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# Éire sa Lá Inniu — Modern Ireland

## 5th & 6th Class SESE

### Modern Ireland — key turning points

1

#### The Celtic Tiger (c.1995–2007)

A period of extraordinary economic growth. Ireland transformed from one of Europe's poorest countries to one of the richest within a decade. Driven by foreign direct investment, EU membership, low corporation tax, and education.

*Example: GDP per capita rose from below EU average to above it*

2

#### The 2008 crash

Ireland's property bubble burst spectacularly. The banking system collapsed; the government guaranteed the banks, taking on enormous debt. IMF/EU bailout in 2010. Severe austerity for several years. One of the worst economic crashes in modern European history.

3

#### Immigration

Ireland went from a country of emigration to one of net immigration during the Celtic Tiger. By 2022, approximately 20% of Irish residents were born outside Ireland. Ireland is now a genuinely multicultural society.

4

#### The EU

Ireland joined the EEC (later EU) in 1973. EU membership has been transformative — structural funds, single market, freedom of movement. Ireland voted to remain in EU when the UK voted to leave (2016).

5

#### Same-sex marriage referendum (2015)

Ireland became the first country in the world to legalise same-sex marriage by popular vote. 62% voted Yes. A significant cultural moment in a country with a strong Catholic tradition.



6

**Ireland in 2024**

Population: 5.1 million. One of EU's fastest-growing economies. Significant debate about housing, immigration, and the future of rural communities.

