



# Bunreacht na hÉireann



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- The constitution of Ireland, is the basic law of Ireland.
- No law can be passed which does not agree with it..
- The Constitution was passed in a referendum on the 1st July 1937. It came into operation on the 29th December 1937.
- The present Constitution replaced Constitution of the Irish Free State (Saorstát Éireann) which came into existence in 1922.



# How easy is it to change?

- The Constitution can be changed only by a referendum in which every citizen of Ireland, over the age of 18, is entitled to vote.



# Main Content

- The Irish Constitution describes the main laws of the Irish state. The power to run the state is divided into three separate powers:
  - legislative
  - executive
  - judicial



# The Powers

- Legislative power is the power to make laws. This power is given to the Oireachtas which is the Dail Eireann, Seanad Eireann and the President.
- Executive Power is the power to carry about the laws. This power is given to the Government with the assistance of the Garda Siochann and the military.
- Judicial Power is the power to decide on whether the law is being followed and what punishment to give. This is given to the courts.



# Human Rights

- Equality
- Trial by jury
- Freedom to travel
- Personal Liberty
- Freedom of Expression
- Freedom of Assembly
- Freedom of Association
- Religious Liberty
- Rights of the Family
- Property Rights
- Right to Work
- Right to Privacy



# Benefits of EU membership to Ireland

- Irish businesses have unhindered access to a market of over 490 million people
- An estimated 700,000 jobs have been created in Ireland during the years of membership and trade has increased 90 fold
- Irish citizens have the right to move, work and reside freely within the territory of other member states
- Between 1973 and 2008 Irish farmers received nearly €44 billion from the Common Agricultural Policy.
- EU membership has helped bring peace and political agreement in Northern Ireland through support and investment in cross-border programmes
- The Irish language is an official working language in the EU, which helps to protect the country's native mother tongue for future generations



# Role of Parliament

Our Parliament is made up of two houses

## The Dail Eireann

- Members of the Dail are called Teachta Dala or TD's and they are elected by citizens of Ireland aged 18 years and over.
- The government meet collectively each week in the cabinet and discuss a range of policy initiatives and legislative proposals.

## The Seanad

- Members of the Seanad are called Senators. Seanad Éireann is made of 60 Members.
- In addition to their parliamentary duties Senators liaise with civil society groups, contribute to debates on the national and local media and work on behalf of their electorate.

