

# THE “IRISH QUESTION”

## (A SHORT HISTORY)

*Irish Question* is a phrase used mainly by members of the British ruling classes from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century until the 1920s to describe Irish nationalism and the calls for Irish independence. It is a complex problem that dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century and is still unresolved.



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**8. ... to BREXIT  
in IRELAND today.**



# 1. From the ORIGINS to the 10th CENTURY



# 0. Ireland in ancient times...

- **6000 BC:** the first settlement of Ireland took place by hunters and fishermen along the island's eastern coast.
- **4000 BC:** the first farmers reached the island and started growing crops.
- **3200 BC:** an exceptionally grand passage tomb, Newgrange, was built which is older than Stonehenge and the Pyramids.
- **300 BC:** Iron Age warriors known as the Celts came to Ireland from mainland Europe and subdued the previous inhabitants.

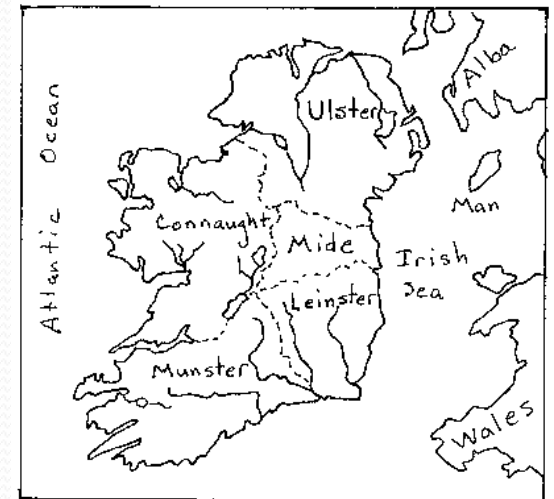




# ...& in the old days!



The Celts forged the culture and the language of Ireland: the country's name, **Éire**, derives from a Celtic goddess, **Ériu**.



- **50 BC - 50 AD:** the island was organised into five kingdoms, the traditional “*Five Fifths of Ireland*”.
- **400 AD:** seven independent kingdoms had evolved. Their kings often allied their armies to raid neighbouring Roman Britain and the Continent.

# The 5<sup>th</sup> century: St. Patrick.

- On one of these raids a lad of 16 was captured in Wales, taken to Ireland and sold into slavery.
- During his enslavement the boy turned to religion and some six years later, at the age of 22, he escaped.
- The young man studied theology in the Roman church and in 432 A.D. he returned to Ireland where he began a lifelong quest of converting the Irish to Christianity.
- This was none other than Ireland's patron, **Saint Patrick** (ca. 387-460).



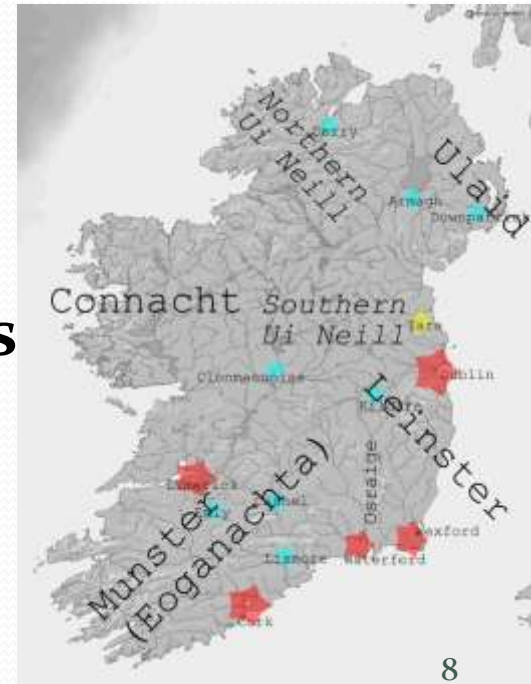
# From the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

- Christianity took over the indigenous pagan religion by the year 600 AD.
- Irish Christian scholars excelled in the study of Latin, Greek and Christian theology in monasteries throughout Ireland.
- The arts of **manuscript illumination**, **metalworking** and **sculpture** flourished and produced such treasures as **the Book of Kells**, ornate jewellery, and the many carved stone crosses that can still be seen across the country.



