

Message

From: [Redacted] [Redacted]@fco.gov.uk]  
 Sent: 01/04/2020 13:00:04  
 To: [Redacted] [Redacted]@fco.gov.uk]; Coronavirus Taskforce Info (Sensitive) [C-19.FCOsecretariatinformation@fco.gov.uk]  
 CC: [Redacted] [Redacted]@fco.gov.uk]; [Redacted] [Redacted]@fco.gov.uk]; DL Europe - Ireland Team (Sensitive) [DLEuropeIrelandTeamSensitive@fco.gov.uk]; [Redacted] [Redacted] Sensitive) [Redacted] [Redacted]@fco.gov.uk]; DL Dublin All Staff [DLDublinAllStaffprotect@fco.gov.uk]; Europe COVID-19 (Sensitive) [Europe.covid19@fco.gov.uk]; NIO Covid-19 [covid-19@nio.gov.uk]; Perry, Colin [colin.perry@nio.gov.uk]; [Redacted] [Redacted]@cabinetoffice.gov.uk; [Redacted] [Redacted]@cabinetoffice.gov.uk; Global Response Centre (Sensitive) [response@fco.gov.uk]; Coronavirus Taskforce (Sensitive) [coronavirustaskforce@fco.gov.uk]; Consular Coronavirus (Sensitive) [Consular.Coronavirus@fco.gov.uk]; [Redacted] [Redacted]@hmtreasury.gov.uk; [Redacted] [Redacted]@hmtreasury.gov.uk; Douglas, Robert - HMT [Robert.Douglas@hmtreasury.gov.uk]; [Redacted] [Redacted] (HM Treasury) (Sensitive) [Redacted] [Redacted]@hmtreasury.gov.uk; [Redacted] [Redacted]@hmtreasury.gov.uk; [Redacted] [Redacted]@cabinetoffice.gov.uk; zainab.gha@cabinetoffice.gov.uk; [Redacted] [Redacted] BEIS) [Redacted] [Redacted]@beis.gov.uk; covid-economy@nio.gov.uk; NIHUB SitRep [sitrep@nihub.gov.uk]; NIO Covid-19 [covid-19@nio.gov.uk]; international@nio.gov.uk; [Redacted] [Redacted]@nio.gov.uk; NIHUB Chief of Staff [cos@nihub.gov.uk]; NIHUB Deputy Chief of Staff [deputycos@nihub.gov.uk]; NIHUB Head of Secretariat [head.secretariat@nihub.gov.uk]; COVID-19 Repatriation Team (London) (Sensitive) [COVID19.RepatriationTeamLondon@fco.gov.uk]; [Redacted] [Redacted]@dhsc.gov.uk; [Redacted] [Redacted]@dhsc.gov.uk; [Redacted] [Redacted]@hmtreasury.gov.uk; [Redacted] [Redacted] (Sensitive) [Redacted] [Redacted]@fco.gov.uk]  
 Subject: Ireland COVID-19 Sitrep #10 - BE Dublin 1300 1 April  
 Attachments: DUBLIN\_ Coronavirus - Economic & Business Roundup.msg

Dear Colleagues,

Please see below today's Sitrep, and attached an economic round-up.

Yours etc,

[Redacted] [Redacted]

[Redacted] [Redacted] First Secretary, Political | British Embassy, Dublin | Mob: [Redacted] Irrelevant & Sensitive

### SITREP TEMPLATE PART 1 v1

New information should be inserted in **red**, with **emphasis in bold**, and sources of data provided where necessary. Outdated information should be **deleted**. [SitRep should be pasted into an email so that it is accessible to smartphone readers.]

| FCO [Country Office] Coronavirus Situation Report [Redacted] |               |             |
|--|---------------|-------------|
| COUNTRY/REGION   | IRELAND       |             |
| DATE   | 1 April       |             |
| LAST UPDATED   | 31 March      |             |
| POINT OF CONTACT   | Name Redacted | @fco.gov.uk |
| Part 1 – all posts returning SITREPS should complete.        |               |             |
| Dashboard  |               |             |
| Total confirmed cases (increase since last update)           | 3,235         | +325        |

|  |                                    |                                  |
|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Intensive care cases</b> (increase since last update) | <b>113 (as of 29 March)</b>        | <b>+10</b>                       |
| <b>Deaths</b> (increase since last update)               | <b>71</b>                          | <b>+17</b>                       |
| <b>Recoveries</b> (increase since last update)           | <b>Not reported</b>                | <b>Not reported</b>              |
| <b>BNs resident in country</b> (lower/upper estimates):  | <b>103,113 (April 2016 census)</b> | <b>300,000</b> (reported figure) |
| <b>BNs visiting in country</b> (lower/upper estimates):  | <b>Not known</b>                   | <b>Not known</b>                 |

### Key Developments Update

- **SOSNI, the Tánaiste, the FM & DFM of NI, and both jurisdictions' respective health ministers spoke yesterday. Joint statement [here](#).**
- **30,213 tests have been carried out as of midnight Monday 30 March. Over the past week, the positivity rate for tests carried out increased from 6% to 15%, in line with the objectives of the revised, more restrictive, testing criteria. However, Health Minister Simon Harris said today that Ireland expects global shortages in the supply of reagents could lead to a slowing in testing. He said that at present 1,500 people a day were being tested, well below the target of 15,000, but that Ireland was still testing more people per head of population than most EU countries.**
- **The National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE) met yesterday, and issued several new recommendations, including on how better to support staff in nursing homes. There are clusters of infection in 24 nursing homes. A cluster is comprised of at least three people, and there are 118 clusters of infection across Ireland. Their recommendations here:**
  - **To focus contact tracing on suspect cases within prioritised groups. The Health Protection Surveillance Centre to update guidance to GPs and contact tracing teams**
  - **Contact tracing to encompass the period from 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms given the risk of asymptomatic transmission**
  - **In response to infections in long term residential care (nursing homes, disability and mental health) and homecare settings NPHE will work with the Health Service Executive to identify a number of measures which can be taken to strengthen support to staff and providers of nursing home care**
- **Taoiseach Leo Varadkar spoke to Chinese Premier Li Keqiang yesterday to thank China for sending essential medical supplies. Further shipments are on their way. Ireland has offered to help China in research and to maintain close contact.**
- **The HSE says it is planning for peak numbers to occur between 10-14 April. Worst case projections have suggested that the number of patients, requiring intensive care, could rise to a peak of 546 a day, by mid-April. N.B. This assessment was made before stricter measures were implemented on 27.3.**
- **The first flight delivering PPE from China arrived as part of a 10 flight/€208m deal. This shipment, worth €28m contained masks, gowns and eye shields. Nine further flights are expected.**

### Key Risks

- **BNs not at greater risk than the rest of the public.**
- **Ireland's usual 5.6 ICU beds/100,000 would make it the most vulnerable country in Europe in terms of the possibility of being overwhelmed by Covid-19 ICU admissions. However, there have been efforts to increase the number of ICU beds in recent weeks. The fact that private hospitals are now available for treating covid-19 cases has also increased capacity (see below).**

### Covid-19 and Health Situation Description



- The latest assessment has shown there are 118 clusters of infection (defined as involving at least three cases). 22% of clusters are located in private houses, 20% in nursing homes and 18% in hospitals.
- The death rate has risen to 2.4% of infections compared with 0.6% a week ago.
- On 30/3 the Taoiseach announced an agreement with the private hospitals association to lease facilities for the treatment of both Covid-19 and non Covid-19 patients. This will increase capacity of the health service in Ireland by 17% providing an additional:
  - 1,000 rooms for solo occupancy
  - 194 ventilators, as well as the use of nine laboratories.
  - 11,000 inpatient beds, 2,300 day beds, 47 ICU beds and 54 high dependency unit beds
- The HSE have said there are now 500 ICU beds in Ireland, up from 255 pre covid-19. Ireland has 88 coronavirus patients in ICU units at present.
- The HSE is preparing to open a coronavirus isolation and stepdown facility at the Citywest hotel and conference centre with the ability to accommodate over 1,000 people.
- A new 'contact tracing app' that will alert people when someone close to them has the virus, is being developed, the HSE confirmed. It is likely to be rolled out in the next 10 days or so, and will be an opt-in system.

### British Nationals

- Very few queries to Malaga helpline regarding Covid in Ireland. Overall little consular demand.
- Resident BNs affected by government restrictions, as are whole of society
- Many BNs cross the border from NI to Ireland daily; as governments in both jurisdictions advise against unnecessary travel flow is likely significantly reduced.

### Press Lines/Media

HMA today published an op-ed in the Irish Independent entitled 'Sometimes we take different steps but the UK shares Ireland's objective.' It appeared on page 12 underneath an article about yesterday's call between SOSNI, the Tanaiste, the FM and DFM of NI entitled 'New cross-border deal puts differences aside to agree all-island response to virus.'

### Travel Advice

|   |     |   |    |   |
|---|-----|---|----|---|
| Are flights operating (select one):                     | Yes | X | No |   |
| If <u>yes</u> , are closures expected in the next week: | Yes |   | No | X |

Ryanair has announced it will continue running their limited schedule until Thursday 9 April (was previously agreed until 2 April).

