




## People and Places

# Ireland



The Republic of Ireland has had a difficult past, but today it's a modern European country.



- Capital city: Dublin
- Population: 3.5 million
- Area: 70,280 km<sup>2</sup>
- Money: euro
- Languages: English, Irish



## Clonmel

“ My name is Liam O’Sullivan and I’m 14. I live near Clonmel in County Tipperary in the south of Eire. Eire is the name of Ireland in Irish. I live in the Republic of Ireland which is an independent republic, separate from Northern Ireland which is part of the United Kingdom. My family have lived in this area for centuries, although a lot of my ancestors emigrated to the USA and the UK during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. I’ve got relatives all over America and Canada! I live near the racehorse stables where my parents work. There’s an important racecourse in Clonmel. Irish horses are famous all over the world and I’d like to work with horses, too. I go riding nearly every day. I love sport in general: I play hurling – that’s a team game you play with a stick and ball, very popular here. Some of my friends play Gaelic football. I sometimes go to watch their matches.

Ireland used to be an agricultural country with most of the people living and working on small farms, but now things are changing. For example, in Clonmel there is now a big cider brewery and a number of factories.

Clonmel isn’t really a tourist town and I think it’s really quiet except when there are the horse-races. People come from all over Ireland to see them. When some of my American relatives came to visit last year they thought it was a wonderful, peaceful place. I suppose the countryside is nice and green, but it rains a lot! ”

*Liam O’Sullivan*





## Dublin

“ I’m Caitlin Murphy and I live in the capital city of the Republic of Ireland. Dublin’s the biggest city in Ireland and over one third of the population live here! It’s an exciting city with lots going on. In summer, it’s full of tourists from all over the world. I was born here, but both my parents come from County Kerry on the west coast. We go there to see our relatives and for holidays. The beaches are fantastic, but it’s a very quiet area. My cousins in Kerry speak Irish fluently but I’m not as good as them because nearly everyone speaks English in Dublin. Irish culture is famous all over the world. I go to an Irish dancing club which I really enjoy. Dublin has become one of the great European capital cities in recent years. Sometimes Ireland is called the Celtic Tiger because its economy has grown so quickly. Now, lots of hi-tech companies have their factories and offices here: IBM, Dell and Apple, for example. Dublin has got a great atmosphere and lots of interesting places to visit: Phoenix Park is the second biggest city park in Europe, Trinity College is a university founded in 1592, the National Museum of Ireland is about the history of Ireland from prehistoric times to the present and at the Bram Stoker Museum there’s a really scary tour through the life of the Irish writer who created Dracula! ”

*Caitlin Murphy*



### New words

- stables • race-horse • race-course • stick
- cider brewery • peaceful • fluently • scary

### Think

**1** What do you know about the history and geography of Ireland?

- 5 What proportion of Irish people live in Dublin?
- 6 Why does Caitlin go to the west coast?
- 7 How well can Caitlin speak Irish?
- 8 What sort of city is Dublin now?

### Read

**2** Read the texts quickly and write in the names of the people.

- 1 Who speaks about the Irish language? .....
- 2 Who speaks about Irish sports? .....
- 3 Who speaks about Irish culture? .....
- 4 Who speaks about the economy? .....

**3** Read again and answer the questions.

- 1 Which part of Ireland does Liam live in?
- 2 Which Irish sports does he mention?
- 3 What’s Clonmel like now?
- 4 What did Liam’s American relatives think of Ireland?

### Speak

**4** Has the town/area where you live changed in recent years? What was it like in the past? What’s it like now?

### Write

**5** What are the local cultural traditions in your area? Think about music, dance, legends, songs. Write a paragraph about them.

**Explain:**

- What they are
- When and where you can see/hear them
- If you take part or enjoy watching them