# The 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries.

- In the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, Ireland came under fierce attacks from **the Vikings** and monasteries suffered great atrocities at the hands of these aggressors.
- The Vikings founded, Dublin, Ireland's capital city in 988 but their influence faded after their **defeat by Brian Boru**, the High King of Ireland, at Clontarf in 1014.
- In 1152 the **four ecclesiastical provinces** (Ulster, Leinster, Munster, Connaught) were created with both Celtic and Viking elements which also formed a united Church.







## 2. From the MIDDLE AGES to the 17th CENTURY



# 1. From the 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> c. ...



- After conquering England **the Normans** set their sights on Ireland: they arrived in **1169** during the reign of **Henry II** (1154–1189) when Dermot MacMurrough, King of Leinster, solicited Henry's help to recover his kingdom from the King of Connaught.
- Henry landed at Waterford and declared himself Lord of Ireland with pope Adrian IV's support.
- At first England was too busy with her own wars to mind Irish affairs, though: the Normans built walled towns, castles and churches, increased agriculture and commerce in Ireland and adopted Irish ways.

# ... through the 13<sup>th</sup>– 15<sup>th</sup> c. ...

- The English did NOT rule over the whole country: in fact they fought against the Irish constantly and after the Black Death of the late 1300s, English territory was reduced to the Greater Dublin area (The Pale).



- In Tudor times **Henry VIII** (1509–1547) made sure that the Irish Parliament declared him **King of Ireland** in **1541** and tried to impose his religious reformation too.

His interference in religious matters proved a mistake and resulted in problems for both countries.



# ...to the 16<sup>th</sup> century.



- The violent extremes of **Edward VI** (1547-1553) and of his half-sister **Mary I** (1553-1558), known as *Bloody Mary*, made the situation even worse.



- As for **Elizabeth I** (1587-1603), she soon realized that the friendship between Ireland and Catholic Spain might enable the latter to use the island as a base to attack England. To prevent this danger, she then colonized all the south with Englishmen, who were given land for settlement (**plantation** policy).



- Under **James I** (1603-1625) thousands of Protestant Scots settled in Ulster to escape the king's rule.





## 2. From the early 17<sup>th</sup> c. ...



- In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, during the conflict between King and Parliament, Catholic Ireland supported **Charles I** (1625-1649) against **Oliver Cromwell**, but it was defeated and severely punished.
- Besides the tragic massacres carried out by Cromwell's Ironsides (1649-50), most of the country was handed over to Protestant settlers: thus **Ireland** became a colony, **the first English colony**. The hatred between colonized and colonizers was increased by the difference in their religions. From that time on, **religion and politics** became the **two inseparable aspects of the Anglo-Irish conflict**.



# ... to the late 17<sup>th</sup> century.



- There seemed to be some hope for Irish Catholics in 1689, when the deposed **James II** (1685-1689), a convert to Catholicism, landed in Ireland to claim his throne, but in

1690 he was defeated in the battle of the Boyne by his Protestant successor **William III** (1688-1702).



- Though they had been promised fair treatment after the defeat, the Irish were actually oppressed by humiliating restrictions: the ***Penal Laws***, passed by a Protestant Parliament in Dublin in 1695, turned them into virtual slaves.
  - ❑ They were **excluded from political life**.
  - ❑ They were **forbidden higher education**.
  - ❑ They were **denied the right to take leases or own land** above a certain value.
- Ireland's economy began to decline and people had to emigrate.