- Travel advice updated on 28/3 to reflect new Irish measures.
  - No screening or temperature checks are in place at Irish airports.
  - The Irish Government have said there are no plans to close airports or ports
  - Ferry services remain in place.
  - Flight services remain in place but on a reduced schedule. Ryanair schedule [here](#).
  - All incoming travellers are required to restrict their movements (self quarantine) for 14 days, except those working in logistics / supply chains and those travelling from NI.
  - Temporary visitors can leave via plane and ferry to GB, or overland to NI.
  - Host government not being actively lobbied to keep routes to UK open, as quite clear that there's an intention they will be not least for freight purposes, but we will stay in close touch with the Irish
- Internally, Irish rail is operating a 60% reduced rail service

| Post Operations  |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
|--|---------------|----|------------------|----|-----------------|----|
| · Future plans for staff deployment/presence   |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Post operating status (select one):  | BAU           | X  | BCP in operation |    | Core staff only |    |
| All wfh. Staff only to attend embassy for essential tasks. Laissez Passer letters provided for staff if they are questioned by the gardai (police) on coming into the embassy. |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Crisis status (select one):  | Normal        |    | Crisis watch     | X  | Crisis mode     |    |
| Serious situation but not affecting large number of BNs or compromising post operations at present.  |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Remote working in place (select one):  | Yes           | X  |                  | No |                 |    |
| Working well. Wide use of MS teams.  |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Services open to visitors/customers (select one):  | Yes           |    |                  | No | X               |    |
| No demand, and preference for no consular face-to-face (although could in theory be facilitated if absolutely necessary)   |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Drawdowns in place   | UKB FCO staff | No | UKB PAG staff    | No | Dependents      | No |
| · COVID-19 Taskforce Formed. Not formal crisis structure. Two embassy teams each taking two days at a time.  |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Wednesday business hours   |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| SRO: NR @fco.gov.uk (DHM)  |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Political / Information Lead: NR @fco.gov.uk (1 <sup>st</sup> Sec)   |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Consular: NR @fco.gov.uk or NR @fco.gov.uk   |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Out of hours duty officer: NR @fco.gov.uk  |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Thursday business hours  |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| SRO: NR @fco.gov.uk (DHM)  |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Political / Information Lead: NR @fco.gov.uk (1 <sup>st</sup> Sec)   |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Consular: NR @fco.gov.uk or NR @fco.gov.uk   |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Out of hours duty officer: NR @fco.gov.uk  |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Assistance Required/Progress   |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| · Any information/resource Post requires from London; requests for Ministerial / other engagement: none  |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| · Assistance requested by host country: none   |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| Daily Rhythm   |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| · Date and time of next Post crisis meeting: Thursday 2 April 1030   |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |
| · Details of when the next Post SitRep will be issued: Thursday 2 April 1300   |               |    |                  |    |                 |    |

### SITREP TEMPLATE PART 2 v1

New information should be inserted in **red**, with **emphasis in bold**, and sources of data provided where necessary. Outdated information should be **deleted**. [SitRep should be pasted into an email so that it is accessible to smartphone readers.]

|  |
|--|
| Part 2 – only selected Posts should return this section.         |
| FCO [Country Office] Coronavirus Additional Questions Report [#] |
| Behavioural and social interventions                             |



The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (**SAGE**) has asked certain posts to list the behavioural or social measures host authorities are taking to contain or delay the spread of the virus through social transmission to inform the UK's domestic response. Please include the date when measures were announced.

1. Restrictions over large public or mass gatherings:

No social gatherings allowed other than members of the same household

2. Closures of crèches, school or HE establishments:

All closed until at least April 19 – to date no special arrangements in place for children of key workers or vulnerable children.

3. Isolation measures for individuals or households suspected or confirmed of being infected:

Self-isolation for 14 days for affected individuals / households.

4. Requirements on social distancing, such as home working and closures of non-essential shops:

All requested to social distance with increased monitoring but no fines for non-compliance, stay at and work from home in all circumstances other than prescribed jobs businesses and services. See:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/539d23-stay-at-home-the-latest-public-health-measures-to-prevent-the-spread/>

5. Measures to protect the elderly or vulnerable groups self-isolating or in social care, and interventions to strengthen the social care sector:

Charity 'Alone' has helpline for older people. Some shops have special opening hours for vulnerable people. Many local and community initiatives. Many government welfare initiatives: six day waiting period for Illness Benefit removed; rate of Illness Benefit increased from €203 to €350 per week.

6. Level and speed at which authorities are carrying out testing:

41 test centres have been created nationwide. At-home tests also available. To be eligible for a test you need to have a fever + another major symptom + be in a priority group. This criteria was introduced on 25 March after it was found only 6% of tests were coming back positive and with a large backlog having developed. Approx. 30,000 tests have been carried out. **Now testing 1,500 / day, well short of target of 15,000 / day but above the EU average.**

7. City or regional lockdowns, curfews or specific travel restrictions, and instructions provided to workers?

People should wfh in all circumstances. People only meant to go out to: buy essential supplies, care for someone in need, exercise (within 2km), essential work.

8. What advice and provisions, such as childcare, are given to critical workers such as emergency services?

Government exploring providing childcare for early-years children of critical workers. Trainee police sworn in and put on active service. Health system and armed forces being bolstered by recruitment of retired staff.

### Economics impacts and response

· Update on host governments' fiscal, monetary and other responses to support individuals, industries and the wider economy.

- **Central Government:** The European Commission approved Ireland's €200 million scheme, in line with EU State aid rules, to provide financial support to Irish companies affected by the coronavirus outbreak.
- The Government has issued a [list of workers](#) who can continue to leave home to go to work amid the latest restrictions. **This is in addition to staff working [in essential retail outlets](#), who may also continue to work.**

• Update on economic impacts of Covid-19 on (a) financial markets, (b) industries/sectors, (c) the labour market and unemployment, (d) consumers and (e) growth (GDP forecasts).

- **Economic Commentary.** As reported in the Irish Times, Ireland's credit profile is "resilient" enough to withstand the cost of Covid-19, according to global ratings agency Moody's as it predicted the economy could contract this year by as little as 1.6 per cent, provided the crisis remains relatively short-lived.
- **Manufacturing:** The manufacturing sector recorded its sharpest decline since August 2009 in March as the coronavirus outbreak spread, according to AIB data.

### International response

- **Taoiseach spoke with Premier Li of China; see above.**
- Ireland coordinating with EU bodies on European response.
- MFA focused on repatriation of Irish citizens across the world.
- Recently procured large consignment of medical PPE from China.
- In close coordination with UK on response to the crisis, not least to minimise disparities between Ireland and NI given open land border. HMG exploring with Irish Government possibility of holding BIC (British-Irish Council) and BIIGC (British Irish Intergovernmental Conference) Coordination with respect to travel advice also ongoing. Several ministerial calls in last fortnight including PM-Taoiseach on 19 March. **Trilateral call at senior official level happening today between IG, NIE and HMG.**

**From:** Name Redacted @fco.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 31 March 2020 13:04

**To:** Name Redacted @fco.gov.uk>; Coronavirus Taskforce Info (Sensitive) <C-19.FCOSecretariatInformation@fco.gov.uk>

[See recipients listed above]

**Subject:** RE: Ireland COVID-19 Sitrep #9 - BE Dublin 1300 30 March



Dear Colleagues,

PSB Dublin's SITREP and Economic Roundup.

Best wishes,

NR

### SITREP TEMPLATE PART 1 v1

New information should be inserted in **red**, with **emphasis in bold**, and sources of data provided where necessary. Outdated information should be **deleted**. [SitRep should be pasted into an email so that it is accessible to smartphone readers.]

FCO [Country Office] Coronavirus Situation Report [#]

|                  |                |  |
|------------------|----------------|--|
| COUNTRY/REGION   | IRELAND        |  |
| DATE             | 31 March 2020  |  |
| LAST UPDATED     | 30 March       |  |
| POINT OF CONTACT | NR @fco.gov.uk |  |

Part 1 – all posts returning SITREPS should complete.

Dashboard

|  |                             |                           |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Total confirmed cases (increase since last update) | 2910                        | 295                       |
| Intensive care cases (increase since last update)  | 103 (31/3)                  | 84 (27/3)                 |
| Deaths (increase since last update)                | 54                          | +8                        |
| Recoveries (increase since last update)            | Not reported                | Not reported              |
| BNs resident in country (lower/upper estimates):   | 103,113 (April 2016 census) | 300,000 (reported figure) |
| BNs visiting in country (lower/upper estimates):   | Not known                   | Not known                 |

Key Developments Update

- The Chief Medical Officer said that although yesterday saw the largest number of new cases of coronavirus in Ireland to date, the rate of increase was slowing. Infections had been rising at a daily rate of 33% before restrictions were imposed. The rise has now slowed to a daily increase of around 15%. The CMO said this was an ‘encouraging sign in our efforts to flatten the curve’.
- Tánaiste Simon Coveney is to discuss cooperation in tackling the coronavirus pandemic with Northern Ireland Secretary Brandon Lewis and Stormont's first and deputy first ministers, Arlene Foster and Michelle O'Neill in a teleconference today.
- The Taoiseach said the Government was not going to close Irish borders to stop the spread of the virus (in response to calls from some). He said there were Irish people abroad who still need to come home, and said imports and exports needed to continue. However, the Taoiseach did confirm that the National Public Health Emergency Team will consider further measures that can be taken to reduce imported cases and tackle the concentration of cases taking place in care homes. BE Dublin will report on any new measures introduced.

