

2022-2023 Academic year

Spring semester



Institut d'Études Politiques

Ireland : Beyond Borders

Instructors

Charlotte **RAULT**
Marie-Violaine **LOUVET**
Bairbre NI **CHIOSAIN**

Course description :

What do people refer to when they talk about "Ireland"? Do they mean "the Republic of Ireland" or the island as a whole, including Northern Ireland as if there were no border?

In fact, over the years, the Irish Border has become softer, all the more so that today its physical manifestation is difficult to discern. However, now that the UK is leaving the EU, its only main land border with another EU member-state is shared with the Republic of Ireland. After two decades of an open border, and cross-border peacebuilding, Brexit could destabilise the Irish peace-process and the Irish economy. If the deal still has to be delineated by Brexit negotiators, the Irish Border is now back in the limelight.

Starting from these recent political developments, this course is designed to question the notion of Border(s) and use it as a stepping-stone to better understand contemporary Ireland, assuming that even though it is an island, Ireland has always been open to the world. Until 1920, its political centre was in London, i.e. beyond the Irish sea; the partition of the island into two separate countries has shaped Irish politics North and South alike; the Irish diaspora has enabled the country to maintain economic and political ties with the US on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean; Ireland's entry into the EEC and its commitment to European integration has played an important role in the modernization of Irish politics, economy and society; more recently, for the first time in its history, Ireland became a country of inward migration, welcoming people from abroad attracted by the job prospects offered by the rapid economic growth of the Celtic Tiger.

The objective of this course is therefore to introduce students to contemporary Ireland and to deepen their understanding of Irish politics and society, both North and South of the Border, in order to equip them with a better understanding of the implications of a possible hardening of the Border in the context of Brexit.

The course is organised as follows:

Class 1: General introduction

This part is going to broach the main political events that marked Irish history since 1801, how the Irish people managed to progressively assert their sovereignty and how the Irish state developed; what Ireland and the Irish people look like today.

Class 2, 3, 4: Northern Ireland

This part focuses on the development of political violence in Northern Ireland and how the Good Friday Agreement ratified in 1998, the devolution process and European integration deeply transformed and normalised Northern Irish politics. Emphasis will also be laid on the current political institutions and most recent developments in Northern Irish politics.

Class 5, 6, 7: Ireland and European integration

This part aims to illustrate the complex relationship between Irish sovereignty and European integration. It focuses on the implications of entry into the EEC; how European integration greatly contributed to the Irish economic boom and social modernization; how the Irish people perceived European integration; what role the Single Market played in improving the relationship between the North and the South and what the implications of a hard Brexit could be.

Class 8, 9, 10: Immigration to Ireland

Over the past 25 years, the Irish population has reversed its downward trend, thanks to migration from the EU or from other countries. Be they workers or asylum-seekers, the arrival of migrants has had a deep impact on Irish society as a whole, forcing the development of an Irish migration policy and challenging the notion of Irish identity.

Assessment :

The final evaluation for this module will consist of an essay-type question (discuss a statement, outline the challenges of XXX, etc).

There will be topics covering all aspects of the module (Northern Ireland, Ireland and Europe, Ireland and Migration).