# 3. The 18th & the 19th CENTURIES





### 3. From *the croppies*...

- In **1798** a serious rebellion, known as the **United Irishmen Rebellion**, broke out: the uprising lasted several months and was directed against British rule in Ireland.
- Influenced by the ideas of the American and French revolutions, the rebels were known as “**croppies**”, from their closely cropped hair, a fashion which was associated with the anti-wig (and, therefore, anti-aristocrat) French revolutionaries of the period.
- Suspected United Irish sympathizers were often subjected to torture by flogging, picketing and half-hanging: **pitch capping**, in particular, was a form of torture invented to intimidate them.
- It was possibly the most concentrated outbreak of violence in Irish history, and resulted in **thousands of deaths over the course of three months**.





## ... to Daniel O'Connell.

- In fact, despite attempts at help from the French the rebellion failed and in **1801 the Act of Union** was passed uniting Ireland politically with Britain.
- In **1829** one of Ireland's greatest leaders **Daniel O'Connell** (1775 – 1847), known as '*the Great Liberator*' was central in getting **the Relief Act** passed in parliament in London by which the total ban on voting by Catholics was lifted and they could now also become Members of the Parliament in London.
- After this success O'Connell aimed to cancel the Act of Union and re-establish an Irish parliament. However, this was a much bigger task and his approach of non-violence was not supported by all.
- Such political issues were overshadowed however by the worst disaster and tragedy in Irish history: the great famine.



# 1845-52: the Great Famine

- The **Great Famine** was a period of **mass starvation**, disease and emigration which took place between 1845 and 1852: it was **caused by** a potato disease commonly known as **potato blight**.



- The impact and human cost in Ireland, where 1/3 of the population was entirely dependent on the potato for food, was made worse by the **trade agreements** controlled by London which **forced Ireland to export abundant harvests of wheat and dairy products** to Britain and overseas.
- About **one million people died** and **one million more emigrated from Ireland**, causing the island's population to fall by between 20% and 25%.

## 4. Charles Parnell.



- **Charles Stewart Parnell** (1846 – 1891), an Irish landowner, founded the Irish Parliamentary Party and was its leader **between 1875 and 1890**, when the party split following revelations of Parnell's private life which intruded on his political career.

- An enigmatic but charismatic personality, he created single-handedly the first modern disciplined political party machine, held together all strands of Irish nationalism and harnessed Irish-America into the Irish cause. He even converted the British P. M. W. Gladstone (1809 – 1898) to Irish Home Rule.
- Parnell is commemorated on **the first Sunday** after the anniversary of his death on **October 6**, known as “**Ivy Day**”.





## 4. The EARLY 20th CENTURY





## 5. The early 20<sup>th</sup> c.: 1914


- On 18<sup>th</sup> September 1914 the **Government of Ireland Act** was passed by Parliament to provide *home rule* for Ireland within the UK.
- However, with the outbreak of the First World War, it was formally **postponed for a minimum of 12 months**: Britain couldn't afford to go into war without the Irish to the point that, in March 1915, conscription became a serious threat.
- The Armistice ended the Great War on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918 so that the military draft bill was never implemented.
- Nevertheless subsequent developments in Ireland led to further postponements of the Act till it was finally repealed in 1920.