- 10,700 people are still waiting for a Covid-19 test with another 4,000 waiting for a test appointment. Ireland is now testing around 5,000 people a day.
- The Health Service Executive (HSE) said it had secured 60,000 more test kits this week and is expecting to procure a further 100,000 a week going forward.
- The HSE says it is planning for peak numbers to occur between 10-14 April. Worst case projections have suggested that the number of patients, requiring intensive care, could rise to a peak of 546 a day, by mid-April. N.B. This assessment was made before stricter measures were implemented on 27.3.
- The first flight delivering PPE from China arrived as part of a 10 flight/€208m deal. This shipment, worth €28m contained masks, gowns and eye shields. **Nine further flights are expected.**
- Repatriation of UK and Irish nationals from Peru continues.

On 27/3 Ireland announced stricter measures in response to the spread of Cov-19 and on the advice of the Public Health Emergency Team. The new measures came into place on 28.3 for a two week period.

## Key Risks

- The Embassy and NIO are looking into eligibility of NI residents, employed in ROI to be able to claim coronavirus benefits. **This will be discussed in the 'quad' call with SoSNI, the NI FM and dFM and Simon Coveney today.**

BNs not at greater risk than the rest of the public.

- Key Ireland's 5.6 ICU beds/100,000 makes it the most vulnerable country in Europe in terms of the possibility of being overwhelmed by Covid-19 ICU admissions. However, the report does not take account of efforts to increase the number of ICU beds in recent weeks.

## Covid-19 and Health Situation Description

- **On 30/3 the Taoiseach announced an agreement with the private hospitals association to lease facilities for the treatment of both Covid-19 and non Covid-19 patients. This will increase capacity of the health service in Ireland by 17% providing an additional:**
  - 1,000 rooms for solo occupancy**
  - 194 ventilators, as well as the use of nine laboratories.**
  - 11,000 inpatient beds, 2,300 day beds, 47 ICU beds and 54 high dependency unit beds**
- **New data on Covid-19 from the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) shows that there are 22 clusters in nursing homes and 19 in hospitals in the Republic of Ireland. National Public Health Emergency Team will consider measures today for nursing homes during the Covid-19 outbreak.**
- The HSE have said there are now 500 ICU beds in Ireland, up from 255 pre covid-19. Ireland has 88 coronavirus patients in ICU units at present.
- The HSE is preparing to open a coronavirus isolation and stepdown facility at the Citywest hotel and conference centre with the ability to accommodate over 1,000 people.
- A new 'contact tracing app' that will alert people when someone close to them has the virus, is being developed, the HSE confirmed. It is likely to be rolled out in the next 10 days or so, and will be an opt-in system.

## British Nationals



- Very few queries to Malaga helpline regarding Covid in Ireland. Overall little consular demand.
- Resident BNs affected by government restrictions, as are whole of society
- Many BNs cross the border from NI to Ireland daily; as governments in both jurisdictions advise against unnecessary travel flow is likely significantly reduced.

### Press Lines/Media

Two UK-based university professors, Dr Gabriel Scally of Bristol University and Dr James McNerney of Nottingham University, provided critical commentary in the Irish media today. They suggested that the UK was in denial about the seriousness of the virus until recently and that we were not following the science. Dr Scally suggested that Northern Ireland should look to Ireland and not to the UK.

The Ambassador has written an oped for publication in the Irish Independent tomorrow, in which he challenges these comments and other critical pieces from the past week. He also highlights the cooperation between the UK and Ireland.

*Q: Why are the UK and Irish positions so different on tackling COVID-19?*

*A: Both governments are doing everything they can to delay and to flatten the curve. We are each following the advice of our expert scientists, especially our Chief Medical Officers. We may sometimes take different steps but our shared objectives are protecting our health services and saving lives.*

### Travel Advice

|   |     |   |    |   |
|---|-----|---|----|---|
| Are flights operating (select one):                     | Yes | X | No |   |
| If <u>yes</u> , are closures expected in the next week: | Yes |   | No | X |

Ryanair has announced it will continue running their limited schedule until Thursday 9 April (was previously agreed until 2 April).

- Travel advice updated on 28/3 to reflect new Irish measures.
- No screening or temperature checks are in place at Irish airports.
- The Irish Government have said there are no plans to close airports or ports
- Ferry services remain in place.
- Flight services remain in place but on a reduced schedule. Ryanair schedule [here](#).
- All incoming travellers are required to restrict their movements (self quarantine) for 14 days, except those working in logistics / supply chains and those travelling from NI.
- Temporary visitors can leave via plane and ferry to GB, or overland to NI.
- Host government not being actively lobbied to keep routes to UK open, as quite clear that there's an intention they will be not least for freight purposes, but we will stay in close touch with the Irish
- Internally, Irish rail is operating a 60% reduced rail service

### Post Operations

- Future plans for staff deployment/presence

|                                     |  |   |                  |   |                 |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|------------------|---|-----------------|--|
| Post operating status (select one): | BAU  | X | BCP in operation |   | Core staff only |  |
|                                     | All wfh. Staff only to attend Embassy for essential tasks. Laissez Pass provided for staff if they are questioned by the gardai (police) on coming into the Embassy. |   |                  |   |                 |  |
|                                     | Normal   |   | Crisis watch     | X | Crisis mode     |  |

|   |  |    |               |    |            |
|---|--|----|---------------|----|------------|
| Crisis status (select one):                       | Serious situation but not affecting large number of BNs or compromising post operations at present.                      |    |               |    |            |
| Remote working in place (select one):             | Yes  | X  | No            |    |            |
|   | Working well. Wide use of MS teams.  |    |               |    |            |
| Services open to visitors/customers (select one): | Yes  |    | No            | X  |            |
|   | No demand, and preference for no consular face-to-face (although could in theory be facilitated if absolutely necessary) |    |               |    |            |
| Drawdowns in place                                | UKB FCO staff  | No | UKB PAG staff | No | Dependents |
|   |  |    |               |    | No         |

- COVID-19 Taskforce Formed. Not formal crisis structure. Two embassy teams each taking two days at a time.

Tuesday business hours  
 SRO: **NR** @fco.gov.uk (Counsellor)  
 Political / Information Lead: **NR** @fco.gov.uk (1<sup>st</sup> Sec)  
 Consular: **NR** @fco.gov.uk or **NR** @fco.gov.uk  
 Out of hours duty officer: **NR** @fco.gov.uk

Wednesday business hours  
 SRO: **NR** @fco.gov.uk (DHM)  
 Political / Information Lead: **NR** @fco.gov.uk (1<sup>st</sup> Sec)  
 Consular: **NR** @fco.gov.uk or **NR** @fco.gov.uk  
 Out of hours duty officer: **NR** @fco.gov.uk

**Assistance Required/Progress**

- Any information/resource Post requires from London; requests for Ministerial / other engagement: **none**
- Assistance requested by host country: **none**

**Daily Rhythm**

- Date and time of next Post crisis meeting: **Wednesday 1 April 1030**
- Details of when the next Post SitRep will be issued: **Wednesday 1 April 1300**

### SITREP TEMPLATE PART 2 v1

New information should be inserted in **red**, with **emphasis in bold**, and sources of data provided where necessary. Outdated information should be **deleted**. [SitRep should be pasted into an email so that it is accessible to smartphone readers.]

**Part 2 – only selected Posts should return this section.**

**FCO [Country Office] Coronavirus Additional Questions Report [#]**

#### Behavioural and social interventions

The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (**SAGE**) has asked certain posts to list the behavioural or social measures host authorities are taking to contain or delay the spread of the virus through social transmission to inform the UK's domestic response. Please include the date when measures were announced.

1. Restrictions over large public or mass gatherings:



|   |
|---|
| No social gatherings allowed other than members of the same household   |
| 2. Closures of crèches, school or HE establishments:  |
| All closed until at least April 19 – to date no special arrangements in place for children of key workers or vulnerable children.   |
| 3. Isolation measures for individuals or households suspected or confirmed of being infected:   |
| Self-isolation for 14 days for affected individuals / households.   |
| 4. Requirements on social distancing, such as home working and closures of non-essential shops:   |
| All requested to social distance with increased monitoring but no fines for non-compliance, stay at and work from home in all circumstances other than prescribed jobs businesses and services. See:<br><br><a href="https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/539d23-stay-at-home-the-latest-public-health-measures-to-prevent-the-spread/">https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/539d23-stay-at-home-the-latest-public-health-measures-to-prevent-the-spread/</a> |
| 5. Measures to protect the elderly or vulnerable groups self-isolating or in social care, and interventions to strengthen the social care sector:   |
| Charity 'Alone' has helpline for older people. Some shops have special opening hours for vulnerable people. Many local and community initiatives. Many government welfare initiatives: six day waiting period for Illness Benefit removed; rate of Illness Benefit increased from €203 to €35.  |
| 6. Level and speed at which authorities are carrying out testing:   |
| 41 test centres have been created nationwide. At-home tests also available. To be eligible for a test you need to have a fever + another major symptom + be in a priority group. This criteria was introduced on 25 March after it was found only 6% of tests were coming back positive and with a large backlog having developed. Approx 20,000 tests have been carried out. Now testing 5,000 a day.  |
| 7. City or regional lockdowns, curfews or specific travel restrictions, and instructions provided to workers?   |
| People should wfh in all circumstances. People only meant to go out to: buy essential supplies, care for someone in need, exercise (within 2km), essential work.  |
| 8. What advice and provisions, such as childcare, are given to critical workers such as emergency services?   |
| Government exploring providing childcare for early-years children of critical workers. Trainee police sworn in and put on active service. Health system and armed forces being bolstered by recruitment of retired staff.   |
| <b>Economics impacts and response</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on host governments' fiscal, monetary and other responses to support individuals, industries and the wider economy.</li> </ul>  |

- Around 205 civil and public servants have been redeployed to the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection to help process an "unprecedented" flood of welfare claims due to the Covid-19 virus. In a statement, the department confirmed that it has also hired more than 100 temporary clerical officers since 2 March.
- Around 300,000 people have qualified for the emergency Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment and the majority of these will receive the payment in their bank account today.
- Marts are to be allowed facilitate the sale of live animals under protocols agreed by the Department of Agriculture. Minister for Agriculture Michael Creed confirmed that the new measures will take effect this morning. The Department has also announced that funding for a scheme to help farmers with calf welfare and rearing has had its funding increased to €4m, in light of the current situation.
- The Government has issued a list of workers who can continue to leave home to go to work amid the latest restrictions. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/dfeb8f-list-of-essential-service-providers-under-new-public-health-guidelin/>

- Update on economic impacts of Covid-19 on (a) financial markets, (b) industries/sectors, (c) the labour market and unemployment, (d) consumers and (e) growth (GDP forecasts).

