



## Griffith College Dublin

### Contemporary Irish Politics and Economics

This module examines two related topics and explores them through lectures, seminars and a relevant field trip:

#### **a) Ireland and the European Union**

Ireland owes much of its economic success to its position within the European Union. This topic examines Ireland's unique relationship with Continental Europe where it remains the only English-Language Euro economy.

With the recent enlargement and the initiation of discussions with Turkey, European integration has entered the newest phase in what has been a remarkable journey towards the eradication of national sovereignty. The locus of decision-making in certain areas has shifted from national governments to a trans-national level while, in politically sensitive areas such as labour, social and health policy, decision-making has remained, for the time-being, with the member states. Students will gain an understanding of these and other current developments unfolding in Europe and of the impact of European policies on the wider world.

This course provides the basis to review and analyze the decision making processes of EU institutions and the member states. The topic examines a range of relevant subjects focusing on European wide politics and economics. The course also explores some of the social, economic and political factors relating to Ireland's position within the EU. Topics include an examination of the motives behind European Integration; the Treaty of Rome and subsequent Treaties; Monetary Union; the Politics and Economics of Enlargement; the Common Agricultural Policy; Regional Policies and Regional Differences and the European Court of Justice amongst others.

#### ***Sample Readings***

Baldwin, Richard and Wyplosz, Charles. *The Economics of European Integration* .

Bomberg, Elizabeth and Stubb, Alexander. *The European Union: How Does it Work?*

Nelsen, Brent F. and Stubb, Alexander, *The European Union. Readings on the Theory and Practice of European Integration.*

Wallace, Hellen and William, eds. *Policy-Making in the European Union.*

#### **b) The Celtic Tiger**

Irish culture is rapidly changing and expanding to include one of the youngest populations in Europe. Ireland has changed from a rural traditional religious society to a multi-ethnic secular predominantly urban society in less than twenty years. This change we call the Celtic Tiger. In an Irish context, economics is particularly interesting as the Irish economy went through a remarkable transformation in the 1990's and the "Celtic Tiger" attracted worldwide interest. The economy is a topic of interest to almost all Irish people and most approach this subject with lots

of ideas and opinions. It is a subject most people relate to and, in an Irish context, it is a subject that attracts a great deal of interest and debate. The Irish economy continues to grow and, with it, both the successes and challenges of an expanding society. This topic examines the social, cultural, political and economic effects of that transformation and the impact of this form of Globalization on Irish society.

Topics include the historical development of the Irish economy; the creation of wealth in Ireland in the 1990s; unemployment, inflation and economic growth - what caused them and why did they disappear?; National Income, GDP and other measures of economic well being in contemporary Ireland.; economic growth and development; the role of government in the Irish economy; the Irish economy as a classical case study of a small open economy; the social impact of the new economy; immigration & multiculturalism; the challenges for secularism.

### ***Sample Readings***

Coulter, Colin, (Ed) *The End of Irish History: Critical Approaches to the Celtic Tiger*

Clinch, Peter, et al. *After the Celtic Tiger: Challenges Ahead*

Sweeney, Paul, *The Celtic Tiger: Ireland's Continuing Economic Miracle*