## 6. From 1916...



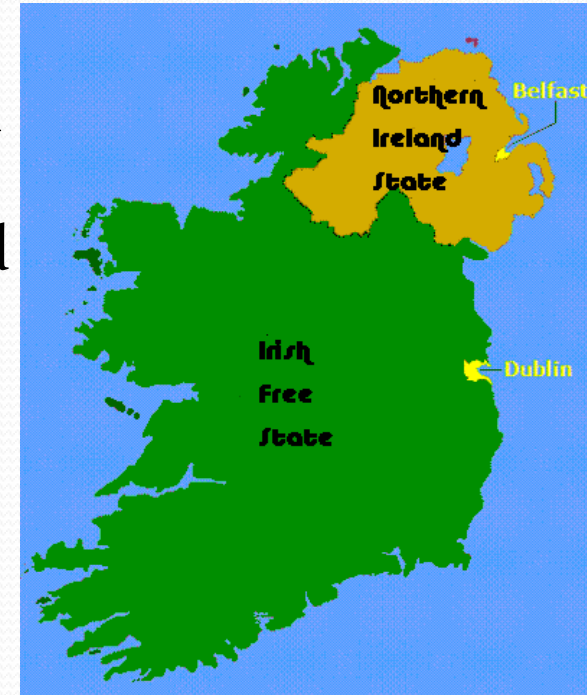
- In 1916 the **Easter Rising** took place: it was mounted by Irish republicans with the aims of ending British rule in Ireland as well as establishing the Irish Republic.
- The Rising lasted from Easter Monday, **24<sup>th</sup> April**, to **30<sup>th</sup> April** 1916. Members of the *Irish Volunteers*, led by schoolteacher and barrister **Patrick Pearse**, were joined by the smaller *Irish Citizen Army* of **James Connolly** and 200 members of *Cumann na mBan*, i.e. The League of Women. Together they seized key locations in Dublin and proclaimed the Irish Republic independent of Britain.
- The Rising was suppressed after seven days of fighting, and its **leaders were court-martialled and executed**, but it succeeded in bringing physical force republicanism back to the forefront of Irish politics.

... to 1919.

- In the **1918** General Election to the British Parliament, republicans (then represented by the **Sinn Féin** party, Irish for *we ourselves*, founded in 1905) won 73 seats out of 105: theirs was a policy of abstentionism and Irish independence.
- In January **1919**, the elected members of  who were not still in prison at the time, including survivors of the Rising, convened **the First Dáil**, i.e. a unicameral, revolutionary parliament which refused to recognise the Parliament of the United Kingdom, and established the Irish Republic.
- The British Government in turn refused to accept the legitimacy of the newly declared nation, precipitating the **Anglo – Irish War** (also known as the Irish War of Independence).

# 7. 1919-1921: the Anglo-Irish War....

- The **Irish War of Independence** was a guerrilla war mounted by **the Irish Republican Army (IRA)** against **the British government** and its forces in January **1919**, following the Irish Republic's declaration of independence. Both sides agreed to a truce in July 1921, but violence continued in the northeast (mostly between republicans and loyalists).
- The post-ceasefire talks led to the Anglo-Irish Treaty on 6<sup>th</sup> December **1921**, which ended British rule in most of Ireland and established the **Irish Free State**, a self-governing dominion of 26 counties, which replaced the Irish Republic.
- Six **northern counties** of Ulster, one of the four provinces of Ireland, **would**, however, remain within the United Kingdom as **Northern Ireland**.





# ... & 1922-1923: the Irish Civil War.

- A division of opinion immediately led to the **Irish Civil War (1922 to 1923)** between pro and anti treaty forces, with
  - **Michael Collins**, one of the key leaders in the War of Independence, **pro-treaty**;
  - **Éamon de Valera**, who had led the Sinn Fein party in the successful elections of 1918, **anti-treaty**.
- The war was won by the former and its consequences can be seen to this day since the two largest political parties in Ireland have their roots in the opposing sides of the time:
  - **Fine Gael** (pro-treaty)
  - **Fianna Fáil** (anti-treaty).
- A period of political stability followed the Civil War.





## 8. From 1937 to 1949.

- **1937**: the Irish Free State came to an end when the citizens voted by **referendum** to replace the 1922 constitution. It was succeeded by the **modern state of Ireland**, an entirely sovereign state with a new constitution.

- **1940-45**: in World War II, the Irish Free State remained neutral while Northern Ireland took part in the fighting.
- **1949**: the last formal link with the United Kingdom was severed when the Oireachtas (national parliament) passed the **Republic of Ireland Act**.

Nevertheless the Irish question has remained alive throughout the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century...