- The Irish economy could contract by up to 13.1% this year if the Covid-19 shutdown is extended to late summer. That is according to one scenario modelled by EY Ireland which would foresee the loss of 318,000 jobs. In a base scenario with extreme disruption ending in May, it projects that GDP will fall by 7% with the loss of 177,000 jobs. Early estimates from the EY Economic Eye model suggest a recession is certain, and a depression is possible if the economic restrictions need to be in force for a protracted time.
- The think-tank ESRI predict rise to 18 % unemployment in Q2 and a GDP contraction of 7.1% in 2020.

#### International response

- Ireland coordinating with EU bodies on European response.
- MFA focused on repatriation of Irish citizens across the world.
- Recently procured large consignment of medical PPE from China.
- In close coordination with UK on response to the crisis, not least to minimise disparities between Ireland and NI given open land border. HMG exploring with Irish Government possibility of holding BIC (British-Irish Council) and BIIGC (British Irish Intergovernmental Conference) Coordination with respect to travel advice also ongoing. Several ministerial calls in last fortnight including PM-Taoiseach on 19 March.

From: NR @fco.gov.uk>

Sent: 30 March 2020 12:56

To: NR @fco.gov.uk>; Coronavirus Taskforce Info (Sensitive) <C-19.FCOSecretariatInformation@fco.gov.uk>

[See recipients listed above]



[See recipients listed above]

**Subject:** RE: Ireland COVID-19 Sitrep #9 - BE Dublin 1300 30 March

Dear Colleagues,

PSB Dublin's SITREP. I also attach our economic update.

Best wishes,

NR

#### SITREP TEMPLATE PART 1 v1

New information should be inserted in **red**, with **emphasis in bold**, and sources of data provided where necessary. Outdated information should be **deleted**. [SitRep should be pasted into an email so that it is accessible to smartphone readers.]

| FCO [Country Office] Coronavirus Situation Report [#] |                             |                                      |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| COUNTRY/REGION  | IRELAND                     |                                      |
| DATE  | 30 March 2020               |                                      |
| LAST UPDATED  | 27 March                    |                                      |
| POINT OF CONTACT                                      | NR                          | @fco.gov.uk                          |
| Part 1 – all posts returning SITREPS should complete. |                             |                                      |
| Dashboard   |                             |                                      |
| Total confirmed cases (increase since last update)    | 2165                        | +796 since Friday (+200 in last 24h) |
| Intensive care cases (increase since last update)     | 88 (as of 29 March)         | +11 (from 27/3 to 28/3)              |
| Deaths (increase since last update)                   | 46                          | +27 (since 27/3)                     |
| Recoveries (increase since last update)               | Not reported                | Not reported                         |
| BNs resident in country (lower/upper estimates):      | 103,113 (April 2016 census) | 300,000 (reported figure)            |
| BNs visiting in country (lower/upper estimates):      | Not known                   | Not known                            |
| Key Developments Update                               |                             |                                      |

- There were 200 new cases confirmed (Sunday), bringing the total number of confirmed cases in Ireland to 2,615.
- There were 10 more deaths: total = 46
- 10,700 people are still waiting for a Covid-19 test with another 4,000 waiting for a test appointment. Ireland is now testing around 5,000 people a day.
- The Health Service Executive (HSE) said it had secured 60,000 more test kits this week and is expecting to procure a further 100,000 a week going forward.
- The HSE says it is planning for peak numbers to occur between 10-14 April. Worst case projections have suggested that the number of patients, requiring intensive care, could rise to a peak of 546 a day, by mid-April. N.B. This assessment was made before stricter measures were implemented on 27.3.
- The first flight delivering PPE from China arrived as part of a 10 flight/€208m deal. This shipment, worth €28m contained masks, gowns and eye shields.
- Repatriation of UK and Irish nationals from Peru continues.

On 27/3 Ireland announced stricter measures in response to the spread of Cov-19 and on the advice of the Public Health Emergency Team. The new measures which came into place on 28.3 for a two week period called on everyone to stay at home in all circumstances except:

- travel to and from work, for the purposes of work, only when the work is an essential health, social care or other essential service, that cannot be done from home.
- to shop for food or household goods, or collect a meal
- to attend medical appointments, and collect medicines.
- for vital family reasons, such as providing care to children, elderly or vulnerable people.
- to take brief individual physical exercise within 2 km of your own home, which may include children from your own household, as long as social distancing is observed.
- for farming purposes

In addition:

- All public and private gatherings outside a single household are prohibited.
- No social family visits that are not for the vital purposes above.
- A further range of non-essential shops and services will be closed.
- All non-essential surgery and medical procedures will be postponed. Pharmacists will have permission to dispense medicines outside the validity of prescriptions, on the basis of their own judgement.
- All visits to hospitals, residential centres or prisons will cease, apart from in defined compassionate circumstances.
- Shielding, or cocooning, will be introduced for everyone over 70, and categories who are particularly vulnerable to Covid 19.
- All public transport and passenger travel will be restricted only to essential workers, and people who are providing essential services.
- Apart from the activities above, there should be no travel outside a radius of 2km from your home, for any reason. .

## Key Risks

- The MP for Derry, Colm Eastwood has written to SoSNI. He has raised the issue of frontier workers living in NI and working in Ireland and queries whether they currently qualify for any employment relief. He raises a concern that they are ineligible from support being offered by the Irish government (because they live in NI) or the British Government (because they work outside the UK). The Embassy and NIO are looking into this.

BNs not at greater risk than the rest of the public.



- Key Ireland's 5.6 ICU beds/100,000 makes it the most vulnerable country in Europe in terms of the possibility of being overwhelmed by Covid-19 ICU admissions. However, the report does not take account of efforts to increase the number of ICU beds in recent weeks.

## Covid-19 and Health Situation Description

See <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/1ca282-statement-from-the-national-public-health-emergency-team-sunday-28-m/> for more detail.

### Latest data from Friday 27.3

- 51% are male and 48% are female, with 103 clusters involving 379 cases
- the median age of confirmed cases is 47 years
- 564 cases (26%) have been hospitalised
- of those hospitalised.
- 506 cases are associated with healthcare workers
- Dublin has the highest number of cases at 1,233 (56% of all cases) followed by Cork with 208 cases (9%)
- of those for whom transmission status is known, community transmission accounts for 51%, close contact accounts for 24%, travel abroad accounts for 25%
- The HSE have said there are now 500 ICU beds in Ireland, up from 255 pre covid-19. Ireland has 88 coronavirus patients in ICU units at present.
- The HSE is preparing to open a coronavirus isolation and stepdown facility at the Citywest hotel and conference centre with the ability to accommodate over 1,000 people.
- A new 'contact tracing app' that will alert people when someone close to them has the virus, is being developed, the HSE confirmed. It is likely to be rolled out in the next 10 days or so, and will be an opt-in system.
- There are 17 clusters of Covid-19 within nursing homes The CEO of Nursing Homes Ireland is due to meet the Minister for Health today.

## British Nationals

- Very few queries to Malaga helpline regarding Covid in Ireland. Overall little consular demand.
- Resident BNs affected by government restrictions, as are whole of society
- Many BNs cross the border from NI to Ireland daily; as governments in both jurisdictions advise against unnecessary travel flow is likely significantly reduced.

## Press Lines/Media

- Media coverage is broadly factual. Some commentary on key members of UK Government team being infected 'virus cuts swathe through UK establishment'. RTE report from London this morning mentioned instances of public not following guidance. The inference being that Irish public are 'behaving better' e.g. Karaoke party and the police turning the lake black.
- Embassy to place an Op Ed by HMA in Irish media this week underlining UK response and UK-Ireland co-operation.
- The Tanaiste issued a statement thanking UK and others for their help with repatriation Irish nationals from Lima. <https://twitter.com/dfatirl/status/1244349821072400386>
- No changes required to public lines.

