



The sixties (or long 1960s) has a reputation as a dynamic and vibrant period in which cultural, social and political norms were challenged around the world. The Republic of Ireland with its large rural base, a protected economy and a long history of emigration, had often failed to follow prevailing European patterns of economic and social development, and indeed had no experience of the economic miracles experienced in many post-war societies. From the 1950s, however, economic growth and planning became the central focus of Irish governments, heralding a new national project that involved opening up the economy, courting foreign capital and applying for membership of the European Economic Community. Irish society entered into a period of accelerated modernisation, and economic, social and cultural changes were increasingly internationalist in orientation. By analysing Irish society through a number of different lenses, including popular culture, religion, migration, and welfare, this course identifies changes and continuities in institutions, ideas and the lived experience of Irish people with consideration given to the ways in which gender, class and location affected Irish lives. In Northern Ireland, social, economic and cultural changes similarly had significant effects. The Civil Rights movement used the language and methods of international protest movements, and the course concludes with a focus on a range of protest movements that emerged on the island, with some consideration of the impact of Troubles. Throughout the module we will analyse how historians have assessed both the sixties and the Irish experience of it.