## 5. From the MID to the LATE 20th CENTURY



# 9. The Troubles.

In **Northern Ireland** the Parliament consisted of a majority of Protestants and while there was **relative stability for decades** this was to come to **an end** in the late 1960s **due to systematic discrimination against the Catholics**, seen as a **threat**. The **first civil rights marches** were organized and they led to violent reactions.

- **1969: *The Troubles*** began, a period in which nationalist/republican and loyalist/unionist groups clashed. British troops were sent to Ireland permanently.

It is estimated that ***between 1969 and 1998*** over 3000 **people were killed by paramilitary groups on opposing sides of the conflict.**

- **1971:** measures like *internment without trial* were introduced



# 10. Bloody Sunday.

- On 30<sup>th</sup> January 1972 in the Bogside area of Derry, **14 unarmed civil rights protesters** and bystanders (including **7 teenagers** and **3 pregnant women**) were **shot** by members of the British Army, soldiers of the First Battalion of the Parachute Regiment.
- The incident occurred during a Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association march organized to protest against the continuation of *internment without trial*. It became known as ***Bloody Sunday***.
- The event caused shock and revulsion at an international level: within Ireland the killings resulted in a dramatic increase in support for Republicanism in general and the IRA in particular.



# 10. *“unjustified and unjustifiable”.*

- Two **investigations** were held by the British Government:
  1. the Widgery Tribunal, held immediately after the event, largely cleared the soldiers and British authorities of blame;
  2. the Saville Inquiry, chaired by Lord Saville of Newdigate, established in 1998 to reinvestigate the events, lasted twelve years. Saville’s report was made public on **15<sup>th</sup> June 2010**, and re-opened the controversy: the report found that all of those shot were unarmed.
- On the publication of the Saville report **the British PM, David Cameron, made a formal apology on behalf of the UK** stating that **the killings were both** *“unjustified and unjustifiable”*.



# 11. The late 20<sup>th</sup> c.: 1973 - 1981

- **1973: Ireland joined the E.U.** (European Union, then called EEC, European Economic Community).
- **1974:** the proposal for an executive formed by Protestants and Catholics together failed.
- **1979: Lord Louis Mountbatten**, the Queen's cousin, was killed by a bomb blast on his boat in Ireland.
- **1981 (5<sup>th</sup> May): Bobby Sands**, an Irish volunteer of the Provisional Irish Republican Army and member of the British Parliament, **died on hunger strike** while imprisoned in HM Prison Maze. Following his example republican prisoners joined the strike at staggered intervals to maximise publicity.



# Bobby Sand's example.

- The hunger strike centred around five demands:
  - ❑ the right not to wear a prison uniform;
  - ❑ the right not to do prison work;
  - ❑ the right of free association with other prisoners and to organize educational and recreational pursuits;
  - ❑ the right to one visit, one letter and one parcel per week;
  - ❑ full restoration of remission lost through the protest.
- The prisoners' aim was to be recognised as *political prisoners* (or prisoners of war) and not to be classed as criminals.





# 12. The Enniskillen bombing.

- On 8<sup>th</sup> November 1987 the Remembrance Day bombing (also known as the Enniskillen bombing or Poppy Day massacre) took place in Enniskillen, Northern Ireland.
- **11 people were killed** when a Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) bomb exploded at the town's war memorial (cenotaph) during a Remembrance Sunday ceremony, held to commemorate the contribution of British and Commonwealth military and civilian servicemen and women in the two World Wars and later conflicts.
- The bombing was described by the BBC as a turning point in *The Troubles* and an attack that shook the IRA “to its core”.



## 13. 1994 – 1996

- **1994:** the IRA proclaimed a ceasefire and the Irish Peace Process was set in motion with “talks” between



the British **Prime Minister John Major**  
and  
the Irish **Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams.**



- **1996 (February):** the IRA called off its ceasefire and one hour later set off a bomb at South Quay which injured 100 people and caused millions of pounds' worth of damage...

