

THE WORLD AROUND US — HISTORY / PDMU · P6–P7

Comhaontú Aoine an Chéasta — The Good Friday Agreement

A Deeper Study — P6–P7

Key provisions and people

1

The Good Friday Agreement (GFA)

Signed 10 April 1998 (Good Friday). The peace agreement that largely ended the Troubles. Signed by the British and Irish governments and most NI political parties. Endorsed by referendum — 71% in NI, 94% in the Republic.

2

The power-sharing executive

A devolved government in which unionist and nationalist parties must share power. The First Minister and Deputy First Minister must be from the largest unionist and nationalist parties. Neither community can govern without the other.

3

The Northern Ireland Assembly

The devolved legislature at Stormont. 90 members elected by proportional representation. Has been suspended several times since 1998 — most recently 2022–2024 — when parties have failed to agree.

4

North-South bodies

Cross-border institutions allowing cooperation between the Republic and NI on matters of mutual interest (tourism, agriculture, EU programmes). Acceptable to nationalists as Irish dimension; acceptable to unionists as not threatening sovereignty.

5

Key people

John Hume (SDLP) and David Trimble (Ulster Unionists) won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1998. Mo Mowlam (UK Secretary of State) and US Senator George Mitchell (independent chair) were crucial in brokering the deal.



6

Ongoing tensions

The GFA has held overall but has faced serious challenges: the Troubles casefiles (prosecutions), Brexit and the Irish border, periodic assembly collapse. The peace is real but not settled.