## Travel Advice

|   |     |   |    |   |
|---|-----|---|----|---|
| Are flights operating (select one):                     | Yes | X | No |   |
| If <u>yes</u> , are closures expected in the next week: | Yes |   | No | X |

- **Travel advice updated on 28/3 to reflect new Irish measures.**
- No screening or temperature checks are in place at Irish airports.
- The Irish Government have said there are no plans to close airports or ports
- Ferry services remain in place.
- Flight services remain in place but on a reduced schedule. Ryanair schedule [here](#).
- All incoming travellers are required to restrict their movements (self quarantine) for 14 days, except those working in logistics / supply chains and those travelling from NI.
- Temporary visitors can leave via plane and ferry to GB, or overland to NI.
- Host government not being actively lobbied to keep routes to UK open, as quite clear that there's an intention they will be not least for freight purposes, but we will stay in close touch with the Irish
- **Internally, Irish rail is operating a 60% reduced rail service**

### Post Operations

- Future plans for staff deployment/presence

|   |   |                  |                  |            |                 |  |
|---|---|------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|--|
| Post operating status (select one):               | BAU   | X                | BCP in operation |            | Core staff only |  |
|   | <i>All wfh. Staff only to attend Embassy for essential tasks. Laissez Pass provided for staff if they are questioned by the gardai (police) on coming into the Embassy.</i> |                  |                  |            |                 |  |
| Crisis status (select one):                       | Normal  |                  | Crisis watch     | X          | Crisis mode     |  |
|   | <i>Serious situation but not affecting large number of BNs or compromising post operations at present.</i>  |                  |                  |            |                 |  |
| Remote working in place (select one):             | Yes   | X                | No               |            |                 |  |
|   | <i>Working well. Wide use of MS teams.</i>  |                  |                  |            |                 |  |
| Services open to visitors/customers (select one): | Yes   |                  | No               | X          |                 |  |
|   | <i>No demand, and preference for no consular face-to-face (although could in theory be facilitated if absolutely necessary)</i>   |                  |                  |            |                 |  |
| Drawdowns in place                                | UKB FCO staff   | No UKB PAG staff | No               | Dependents | No              |  |

- COVID-19 Taskforce Formed. Not formal crisis structure. Two embassy teams each taking two days at a time.

#### Monday business hours

SRO: **NR** [@fco.gov.uk](mailto:NR@fco.gov.uk) (Counsellor)  
 Political / Information Lead: **NR** [@fco.gov.uk](mailto:NR@fco.gov.uk) (1<sup>st</sup> Sec)  
 Consular: **NR** [@fco.gov.uk](mailto:NR@fco.gov.uk) or **NR** [@fco.gov.uk](mailto:NR@fco.gov.uk)  
 Out of hours duty officer: **NR** [@fco.gov.uk](mailto:NR@fco.gov.uk)

#### Tuesday business hours

SRO: **NR** [@fco.gov.uk](mailto:NR@fco.gov.uk) (Counsellor)  
 Political / Information Lead: **NR** [@fco.gov.uk](mailto:NR@fco.gov.uk) (1<sup>st</sup> Sec)  
 Consular: **NR** [@fco.gov.uk](mailto:NR@fco.gov.uk) or **NR** [@fco.gov.uk](mailto:NR@fco.gov.uk)  
 Out of hours duty officer: **NR** [@fco.gov.uk](mailto:NR@fco.gov.uk)



|   |
|---|
| <b>Assistance Required/Progress</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any information/resource Post requires from London; requests for Ministerial / other engagement: <b>none</b></li> <li>Assistance requested by host country: <b>none</b></li> </ul> |
| <b>Daily Rhythm</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Date and time of next Post crisis meeting: <b>Tuesday 31 March 1030</b></li> <li>Details of when the next Post SitRep will be issued: <b>Tuesday 31 March 1300</b></li> </ul>      |

### SITREP TEMPLATE PART 2 v1

New information should be inserted in **red**, with **emphasis in bold**, and sources of data provided where necessary. Outdated information should be **deleted**. [SitRep should be pasted into an email so that it is accessible to smartphone readers.]

|  |
|--|
| <b>Part 2 – only selected Posts should return this section.</b>  |
| <b>FCO [Country Office] Coronavirus Additional Questions Report [#]</b>  |
| <b>Behavioural and social interventions</b>  |
| <i>The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) has asked certain posts to list the behavioural or social measures host authorities are taking to contain or delay the spread of the virus through social transmission to inform the UK's domestic response. Please include the date when measures were announced.</i> |
| 1. Restrictions over large public or mass gatherings:  |
| <b>No social gatherings allowed other than members of the same household</b>   |
| 2. Closures of crèches, school or HE establishments:   |
| <i>All closed until at least April 19 – to date no special arrangements in place for children of key workers or vulnerable children.</i>   |
| 3. Isolation measures for individuals or households suspected or confirmed of being infected:  |
| <i>Self-isolation for 14 days for affected individuals / households.</i>   |
| 4. Requirements on social distancing, such as home working and closures of non-essential shops:  |
| <b>All requested to social distance with increased monitoring but no fines for non-compliance, stay at and work from home in all circumstances other than prescribed jobs businesses and services. See:</b>  |
| <a href="https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/539d23-stay-at-home-the-latest-public-health-measures-to-prevent-the-spread/">https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/539d23-stay-at-home-the-latest-public-health-measures-to-prevent-the-spread/</a>  |
| 5. Measures to protect the elderly or vulnerable groups self-isolating or in social care, and interventions to strengthen the social care sector:  |
| <i>Charity 'Alone' has helpline for older people. Some shops have special opening hours for vulnerable people. Many local and community initiatives. Many government welfare initiatives: six day waiting period for Illness Benefit removed; rate of Illness Benefit increased from €203 to €305.</i>                         |

6. Level and speed at which authorities are carrying out testing:

41 test centres have been created nationwide. At-home tests also available. To be eligible for a test you need to have a fever + another major symptom + be in a priority group. This criteria was introduced on 25 March after it was found only 6% of tests were coming back positive and with a large backlog having developed. Approx 20,000 tests have been carried out. **Now testing 5,000 a day.**

7. City or regional lockdowns, curfews or specific travel restrictions, and instructions provided to workers?

**People should wfh in all circumstances. People only meant to go out to: buy essential supplies, care for someone in need, exercise (within 2km), essential work.**

8. What advice and provisions, such as childcare, are given to critical workers such as emergency services?

Government exploring providing childcare for early-years children of critical workers. Trainee police sworn in and put on active service. Health system and armed forces being bolstered by recruitment of retired staff.

### Economics impacts and response

- Update on host governments' fiscal, monetary and other responses to support individuals, industries and the wider economy.

- Minister of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Regina Doherty, has said that by close of business on Friday, about 283,000 new people had applied for the Covid-19 emergency income payment from the Department of Social Protection and 16,000 plus companies had applied for the wage subsidy scheme.
- The Government has issued a list of workers who can continue to leave home to go to work amid the latest restrictions. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/dfeb8f-list-of-essential-service-providers-under-new-public-health-guidelin/>
- The Construction Industry Federation (CIF) has directed its members to cease working on building sites and secure them immediately.

Irish Parliament in process of passing 'Emergency Powers in the Public Interest' Bill, which includes rent freeze and protection against eviction for 90 days.

- Update on economic impacts of Covid-19 on (a) financial markets, (b) industries/sectors, (c) the labour market and unemployment, (d) consumers and (e) growth (GDP forecasts).
- 

The think-tank ESRI predict rise to 18 % unemployment in Q2 and a GDP contraction of 7.1% in 2020.

### International response



- Ireland coordinating with EU bodies on European response.
- MFA focused on repatriation of Irish citizens across the world.
- Recently procured large consignment of medical PPE from China.
- In close coordination with UK on response to the crisis, not least to minimise disparities between Ireland and NI given open land border. HMG exploring with Irish Government possibility of holding BIC (British-Irish Council) and BIIGC (British Irish Intergovernmental Conference) Coordination with respect to travel advice also ongoing. Several ministerial calls in last fortnight including PM-Taoiseach on 19 March.

**From:** Name Redacted <[redacted]@fco.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 27 March 2020 14:18  
**To:** Coronavirus Taskforce Info (Sensitive) <C-19.FCOSecretariatInformation@fco.gov.uk>

[See recipients listed above]

**Subject:** Ireland COVID-19 Sitrep #8 - BE Dublin 1300 27 March

Colleagues,

PSB BE Dublin Sitrep in new format.

Is there a need to submit weekend sitreps?

Yours,

NR

NR

First Secretary, Political | British Embassy, Dublin | Mob:

Irrelevant & Sensitive

#### SITREP TEMPLATE PART 1 v1

*New information should be inserted in **red**, with **emphasis in bold**, and sources of data provided where necessary. Outdated information should be **deleted**. [SitRep should be pasted into an email so that it is accessible to smartphone readers.]*

**FCO [Country Office] Coronavirus Situation Report [#]**

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| COUNTRY/REGION   | IRELAND   |
| DATE             | 27 March 2020                                     |
| LAST UPDATED     | 26 March (in previous format)                     |
| POINT OF CONTACT | NR <a href="mailto:NR@fco.gov.uk">@fco.gov.uk</a> |

Part 1 – all posts returning SITREPS should complete.

