

Ireland Divided



The map, left, shows that Ireland is divided into two parts:

The Republic of Ireland in the South is an independent country with its own government and Parliament in Dublin.

Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom. It is ruled by Parliament.

The troubles in Northern Ireland are largely the result of one question:

Should the North stay part of the UK or should it join the South as part of a United and Independent Ireland?

This question is the main root of the problem since people do not agree

Northern Ireland

Some people in Northern Ireland want to stay part of the UK. These people are called **Unionists** and are mostly **Protestant**. Hardline Unionists are known as **Loyalists**.

The other side want to join the South and become part of the Irish Republic. These people are called **Nationalists** and are mostly **Catholic**. Hardline nationalists are known as **Republicans**.



Both groups do not trust each other. Some are determined to get their own way although most people in Northern Ireland do not support violence, a minority of Loyalists and Republicans have used murder to show how strongly they feel about the future of Ireland.

The Government of the UK and the Irish Republic often disagree about Northern Ireland. Governments in Dublin want a united Ireland. The British said it will not withdraw from Northern Ireland as long as most people of Northern Ireland wish to stay British.

Both Nationalists and Unionists say they are democrats (they agree that the majority should decide). But who are the majority – the whole of Ireland or Northern Ireland.

The Religious Divide in Northern Ireland

COUNTY	PROTESTANT	CATHOLIC
Antrim	75%	25%
Down	72%	28%
Armagh	52%	48%
Tyrone	46%	54%
Fermanagh	47%	53%
Londonderry	57%	43%

The two largest cities are Londonderry and Belfast. Londonderry is 33% Protestant, 67% Catholic
Belfast is 73% Protestant 27% Catholic