_Ireland)

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=35)]

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## Bibliography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=37)]

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* [Template:Wikiatlas](/wiki/Template:Wikiatlas)
* [Government of Ireland](http://www.gov.ie/)
* [Northern Ireland Executive](http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/)

[Template:Ireland topics](/wiki/Template:Ireland_topics) [Template:Celtic nations](/wiki/Template:Celtic_nations) [Template:British Isles](/wiki/Template:British_Isles)

[Template:Good article](/wiki/Template:Good_article)

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