### Dashboard

|  |                             |                           |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Total confirmed cases (increase since last update) | 1819                        | +255                      |
| Intensive care cases (increase since last update)  | 47 (as of 24 March)         | +8 (over 23 March)        |
| Deaths (increase since last update)                | 19                          | +10                       |
| Recoveries (increase since last update)            | Not reported                | Not reported              |
| BNs resident in country (lower/upper estimates):   | 103,113 (April 2016 census) | 300,000 (reported figure) |
| BNs visiting in country (lower/upper estimates):   | Not known                   | Not known                 |

### Key Developments Update

- The National Public Health Emergency Team is meeting today as number of deaths more than double in 24hrs. The emergency team is particularly concerned about clusters of infections in health care settings.
- The 'Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Bill' will go to the Seanad today after passing the Dail last night.
- RTE reports that after a call between Simon Coveney and the Peruvian FM clearance has been granted for a repatriation flight in the next few days. Six vulnerable Irish nationals returned on this week's UK flight from Peru.

### Key Risks

- BNs not at greater risk than the rest of the public.
- Key risk as reported yesterday is that ECDC report indicates Ireland's 5.6 ICU beds/100,000 makes it the most vulnerable country in Europe in terms of the possibility of being overwhelmed by Covid-19 ICU admissions. However, the report does not take account of efforts to increase the number of ICU beds in recent weeks.

### Covid-19 and Health Situation Description

All that follows as of midnight 24 March. See [here](#) for more detail.

- 56% of cases in Dublin, 11% in Cork, rest spread across country.
- Community transmission 28%, travel-related 16%, close contact with confirmed case 13%, under investigation 42%.
- Many publicly-confirmed travel-related cases relate to Northern Italy.
- Health service being strengthened by recruitment of retired staff. Purchase and delivery of PPE underway.
  - 23% of cases are healthcare workers – total 283.
  - No known deaths amongst healthcare workers
  - As of Wednesday, tests only available for people who have fever + one other major symptom + are in a priority group (including healthcare workers). This in response to severe backlogs in the testing system.
  - Resources of private healthcare sector now available to public sector, to respond to crisis

### British Nationals



- Very few queries to Malaga helpline regarding Covid in Ireland. Overall little consular demand.
- Resident BNs affected by government restrictions, as are whole of society
- Many BNs cross the border from NI to Ireland daily; as governments in both jurisdictions advise against unnecessary travel flow is likely significantly reduced.

### Press Lines/Media

- As British and Irish responses have converged, reporting has become more factual and less critical. Focus is on areas where UK still differs from Ireland, including moving house and advice to those most at risk.
- One critical voice is Dr Gabriel Scally, President of the Epidemiology and Public Health Section at the Royal Society of Medicine, who this morning was again featured on RTE's Morning Ireland ('Today Programme' equivalent). He said that the UK was making no effort to control the spread of the virus in the community through testing. UK was an outlier together with Sweden and US and was not following WHO guidance. There would be a high burden of cases as a result and would be difficult to lift travel restrictions afterwards. This is not the first time he has been critical of the U.K.
- No changes required to public lines.

### Travel Advice

|   |     |                                     |    |                                     |
|---|-----|-------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|
| Are flights operating (select one):                     | Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No |                                     |
| If <u>yes</u> , are closures expected in the next week: | Yes |                                     | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

- No screening or temperature checks are in place at Irish airports.
- The Irish Government have said there are no plans to close airports or ports
- Ferry services remain in place.
- Flight services remain in place but on a reduced schedule. Ryanair schedule [here](#).
- All incoming travelers are required to restrict their movements (self quarantine) for 14 days, except those working in logistics / supply chains and those travelling from NI.
- Temporary visitors can leave via plane and ferry to GB, or overland to NI.
- Host government not being actively lobbied to keep routes to UK open, as quite clear that there's an intention they will be not least for freight purposes, but we will stay in close touch with the Irish

### Post Operations

|   |   |                                     |                  |                                     |                 |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| • Future plans for staff deployment/presence      |   |                                     |                  |                                     |                 |
| Post operating status (select one):               | BAU   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | BCP in operation |                                     | Core staff only |
|   | <i>Almost all wfh. Minimal presence in building for some essential roles.</i>   |                                     |                  |                                     |                 |
| Crisis status (select one):                       | Normal  |                                     | Crisis watch     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Crisis mode     |
|   | <i>Serious situation but not affecting large number of BNs or compromising post operations at present.</i>                      |                                     |                  |                                     |                 |
| Remote working in place (select one):             | Yes   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No               |                                     |                 |
|   | <i>Working well. Wide use of MS teams.</i>  |                                     |                  |                                     |                 |
| Services open to visitors/customers (select one): | Yes   |                                     | No               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                 |
|   | <i>No demand, and preference for no consular face-to-face (although could in theory be facilitated if absolutely necessary)</i> |                                     |                  |                                     |                 |
| Drawdowns in place                                | UKB FCO staff   | No                                  | UKB PAG staff    | No                                  | Dependents      |
|   |   |                                     |                  |                                     | No              |

- COVID-19 Taskforce Formed. Not formal crisis structure. Two embassy teams each taking two days at a time.

#### Friday business hours

SRO: **NR** @fco.gov.uk (DHM)

Political / Information Lead: **NR** @fco.gov.uk (1<sup>st</sup> Sec)

Consular: **NR** @fco.gov.uk (Vice Consul)

Out of hours duty officer: **NR** @fco.gov.uk (2<sup>nd</sup> Sec)

#### Saturday (monitoring)

SRO: **NR** @fco.gov.uk (Counsellor)

Political / Information Lead: **NR** @fco.gov.uk (1<sup>st</sup> Sec)

#### Sunday (monitoring)

SRO: **NR** @fco.gov.uk (DHM)

Political / Information Lead: **NR** @fco.gov.uk (1<sup>st</sup> Sec)

### Assistance Required/Progress

- Any information/resource Post requires from London; requests for Ministerial / other engagement: **none**
- Assistance requested by host country: **none**

### Daily Rhythm

- Date and time of next Post crisis meeting: **Monday 30 March 1030**
- Details of when the next Post SitRep will be issued: **Monday 30 March 1300**

### SITREP TEMPLATE PART 2 v1

New information should be inserted in **red**, with **emphasis in bold**, and sources of data provided where necessary. Outdated information should be **deleted**. [SitRep should be pasted into an email so that it is accessible to smartphone readers.]

**Part 2 – only selected Posts should return this section.**

### FCO [Country Office] Coronavirus Additional Questions Report [#]

#### Behavioural and social interventions

The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (**SAGE**) has asked certain posts to list the behavioural or social measures host authorities are taking to contain or delay the spread of the virus through social transmission to inform the UK's domestic response. Please include the date when measures were announced.

1. Restrictions over large public or mass gatherings:

**No social gatherings of over 4 allowed unless from same household**

2. Closures of crèches, school or HE establishments:

**All closed until at least April 19 – to date no special arrangements in place for children of key workers or vulnerable children.**

3. Isolation measures for individuals or households suspected or confirmed of being infected:

**Self-isolation for 14 days for affected individuals / households.**



4. Requirements on social distancing, such as home working and closures of non-essential shops:

All encouraged to social distance with increased monitoring but no fines for non-compliance, stay at and work from home where possible but construction sites open subject to distancing, all non-essential shops closed.

5. Measures to protect the elderly or vulnerable groups self-isolating or in social care, and interventions to strengthen the social care sector:

Charity 'Alone' has helpline for older people. Some shops have special opening hours for vulnerable people. Many local and community initiatives. Many government welfare initiatives: six day waiting period for Illness Benefit removed; rate of Illness Benefit increased from €203 to €305.

6. Level and speed at which authorities are carrying out testing:

41 test centres have been created nationwide. At-home tests also available. To be eligible for a test you need to have a fever + another major symptom + be in a priority group. This criteria was introduced on 25 March after it was found only 6% of tests were coming back positive and with a large backlog having developed. Approx 20,000 tests have been carried out. 2,000 are being tested daily.

7. City or regional lockdowns, curfews or specific travel restrictions, and instructions provided to workers?

People should wfh where possible. People only meant to go out to: buy essential supplies, care for someone in need, exercise, work. No gatherings in groups larger than four unless all from same household. Discouraged from entering others' houses.

8. What advice and provisions, such as childcare, are given to critical workers such as emergency services?

Government exploring providing childcare for early-years children of critical workers. Trainee police sworn in and put on active service. Health system and armed forces being bolstered by recruitment of retired staff.

### Economics impacts and response

- Update on host governments' fiscal, monetary and other responses to support individuals, industries and the wider economy.

Irish Parliament in process of passing 'Emergency Powers in the Public Interest' Bill, which includes rent freeze and protection against eviction for 90 days.

- Update on economic impacts of Covid-19 on (a) financial markets, (b) industries/sectors, (c) the labour market and unemployment, (d) consumers and (e) growth (GDP forecasts).
- 

a.) not much international market turbulence at present (see separate report to HMT by Nicola Awford) b.) fuel retail operator Applegreen has cut almost half its workforce in Ireland & UK. US Cybersecurity firm Tenable has put on hold a plan to relocate its international HQ to Dublin. c.) think-tank ESRI predict rise to 18 % unemployment in Q2. d.) ESRI predict reduction in household spending. e.) ESRI predict 7.1 GDP contraction in 2020.

### International response

- Ireland coordinating with EU bodies on European response.
- MFA focused on repatriation of Irish citizens across the world.
- Recently procured large consignment of medical PPE from China.
- In close coordination with UK on response to the crisis, not least to minimise disparities between Ireland and NI given open land border. HMG exploring with Irish Government possibility of holding BIC (British-Irish Council) and BIIGC (British Irish Intergovernmental Conference) Coordination with respect to travel advice also ongoing. Several ministerial calls in last fortnight including PM-Taoiseach on 19 March.

