

THE WORLD AROUND US — HISTORY · P6/P7

# The Troubles — An Overview

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## The Troubles — a balanced overview

### 1 What were the Troubles?

A period of conflict in Northern Ireland from approximately 1968 to 1998. Over 3,500 people died and tens of thousands were injured. Affected communities across NI — and beyond.

### 2 The two sides

Unionists/Loyalists (mostly Protestant): wanted NI to remain in the UK.

Nationalists/Republicans (mostly Catholic): wanted a united Ireland. Most people on both sides were not violent — but armed groups on both sides carried out attacks.

### 3 Why did it begin?

In the 1960s, Catholics in NI faced discrimination in jobs, housing, and voting. The civil rights movement (inspired by the US civil rights movement) protested peacefully — but protests led to violence. The British army was sent in 1969 to restore order.

### 4 Key events

Bloody Sunday (1972) — 14 unarmed civilians killed in Derry. Hunger strikes (1981) — 10 Republican prisoners died. The Birmingham, Guildford, and Manchester bombings. Internment without trial. Many, many funerals on all sides.

### 5 The IRA, UVF, UDA

The main armed groups during the Troubles. The Provisional IRA (Republican). The Ulster Volunteer Force and Ulster Defence Association (Loyalist). All committed acts of violence — and all eventually agreed to ceasefires.



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**The peace process**

Long, difficult, with many setbacks. Key figures: John Hume, David Trimble, Gerry Adams, Ian Paisley, Tony Blair, Bertie Ahern, US Senator George Mitchell. Many years of secret and public negotiations.

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**The Good Friday Agreement (1998)**

The peace deal that effectively ended the Troubles. Voted on by people in both NI and the Republic. Created the Northern Ireland Assembly. Recognised that people in NI can be British, Irish, or both.