# 14. 1998: the Belfast Agreement.



- On 10<sup>th</sup> April 1998 the **Belfast Agreement** (or the **Good Friday Agreement**) was signed in Belfast by the Irish and the British governments through their P.M.s **Bertie Ahern** and **Tony Blair**: it was a major political development in the Northern Ireland peace process.

- It established the Northern Ireland Assembly with devolved legislative powers and marked a de-escalation of violence in *The Troubles*, the period of ethno-political conflict conventionally dated from the late 1960s. It also committed its participants:
  - ❑ to *partnership, equality and mutual respect between these islands*;
  - ❑ to use *exclusively democratic and peaceful means of resolving differences on political issues*;
  - ❑ to *oppose any use or threat of force by others for any political purpose*.

# 15. The Omagh bombing.

- On 15<sup>th</sup> August 1998 the **Omagh bombing** took place: the paramilitary car bomb attack was carried out by the Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA), a splinter group of former Provisional Irish Republican Army members opposed to the Belfast Agreement. **29 people died** as a result of the attack and about **220 people** were injured.
- Described as *Northern Ireland's worst single terrorist atrocity, an appalling act of savagery*, it made victims among both Protestants and Catholics, teenagers and children, natives and tourists.
- The nature of the bombing created a strong international and local outcry against the RIRA, which later apologised.







## 6. The EARLY 21st CENTURY



# 16. From 2000 ...

- Violence continued, though on a sporadic basis:
  1. **3<sup>rd</sup> August 2001: the Ealing bombing** – a Real IRA car bomb **injured 7 civilians** in Ealing, west London;
  2. **12<sup>th</sup> July 2005: police** were **attacked** with blast and petrol bombs during rioting in an area of Belfast, following an ***Orange Order*** parade. **80 police officers** were **injured** and several people were arrested;



3. **25<sup>th</sup> February 2006: the Dublin riots.** A unionist demonstration was to take place down O'Connell Street but counter-demonstrators blocked the route of the proposed march. **14 people**, including journalists and photographers, were **hospitalised** and **41 people** were arrested;

# ... through 2009-12...

4. **7<sup>th</sup> March 2009: two British Army soldiers were shot dead** and two more seriously injured during a Real IRA gun attack. Two days later a **police officer was shot dead** by the Continuity IRA;
5. **February – October 2010: car bomb attacks** were organised by the RIRA throughout the year;
6. **June – July 2011: the Northern Ireland riots** took place. Scores of youths attacked police in an expression of rage over an Orange Order parade in north Belfast, throwing stones, golf balls, gasoline bombs and fireworks at police.
7. **1<sup>st</sup> November 2012: a prison officer was shot and killed.** A new paramilitary group calling itself the “New IRA” claimed responsibility for the murder;





... to 2016.

8. **8<sup>th</sup> October 2013:** the same group claimed the callous and cold-blooded **murder of a 46-year-old man in north Belfast;**
  9. **June – October 2014:** a significant number of **bomb attacks** targeting police officers were foiled by police in various counties of NI;
  10. **April – June 2015:** numerous threats were made **to the lives of police officers** from dissident republicans;
  11. **4<sup>th</sup> March 2016:** another prison officer was murdered. The new IRA claimed responsibility for the killing. The victim was **the 32<sup>nd</sup> prison staff member to be murdered** in NI because of his job.
- These are only some of the many tragic events which occurred.







# 7. From the EASTER RISING CENTENARY (2016)...



# 17. 2016: the Easter Rising CENTENARY



- In 2016 the **centenary** of the Easter Rising was celebrated: many events were organised by the Irish government to mark the occasion, and included the circulation of **Ireland's first ever commemorative €2 coin**.
- The ceremony which took place on **Easter Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> March**, was the culmination of the commemorations: hundreds of thousands of people lined the streets of Dublin to take part in the largest military parade ever staged in the Republic of Ireland.
- Irish President Michael D. Higgins led the main ceremony on O'Connell Street as the Irish tricolour was lowered at the General Post Office (GPO), the building that was once the rebels' headquarters.

