

# Understanding Social Change: The Case of Irish Society | SOU33122

Year	Junior Sophister
ECTS Credits	5
Contact Hours	
Pre-requisite	None
Semester	2
Module Leader & Lecturer	
Contact Email	

## Module Outline:

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 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'. Finally, it locates Ireland's societal change in the context of Europe and globally.

## Learning Outcomes:

- Discuss how sociologists have analysed the economic and social changes associated with Ireland's social and economic 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.

## Assessment:

Presentations (20%) and end-of-term essay (80%).



## Recommended Reading List:

- Nolan, B, O'Connell, P.J and Whelan, C.T (2000) Bust to Boom? The Irish Experience of Growth and Inequality. Institute of Public Administration.
- Fahey, T, Russell, H. and Whelan, C.T. (Eds.) (2008) Quality of Life in Ireland: Social Impact of Economic Boom, Springer