

World War Two

1939 -
1945

The text '1939 - 1945' is rendered in large, bold, black, sans-serif font. A white, stylized barbed wire graphic winds through the numbers. To the left of the '1945' text, there are two red poppies with black centers and thin black stems.

The Emergency - Timeline

February 19th,
1939

The Emergency

Taoiseach Éamon de
Valera declares the
government's intention to
preserve its neutrality.

September 1st,
1939

The Emergency

German army invades
Poland, an act of aggression
which instigates the start of
the war.

September 3rd,
1939

The Emergency

British Prime Minister
Neville Chamberlain
declares that Britain is
at war with Germany.

September 2-3,
1939

The Emergency

The Dáil and Seanad meet to enact two bills which declare Ireland's neutrality. A state of Emergency is also declared.

September 3rd,
1939

The Emergency

The Dáil passes the
“Emergency Powers Act”,
putting the country in an official
state of emergency and giving
the government extensive new
powers.

September 3rd,
1939

The Emergency

The "Emergency Powers Act", also contained provisions for the censorship of newspapers and periodicals during the war.

August 26th,
1940

The Emergency

German bombs are
dropped on a creamery in
Campile, Co. Wexford,
killing three people.

January 1-3,
1941

The Emergency

German bombs are dropped in various locations along the East coast including Carlow, Kildare, Louth, Meath, Wexford and Wicklow.

January 2-3,

1941

The Emergency

German bombs are dropped
on locations in Dublin
including the Donore area,
South Circular Road and
Terenure.

April - May,

1941

The Emergency

“The Belfast Blitz” –
Germans target Belfast.
After sustained air-raids,
more than 1,000 people are
killed.

April - May,

1941

The Emergency

Éamon de Valera instructs fire engines to go to Belfast to assist the Northern authorities in the aftermath of the bombings.

May 31st,

1941

The Emergency

Four German bombs land on the North Strand area of Dublin resulting in 38 deaths and 90 injured. 700 houses are damaged or destroyed.

June 19th,
1941

The Emergency

The Irish government announces that the German government have expressed regret for the North Strand bombing and promise compensation.

1942

The Emergency

Bread, tea, butter, sugar,
soap, toothpaste,
chocolate, clothes and
shoe polish are all
rationed.

1942

The Emergency

People are issued with Ration Books containing coupons which allow them to purchase a certain amount of rationed goods.

June 6th,
1944

The Emergency

D-Day landings in Normandy.
The Allies send thousands of
planes, ships and troops to
attack the German army.

May 8th,

1945

The Emergency

The war in Europe ends with the surrender of the German army. This became known as VE Day.

May 13th,
1945

The Emergency

In his VE Day speech, the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, criticises Taoiseach Éamon de Valera and Ireland's policy of neutrality during the war.

May 16th,

1945

The Emergency

Taoiseach Éamon de Valera responds to Churchill's comments on Ireland's neutrality by saying that "It is indeed hard for the strong to be just to the weak, but acting justly always has its rewards".

August 6th,
1945

The Emergency

The first atomic bomb is dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. 100,000 Japanese are killed.

August 9th,
1945

The Emergency

A second atomic bomb is dropped on the Japanese city of Nagasaki. 40,000 Japanese are killed.

September 2nd,
1945

The Emergency

The Japanese army
surrenders, finally
marking the end of World
War Two.

1939 - 1945

The Emergency

260 German military, air force and naval personnel are interned in Ireland during the war. Most of these had crash landed in Ireland.

1939 - 1945

The Emergency

In 1943, Ireland quietly releases 33 Allied internees. After this, any Allied air crews which crash land in Ireland are secretly escorted across the border to Northern Ireland.

1939 - 1945

The Emergency

4,983 members of
the Irish Defence
Forces deserted to fight
with the British and Allied
armed forces.

1939 - 1945

The Emergency

Approximately 70,000 Irishmen served with the British army during World War II. Another 200,000 Irish people moved to Britain to work during the war years.

September 2nd,
1946

The Emergency

The Emergency Powers Act lapses, although it was never officially lifted. The state of emergency was officially rescinded on September 1st, 1976.

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