

SOU33122 — Understanding Social Change: The Case of Irish Society

Module Information	
Module Code	SOU33122
Module Title	Understanding Social Change: The Case of Irish Society
Department	Sociology
Year Group	Junior Sophister
Module Personnel	Dr Roderick Condon
Academic Year	2026-27
Credit Weighting	5 credits
Semester	Semester 2
Contact Hours	1 lecture per week; 1 tutorial per week

Module Content	
Module Description	This module explores key theories and concepts of social change with a specific focus on Irish society.
Module Learning Aims	For much of the 20th Century, Ireland lagged behind other states in Northern Europe in terms of economic development and average standard of living. Yet in the last decade of the 20th century Ireland's economic fortunes changed dramatically with the advent of the 'Celtic Tiger'. Ireland experienced rapid economic, social and cultural change over a short period of time that continues to unfold. Rapid population and demographic change and liberalization of social attitudes and values have all contributed to this change. Such changes have reinvigorated debates about what it means to be Irish, the values, lifestyles and identities associated with such changes and the institutional practices, occupational structures and the political priorities evident in Irish society. Yet there are continuities that can be traced back in Irish history that underpin and also help explain the dynamics of Irish society. This module utilizes theories of social change to explore what type of society Ireland is. It critically evaluates theories of development that have been used by academics and experts in Ireland to explain Ireland's conversion from a 'late modernizer' to a 'knowledge society'.

Module Content	
	Finally, it locates Ireland's societal change in the context of Europe and globally.
Learning Outcomes	On successful completion of this module students should be able to: • Discuss how sociologists have analysed the economic and social changes associated with Ireland's development; • Critically analyse changing patterns of migration, identity, work and lifestyle in terms of the key structural changes in Irish society; • Discuss the extent to which social and cultural change in Ireland is driven by processes of globalization.
Indicative Reading / Resources	The following texts are recommended: • P. Share, M. Corcoran and B. Conway. 2012. <i>Sociology of Ireland</i> (4th Ed) Dublin: IPA. • R. Meade and F. Dukelow 2015. (eds) <i>Defining Events: Power, Resistance and Identity in Twenty First Century Ireland</i>. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Assessment	
Assessment Components	Written Assignment (80%), Presentation (20%)
Assessment Details	

Additional Information	
Prerequisites	None
Co-requisites	None
Any other information	