From: **NR** (Sensitive)

Sent: 26 March 2020 14:45

[See recipients listed above]

Subject: Ireland: Coronavirus SITREP 26/3/20

All,

PSB today's Ireland Coronavirus Sitrep.

Please see attached also a report on economic / business developments from the embassy economic section.

Yours,

**NR**

**Name Redacted** First Secretary, Political | British Embassy, Dublin | Mob: **Irrelevant & Sensitive**

**CRISIS WATCH SITREP 26.03.2020**  
CORONAVIRUS: IRELAND

**Situation Update**



- 235 new cases announced yesterday - the biggest daily increase so far - as well as two deaths. 1564 confirmed cases and nine deaths to date.
- The Dail today debates the 'Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (Covid 19) 2020' Bill. The bill includes *inter alia* provisions for temporary rent freezes, prohibition on evictions, and changing rules to allow for hiring of retired health workers and retired members of the armed forces. Few TDs are present in the chamber.
- Concern that once the Seanad (upper parliamentary chamber) dissolves this weekend, no new legislation will be able to be passed. This is because in the absence of a new government following the 8 February general election, the eleven senators nominated by an incoming Taoiseach cannot be appointed. The only clear way through is for a new government to be formed.
- Fianna Fail and Fine Gael are progressing in talks to form a new government. They said in a statement last night that both agreed the need to form a strong stable government that would help Ireland recover post Covid-19; that they were working to develop a Programme for Government that provided stability and a working majority in the Dáil; and that they would continue to meet and would reach out to other parties.
- DFAT remain focused on repatriation. Simon Coveney made a statement yesterday that 170 Irish citizens were flying back from Perth via the UK, and that his team were trying to facilitate further flights for Irish citizens in the coming days.
- ECDC report indicates Ireland's 5.6 ICU beds/100,000 makes her the most vulnerable country in Europe in terms of the possibility of being overwhelmed by Covid-19 ICU admissions. The UK is in second place with 6.7 beds/100,000.
- Significant domestic restrictions are in place:
  - People should only leave the house only for essential supplies, for medical or dental appointments, to care for others or for exercise. All non-essential shops are closed.
  - Non-essential indoor visits to other people's homes should be avoided. Social gatherings outdoors should be no more than 4, unless from the same household.
  - No unnecessary travel should take place within the country or overseas;  
(See FCO Ireland Travel Advice Page for full details on domestic restrictions).
- Ryanair announced on 25 March that whilst most of its planes would be grounded from 24 March it would operate daily or weekly flights from Dublin to many UK airports until at least 2 April.
- Irish Ferries have said they would continue to operate schedules linking Ireland to GB and France.
- 21/3 - HMA gave advice to UK nationals visiting and/or living in Ireland.
- The Embassy is working up a comms plan to project the positive action the UK is taking to tackle Covid -19 and underscore joint working with the Irish.

### British Nationals

- 7250 hits on FCO Ireland Travel Advice page between 21 and 25 March.
- There are approximately 200,000 BNs in Ireland.
- Still very few enquiries to Malaga on the COVID-19 situation in Ireland.
- Two consular cases have been registered from BNs seeking to return home. No cases of BNs seeking assistance with treatment.

### Post Operations

- Embassy remains on crisis watch. As of 25.3, the Embassy's on-site footprint had been further reduced, prioritising essential functions (reception, security, cleaning, access to otherwise unavailable comms etc.) in the Embassy and Residence.
- Coronavirus Taskforce established to cover policy and corporate aspects of Post response.

### Cross-Whitehall / External Partners

- A virtual meeting of the British Irish Council (BIC) to discuss Covid-19 is expected to take place although the Irish Government have signalled that they do not have the capacity to take part in one this week.
- Trilateral senior co-ordination meeting involving senior UK, Ireland and Northern Ireland Civil Service hoped to take place as soon as possible [await confirmation from Ireland].
- SOSFA spoke to Tánaiste on 20 March. They agreed on the importance of the CTA and the need for coordination on travel advice; discussed EU border closures; and discussed different national approaches to COVID-19.

- SOSNI spoke to Tánaiste on 20 March.
- SOS for Transport spoke with Transport Minister Shane Ross on 20 March.
- The PM spoke with the Taoiseach on 19 March. They agreed to be in touch and to align actions as much as possible.
- Cabinet Secretary Mark Sedwill spoke with Sec-Gen Martin Fraser on 18 March. Both agreed on the need for close cooperation and named leads in both administrations who would take this forward.

#### Travel Advice / Press lines/Media

- Travel Advice for Ireland being updated on 26 March to include details of recent restrictions. The IG has been informed.
- UK and Ireland coordinated to update travel advice on Friday 20 March, advising that the availability of cross-Irish Sea travel may reduce, and that visitors to Ireland from GB and Irish visitors to GB should pay close attention to announcements from airlines and ferry companies.
- The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade continues to advise against all non-essential travel overseas (including cruises). The Irish government now also advises against unnecessary travel within Ireland.

#### Assistance Required

- No

#### Battle Rhythm

- Sitrep to be issued daily on weekdays. Staff will monitor over the weekend and report on any important developments.

From: **Name Redacted** <[Name Redacted@fco.gov.uk](mailto:Name Redacted@fco.gov.uk)>  
Sent: 25 March 2020 14:59

[See recipients listed above]

**Subject:** RE: Ireland: Coronavirus SITREP 25/3/20

Dear Colleagues,

Please see below today's Sitrep with business and economic developments attached too.

Best wishes,

NR

**CRISIS WATCH SITREP 25.03.2020**  
CORONAVIRUS: IRELAND



## Situation Update

- 204 new cases. Total = 1,329 cases in Ireland. There was one further death bringing the total to 7.
- New rules introduced for Covid-19 testing given the backlog. Patients must have two symptoms (fever and either cough or shortness of breath) and be in priority group (close contacts of confirmed cases, healthcare staff and vulnerable groups).
- The Irish post office (An Post) will also be delivering a public information leaflet to all households, postcards to be delivered free of charge to friends and family, and will provide support with food, medical supplies and general deliveries to the elderly and vulnerable.
- In an address on 24.3, caretaker, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar announced new measures to slow the spread of the virus and support those impacted economically. He said existing measures would also be extended to 19 April. Emergency legislation was signed into law by the President. The measures included the following:
  - People should stay at home as much as possible, work from home and only leave home to go to work if it's essential;
  - People should only leave the house only for essential supplies, for medical or dental appointments, to care for others or for exercise. All non-essential shops are to close – see the [List of Essential Retail Outlets](#) [List of Essential Retail Outlets](#).
  - All theatres, clubs, gyms, hairdressers, betting shops, marts, markets, casinos, libraries and other non-essential outlets are to shut. All sporting events to be cancelled including those held behind closed doors. All cafes and restaurants to limit to take away only and implement social distancing in queueing;
  - Non-essential indoor visits to other people's homes should be avoided. Social gatherings outdoors should be no more than 4, unless from the same household.
  - No unnecessary travel should take place within the country or overseas;
  - Schools will remain closed beyond 29 March. The Dept of Education says it is doing all it can to ensure that exams will take place this year;
  - Places of worship to restrict numbers entering;
  - Private hospitals are to act as part of the public hospital system during the Covid-19 emergency.
  - Gardaí and park rangers are to increase interventions in cases of non-compliance.
- On the **economic support**, the Taoiseach announced that those laid off will receive €353 a week equating to 75% of earnings in the sectors affected (up from €203), with the first payment to be made on Friday. Those inactive due to self –solation will be eligible for the same payment. Maintaining the link between employers and workers, is seen as critical to ensuring the economy can bounce back after the emergency. To that end, a temporary wage subsidy of 70% of take home pay up to a maximum tax-free amount of €410 per week to help affected companies keep paying their employees. Self-Employed will be eligible for the Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment of €350 directly from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (rather than the Revenue scheme).
- Constuction sites and factories to remain open on the condition they can enforce social distancing.
- Many restrictions in place for visitors and residents in Ireland. See FCO Ireland Travel Advice Page for full details.
- Ryanair announced on 25 March that while most of its planes would be grounded from 24 March it will operate daily or weekly flights from Dublin to London Stansted and Gatwick, Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Amsterdam, Brussels, Berlin, Cologne and Lisbon from Friday March 27 to Thursday 2 April. It will also operate flights from Cork to London Stansted.
- Irish Ferries released new Covid 19 announcement to say "Irish Ferries continues to operate schedules linking Ireland to GB and France. This service ensures that those who need to travel for repatriation, for essential work, or to join their loved ones can still access vital transport links whilst maintaining social distancing on board. These services also play a critical role in the supply chain, ensuring our supermarket shelves remain stocked and important pharmaceutical and medical supplies are shipped."
- 21/3 - HMA gave advice to UK nationals visiting and/or living in Ireland. We are also working on some social media to highlight joint British and Irish nationals' repatriation from Peru. The Embassy is also working up a comms plan to project the positive action the UK is taking to tackle Covid –19 and underscore joint working with the Irish.

## British Nationals

- There are approximately 200,000 BNs in Ireland.
- Still very few enquiries to Malaga on the COVID-19 situation in Ireland.
- **Two** consular cases have been registered from BNs seeking to return home. No cases of BNs seeking assistance with treatment.