# IN DUBLIN...



- The **1916 Proclamation** was read out by an officer from the Irish defence forces, in a re-enactment of the declaration of independence the rebels made outside the GPO on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1916:

*“...In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty; six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms. Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, **we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a Sovereign Independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades in arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare, and of its exaltation among the nations...**”*

- Though the parade was inspired by “*an unshakable resolve to live together in harmony and peace*”...

## ... & IN BELFAST.

- ... a **separate service** was held in **West Belfast** on that Sunday to commemorate the death of **116 British soldiers** who were among the over 450 people **killed that Easter**.
- After a parade in Greyabbey, a wreath was laid on the grave of **Sandy McClelland**, of the Royal Irish Rifles, a teenager when he was killed. He thought he was on his way to the Western Front while in fact he found himself fighting against his fellow people from the same island.
- Senior unionist politicians were invited to the Irish government's official commemorations in Dublin on Sunday but, sadly, they declined to attend. Nevertheless, the UUP (Ulster Unionist Party) leader Mike Nesbitt said

*"From what I've seen of what has happened in Dublin today, I think **they have made a huge effort to be inclusive.**"*





# 18. From 2016 ...

- Violence never stopped but the episodes became less frequent:
  - 12. **22<sup>nd</sup> February 2017:** a **bomb exploded** outside the home of a serving police officer in Londonderry as Army experts tried to defuse it.
  - 13. **2<sup>nd</sup> April 2018:** petrol bombs and stones were thrown at police vehicles during an illegal dissident republican parade in Londonderry.
  - 14. **13<sup>th</sup> February 2018:** dissident republicans may have been behind the murder of a man in west Belfast, shot dead in front of his partner and an 11-year-old girl.
  - 15. **November 2018:** a stash of bullets and guns exploded after being left on top of a hot boiler at a house in west Belfast. Police blamed the New IRA.



... to 2019.

- 16. **January 2019: a bomb placed inside a van** exploded in the centre of Londonderry on a Saturday night. The attack seems to have been carried out by the New IRA.
- 17. **March 2019:** five small explosive packages were found at locations across Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland. The New IRA said it was behind the **letter bombs**.
- 18. **18<sup>th</sup> April 2019: a journalist was shot dead** while observing rioting in the Creggan area of Londonderry. Police blamed the 29-year-old's killing on dissident republicans.
- 19. **19<sup>th</sup> August 2019: a bomb exploded near Wattlebridge** in County Fermanagh. Police said it was an attempt to lure officers to their deaths and blamed Continuity IRA for the attack.
- Once again, these are only some of the events which occurred.

