

## Ireland

### Exercise 1

1. Which of these statements is true?
  - a) Ireland is part of the United Kingdom.
  - b) Ireland is part of Scotland.
  - c) Ireland is an independent country.
  
2. Which colour is associated with Ireland?
  - a) green
  - b) red
  - c) blue
  
3. What is the approximate population of Ireland?
  - a) 4.3 million
  - b) 21.5 million
  - c) 43 million
  
4. Which two sports are both very popular in Ireland?
  - a) football and American football
  - b) football and Gaelic football
  - c) golf and baseball
  
5. What is 'Guinness'?
  - a) a kind of beer
  - b) the capital of Ireland
  - c) a kind of Irish music
  
6. Which of these has *not* increased in Ireland since the 1990s?
  - a) the number of immigrants
  - b) foreign investment
  - c) the number of people leaving the country to live abroad
  
7. Which of these statements is true?
  - a) Irish people have a reputation for being talkative.
  - b) Ireland's national day is called Saint Rafael's Day.
  - c) It doesn't rain very often in Ireland.
  
8. What is 'Gaelic'?
  - a) a language
  - b) a kind of food
  - c) the capital of Ireland

## Ireland

WORKSHEET B

Ireland (or to give its full name, the Republic of Ireland) is a European country covering most of an island situated to the west of Great Britain. The other, smaller country on the island is Northern Ireland. Whereas Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom (along with England, Scotland and Wales), the Republic of Ireland is a separate country that became independent from the United Kingdom in the early 1920s.

The population of Ireland is around 4.3 million, the main religion is Catholicism, and the main language of everyday life is English. However there is another language called Gaelic (also referred to as 'Irish'), which used to be spoken throughout the country before the English language arrived, and is still spoken in some areas.

Although Ireland is a small country, many aspects of its culture are quite well known around the world. The explanation for this goes back to the poverty that led millions of Irish people to emigrate during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. As a result there are now significant numbers of people with Irish ancestry in many different parts of the world, particularly in other English-speaking countries. According to a 2005 survey more than 10% of people in the United States have Irish ancestors.

There has been a huge change in Ireland's economic situation in the last 30 years or so. Foreign investment has increased rapidly, particularly since the 1990s, and now the country is one of the richest in Europe. For the first time in its history there are a lot of immigrants arriving in search of work, for example from countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

There probably aren't many countries that are strongly associated with a particular colour, but in the case of Ireland the colour green is almost a national symbol. The Irish countryside is well known for being very green due to the wet climate, and has led to Ireland having the nickname 'the Emerald Isle'. The shirts worn by the Irish national sports teams are green, and the colour is also present (along with white and orange) on the national flag.

The most popular sports in Ireland are football, rugby and golf, and also two very traditional sports that are not well known in other countries: hurling (which is a bit like hockey), and Gaelic football (a bit like a mixture of football and rugby).

Irish people have a reputation for being sociable and talkative, and Irish pubs are usually loud, friendly places. The most popular drink in these pubs, and indeed one of Ireland's most famous exports, is a very dark, almost black beer called Guinness.

Ireland's national day, Saint Patrick's Day, is on March 17<sup>th</sup>, and because of the number of people around the world with Irish ancestry it has become an international event. Perhaps the most colourful Saint Patrick's Day celebration takes place in Chicago in the United States, where the large river running through the city is turned green by putting dye into it!

## Ireland

WORKSHEET C

### Exercise 2

#### Team A

Using the information on Worksheet B, make questions using the words in the boxes. Use only one box for each question, and don't repeat any questions. When you have prepared the questions, Team B will have to answer them as part of a quiz.

why	nickname	dye	exports
national flag	popular	reputation	United Kingdom
when	religion	emigrate	how many

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#### Team B

Using the information on Worksheet B, make questions using the words in the boxes. Use only one box for each question, and don't repeat any questions. When you have prepared the questions, Team A will have to answer them as part of a quiz.

how many	ancestors	why	national day
immigrants	traditional	colour	Chicago
language	sports	when	full name