

Ireland

Rice

In 1922, Ireland became a Free State within the British Commonwealth. The leadership of the government rested with the President of Dáil Éireann (who had the powers of a Prime Minister) along with his/her Cabinet, known as the Executive Council. The first President of the Council was Arthur Griffith, a member of the Sinn Féin (SF) party who came to power January 10, 1922. He died in August 1922. Michael Collins, head of a provisional government, was in charge briefly, but he was killed ten days later (no SOLS change). The next leader was William Thomas Cosgrave, a member of the Society of the Gaels (CG) party (SOLS change).

Cosgrave remained in office until 1932, when elections resulted in the Fianna Fáil (FF) party winning the largest number of seats. Its leader, Eamon de Valera, was able to form a government after gaining the backing of seven members of Parliament from smaller parties (SOLS change). In 1937, de Valera oversaw the drafting of a new constitution, which severed the dominion relationship with Great Britain (though the King still held some executive powers for Ireland until 1949), and made the “Irish Free State” into just “Ireland”. Included in this constitution was a change in government leadership—the leader was now the Taoiseach, or Prime Minister, who was the leader of the majority party in the Dáil (Parliament). In addition, this constitution provided for a directly elected President, marking a transition from a pure parliamentary system to a mixed system (although one in which the PM remained the effective leader.) The 1937 Constitution is available here: <https://www.constitution.ie/Constitution.aspx> When the constitution took effect, de Valera remained at the head of government, just with a different title. He would remain in this office until 1948.

In February of 1948, John Aloysius Costello formed a coalition government of 3 different parties, The National Labor Party (LAB), Clann na Poblachta (CNP), and Clann na Talmhan (CNT). This is a SOLS change for 18 February 1948, because new prime minister elected, John Aloysius Costello, was from a different party, Fine Gael (FG). In 1951 Eamon de Valera, FF, once again became PM. This is a SOLS change. Competition between Costello and de Valera (and their respective parties) continued through two more election cycles; Costello and the Fine Gael came back in 1954, then de Valera and the Fianna Fáil in 1957. Both of these leadership changes are also SOLS changes.

In 1959, de Valera was elected President of the Irish Republic, at which point the leadership of FF passed to Sean Lemass, who in turn became Prime Minister (this is not coded as an SOLS change because both Lemass and de Valera were from the same party). Similarly, in 1966, Jack Lynch became the leader of FF, and assumed the office of Prime Minister (again, no SOLS change). The next SOLS change came in 1973, with the leader of FG, Liam Cosgrave, assuming the office of Prime Minister in coalition with LAB (Woldendorp et al. 2000, 291). This is a SOLS change. This coalition governed until 1977, when there was again an FF victory in elections under the leadership of Lynch (another SOLS change). Lynch passed FF leadership (and the office of Prime Minister) to Charles Haughey, who assumed office (without an SOLS change).

In 1979, Lynch resigned and FF leadership passed to Charles Haughey, son-in-law of former PM Seán LeMass (State 2009, 306). This is not a SOLS change. In 1981, Garret FitzGerald, who had succeeded Liam Cosgrave as head of FG in 1977, became PM (State 2009, 307). This is a SOLS change. However, in February of 1982, elections led to a victory for FF (apparently, even though FF added only three seats in Parliament, and FG lost only two, three

Marxist Workers' party members sided with FF and brought them into power (Hollis 2001, 187)). Haughey assumed office again, but found himself dealing with internal dissent from his party. He, suffered a vote of no confidence, and was forced to resign (State 2009, 308). Fitzgerald, FG, became PM in coalition with LAB. This is a SOLS change.

In 1987 Haughey, FF, became PM. This is a SOLS change. In 1989 the Progressive Democrats (PD) joined in coalition with the FF. This is a minor SOLS change (July 12 1989). In 1992, Haughey resigned due to his alleged knowledge of various scandals from the 1980s (State 2009, 329) and leadership of FF, still in coalition with PD, passed to Albert Reynolds. This is not a SOLS change. In 1993, the governing coalition changed from FF/PD to FF/LAB (Woldendorp et al. 2000, 291). This is a minor SOLS change (Jan 12 1993). Reynolds resigned in 1994 after a controversial attorney general appointment. The Labour Party (LP) switched sides to join the FG in a coalition with another minor party, the Democratic Left (DL). The coalition was headed by John Bruton, FG. This is a SOLS change. In 1997, Patrick Bartholomew "Bertie" Ahern, FF, became PM in coalition with PD. This is a SOLS change. In 2007, the Green Party joined the coalition to change the composition from FF/PD to FF/GP/PD (O'Malley 2008, 1013). This is a minor SOLS change (14 June 2007). In 2008, Ahern resigned and was replaced by Brian Cowen as head of FF (O'Malley 2009, 986). This is not a SOLS change.

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