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The Political, Social and Economic Evolution of the United Kingdom and Ireland since 1945. Their Presence in the European Community. A Panoramic View of the Literature of this Period in these Countries

Evolución política, social y económica del Reino Unido e Irlanda desde 1945. Su presencia en la Comunidad Europea. Panorama literario de este periodo en estos países.

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Material de elaboración propia a partir de las fuentes oficiales que se citan al final del tema. No es un temario oficial ni sustituye a la normativa publicada.

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1. INTRODUCTION

George Orwell wrote in his essay "Politics and the English Language": "In our age there is no such thing as 'keeping out of politics'. All issues are political issues." The sentence is a good key to this topic. Since 1945 the United Kingdom and Ireland have lived through reconstruction, the end of empire, civil conflict, economic boom and crisis, membership of the European project and, for the United Kingdom, departure from it. Their writers have not stood outside those events: they have described them, questioned them and sometimes anticipated them.

The topic covers more than eighty years, so I must select and organise. I will first examine the political, social and economic evolution of the United Kingdom, from the Attlee government to the present, and then that of Ireland, including the conflict in Northern Ireland. Secondly, I will compare the presence of both countries in the European Community and the European Union, with special attention to Brexit and its consequences for the island of Ireland. Thirdly, I will offer a panoramic view of the literature of the period through prose, poetry and drama. Finally, I will consider the place of this content in Secondary Education and Bachillerato, and I will close with a conclusion that returns to Orwell.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted: Kenneth O. Morgan's The People's Peace: Britain since 1945 (Oxford University Press, updated edition); R. F. Foster's Modern Ireland 1600–1972 (Penguin); Ronald Carter and John McRae's The Routledge History of Literature in English: Britain and Ireland (Routledge, third edition); and Andrew Sanders's The Short Oxford History of English Literature (Oxford University Press, third edition, 2004). I have also used official sources such as gov.uk, parliament.uk, the Nobel Prize archive and the Electoral Commission, and, for the didactic section, the framework of Organic Law 3/2020 (LOMLOE), Royal Decrees 217/2022 and 243/2022 and Extremadura Decrees 110/2022 and 109/2022. Where recent facts are given, they are valid as of November 2026.