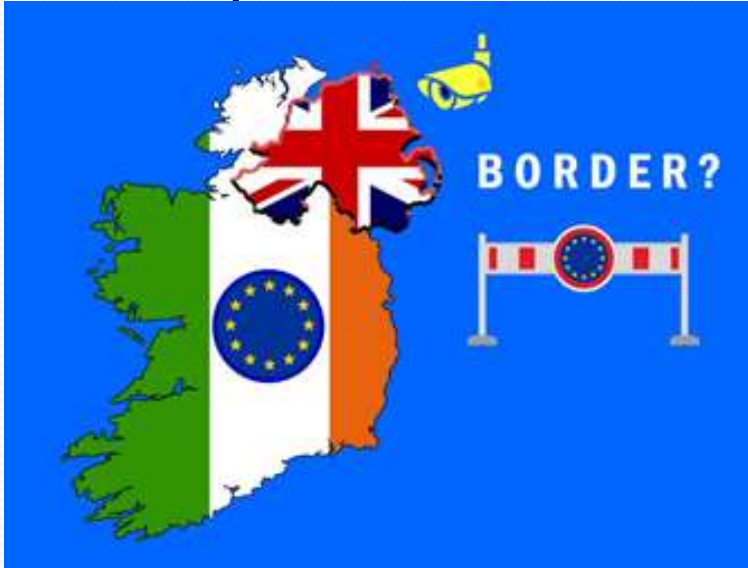


## 8. ... to BREXIT in IRELAND today.



# 19. 2016 – 2020: TOWARDS BREXIT

- When the United Kingdom decided to leave the European Union with the referendum of 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016, out of all the problems which had to be faced the most complicated one was probably that of the Irish border, which held up Brexit for over three years.
- The Republic of Ireland had no intention of leaving the EU, but it shares a border with Northern Ireland, which is part of Brexit and this created a big issue: how could the transition of goods crossing in and out of the EU be controlled? And what was going to happen on the Irish border?





# 20. 31.01.2020: IRELAND & BREXIT



- Fences and checkpoints on the border were the last thing people wanted after the years of *The Troubles* in which more than 3,600 people... so what was agreed?
  - ❑ **Northern Ireland** would be **outside** the EU while the **Republic of Ireland** would remain **inside**.
  - ❑ The UK and EU agreed this should **not** lead to **new checks or controls on goods crossing the border** between the two parts of Ireland.
  - ❑ To achieve this, **NI** would **continue to follow EU rules on agricultural and manufactured goods**, while the rest of the UK would not.
  - ❑ Additionally, the whole of the UK would leave the EU's customs union but **NI** would continue to enforce the **EU's customs code**.

# 1.02.2020 – 31.12.2020: THE TRANSITION PERIOD

- The UK went through an 11-month period, known as ***the transition***, which kept the UK bound to the EU's rules: the idea behind it was to give some breathing space while new UK-EU negotiations were taking place to determine what the future relationship would eventually look like.
- The operation of the whole withdrawal deal was overseen by a joint committee of the EU and UK but there was also a **specialised committee focusing solely on the Northern Ireland part of the deal** which was able to receive proposals from the north-south bodies set up under the Good Friday Agreement.



# 2021 onwards: CITIZENS' RIGHTS



- The situation today is as follows:
  - **people born in Northern Ireland** have the right to **Irish as well as British citizenship**. Those who exercise that right will retain their EU citizenship, something not available to people elsewhere in the UK who may have only British citizenship;
  - **people travelling on Irish passports** will be able to use **EU/EEA lanes and e-gates at airports**. Those with British passports will not. More fundamentally people with Irish passports **keep their right to freedom of movement within the EU**, which means they can **live, work and study in an EU country without a visa and with no time limit**. These rights extend to their spouses and dependent children;

# STUDYING & TRADE

- as regards students and studying abroad the UK will no longer be participating in Erasmus, the EU student exchange scheme. However, **students at Northern Ireland's universities will still be able to take part in Erasmus due to funding and administrative assistance from the Irish government;**
- new rules regarding trade were set out in the an agreement between the EU and the UK called **the Northern Ireland Protocol, which came into force on 1 January 2021.**



Thus certain goods, such as **meat, milk, fish and eggs**, need to be **checked** when **they enter Northern Ireland from Great Britain** but they can move across the border into the Republic of Ireland.



# 2022: an update

- After the full first year of U.K.-Irish trade following Brexit there has been an acceptance from both sides that there are **issues with the Protocol**:
  - the EU thinks they can be tweaked to work;
  - the UK is asking for the whole Protocol to be removed.
- Newly published figures confirm that **cross-border commerce is surging** on the island of Ireland, while imports from Britain have slumped.

Almost overnight it became easier for Dublin to order goods from Belfast than London, and likewise easier for Belfast to order goods from Dublin than London...

Irish Reunification Is Inevitable



**Brexit certainly seems to have given a boost to Irish unity!**