#### Post Operations

- **Embassy remains on crisis watch. As of 25.3, the Embassy's on site footprint has been further reduced, prioritising essential functions (reception, security, cleaning, access to otherwise unavailable comms etc.) in the Embassy and Residence.**
- Coronavirus Taskforce established to cover policy and corporate aspects of Post response.

#### Cross-Whitehall / External Partners

- A virtual meeting of the British Irish Council (BIC) to discuss Covid-19 is expected to take place **although the Irish Government have signalled that they do not have the capacity to take part in one this week.** The BIC is made-up of political representatives of the UK and Irish Governments, the devolved administrations in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, together with representatives of the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.
- Trilateral senior co-ordination meeting involving senior UK, Ireland and Northern Ireland Civil Service hoped to take place as soon as possible [await confirmation from Ireland].
- SOSFA spoke to Tánaiste on 20 March. They agreed on the importance of the CTA and the need for coordination on travel advice; discussed EU border closures; and discussed different national approaches to COVID-19.
- SOSNI spoke to Tánaiste on 20 March.
- SOS for Transport spoke with Transport Minister Shane Ross on 20 March.
- The PM spoke with the Taoiseach on 19 March. They agreed to be in touch and to align actions as much as possible.
- Cabinet Secretary Mark Sedwill spoke with Sec-Gen Martin Fraser on 18 March. Both agreed on the need for close cooperation and named leads in both administrations who would take this forward.

#### Travel Advice / Press lines/Media

- UK and Ireland coordinated to update travel advice on Friday 20 March, advising that the availability of cross-Irish Sea travel may reduce, and that visitors to Ireland from GB and Irish visitors to GB should pay close attention to announcements from airlines and ferry companies.
- **The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade continues to advise against all non-essential travel overseas (now includes cruises). The Irish government now also advises against unnecessary travel within Ireland, FCO Ireland team are updating travel advice to reflect the latest Irish Government measures.**

#### Assistance Required

- No

#### Battle Rhythm

- Sitrep to be issued daily on weekdays. Staff will monitor over the weekend and report on any important developments.

From: **NR** (Sensitive)

Sent: 24 March 2020 18:19

[See recipients listed above]



[See recipients listed above]

**Subject:** RE: Ireland: Coronavirus SITREP 24/3/20

Dear Colleagues,

Please see below today's Sitrep. Latest business and economic developments are attached too.

Best wishes

NR

**CRISIS WATCH SITREP 24.03.2020**  
CORONAVIRUS: IRELAND

**Situation Update**

- 219 new cases. Total = 1,125 cases in Ireland. There were two further deaths bringing the total to 6.
- In an address this afternoon, caretaker, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar announced new measures to slow the spread of the virus and support those impacted economically. He said existing measures would also be extended to 19 April. Emergency legislation was signed into law by the President today. Today's measures included the following:
  - People should only leave home for essential reasons (work, or for essential supplies, treatment for illness or exercise).
  - Individuals should work from home unless workplace attendance is essential.
  - No unnecessary travel should be made within Ireland or overseas.
  - From midnight tonight, all theatres, clubs, gyms, hairdressers, betting shops, marts, markets, casinos, libraries and other non-essential outlets are to shut. All sporting events to be cancelled including those held behind closed doors. All cafes and restaurants to limit to take away only and implement social distancing in queuing.
  - All places of worship to restrict numbers entering at any one time.
  - Social gatherings of individuals outdoors should be no more than four persons, unless all are from the same family.
  - Private hospitals are to act as part of the public hospital system during the Covid-19 emergency.
  - Gardai and park rangers are to increase interventions in cases of non-compliance.
- On the economic support, the Taoiseach announced that those laid off will receive €353 a week equating to 75% of earnings in the sectors affected (up from €203), with the first payment to be made on Friday. Those inactive due to self-isolation will be eligible for the same payment. Maintaining the link between employers and workers, is seen as critical to ensuring the economy can bounce back after the emergency. To that end, a temporary wage subsidy of 70% of take home pay up to a maximum tax-free amount of €410 per week to help affected companies keep paying their employees. Self-Employed will be eligible for the Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment of €350 directly from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (rather than the Revenue scheme). Further details will be provided by the Business Minister.
- Constuction sites and factories to remain open on the condition they can enforce social distancing.

In other developments today:

- Education Minister confirmed that schools will not reopen on 29 March.
- The Bank of Ireland has closed 101 branches. 161 would remain open. The Bank said that footfall was low (partly due to on-line banking and partly due to COVID-19). The closures would divert staff to support contact centres and help customers.
- The Irish Government informed missions today that the processing of new visa applications has been limited to priority or emergency cases meeting very specific criteria, including healthcare professionals, immediate family of Irish citizens and persons entitled to EU Free Movement rights. There is a blanket temporary leave for asylum cases and all interviews and appeals have been suspended until further notice.
- Minister for Health Simon Harris has said priority testing, for example for healthcare workers, will be implemented and that the State would take control of private hospitals for the duration of the crisis and that patients with the virus will be treated for free with no distinction between public and private. The waiting time for a test is currently four-five days, and 40,000 are waiting to be tested. Additional centres are being installed across the country to cope with the pressure.
- Many restrictions in place for visitors and residents in Ireland. See FCO Ireland Travel Advice Page for full details.
- 21/3 - HMA gave advice to UK nationals visiting and/or living in Ireland.

#### British Nationals

- There are approximately 200,000 BNs in Ireland.
- Still very few enquiries to Malaga on the COVID-19 situation in Ireland.
- One consular case has been registered from a BN seeking to return home. No cases of BNs seeking assistance with treatment.

#### Post Operations

- Embassy is now on crisis watch with majority of staff working remotely, and a shift pattern to ensure a limited physical presence in the building. Remote working is functioning well. Embassy to update guidance on 25.03 to reflect changing UK and Ireland government postures.
- Coronavirus Taskforce established to cover policy and corporate aspects of Post response.

#### Cross-Whitehall / External Partners

- A virtual meeting of the British Irish Council (BIC) to discuss Covid-19 is expected to take place within the next week. The BIC is made up of political representatives of the UK and Irish Governments, the devolved administrations in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, together with representatives of the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.
- Trilateral senior co-ordination meeting involving senior UK, Ireland and Northern Ireland Civil Service hoped to take place as soon as possible [await confirmation from Ireland].
- SOSFA spoke to Tánaiste on 20 March. They agreed on the importance of the CTA and the need for coordination on travel advice; discussed EU border closures; and discussed different national approaches to COVID-19.
- SOSNI spoke to Tánaiste on 20 March.
- SOS for Transport spoke with Transport Minister Shane Ross on 20 March.
- The PM spoke with the Taoiseach on 19 March. They agreed to be in touch and to align actions as much as possible.
- Cabinet Secretary Mark Sedwill spoke with Sec-Gen Martin Fraser on 18 March. Both agreed on the need for close cooperation and named leads in both administrations who would take this forward.



|  |
|--|
| <b>Travel Advice / Press lines/Media</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UK and Ireland coordinated to update travel advice on Friday 20 March, advising that the availability of cross-Irish Sea travel may reduce, and that visitors to Ireland from GB and Irish visitors to GB should pay close attention to announcements from airlines and ferry companies.</li> <li>FCO Ireland team reviewing travel advice to reflect the latest Irish Government measures</li> </ul> |
| <b>Assistance Required</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Battle Rhythm</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sitrep to be issued daily on weekdays. Staff will monitor over the weekend and report on any important developments.</li> </ul>   |

From: NR @fco.gov.uk>  
Sent: 23 March 2020 13:19

[See recipients listed above]

Subject: Ireland: Coronavirus SITREP 23/03/20, TIME 1320

All,

PSB today's Ireland Coronavirus Sitrep.

Please see attached also a report on economic / business developments from the embassy economic section.

Yours,

NR

NR First Secretary, Political | British Embassy, Dublin | Mob: Irrelevant & Sensitive

**CRISIS WATCH SITREP Monday 23.03.2020, 1320**

CORONAVIRUS: IRELAND

|                         |
|-------------------------|
| <b>Situation Update</b> |
|                         |

- 121 new cases. Total = 906 cases in Ireland. Fourth death announced.
- New restrictions to enforce social distancing are expected. Further analysis and recommendations on public policy will be made by the National Public Health Emergency Team tomorrow, and the government will consider and act following that advice. This follows a weekend of good weather and disregard for social distancing guidelines by some in Ireland. Restrictions on gatherings on beaches, in parks and in other public spaces may be included.
- McDonalds will close its restaurants across Ireland (and the UK) from 7pm tonight. The Irish Farmers' Association said this was a big blow to the Irish beef industry, as McDonald's was a big buyer.
- Minister for Health Simon Harris has said priority testing, for example for healthcare workers, may be implemented. The waiting time for a test is currently four-five days, and 40,000 are waiting to be tested. Additional centres are being installed across the country to cope with the pressure.
- Tánaiste Simon Coveney has said that the government is working on a 'significant' financial package to support people who've lost their jobs. It would go 'well beyond' the €203-a-week 'COVID payments' currently on offer. The scheme is expected to be a payment by the government which employers can top up, but not a salary-linked payment like in Denmark or the UK.
- Concern reported about 135 Irish nationals unable to leave Peru due to lack of flights and travel restrictions. UK and Ireland are coordinating on consular issues such as this one (via FCO Ireland team in London).
- Many restrictions in place for visitors and residents in Ireland. See FCO Ireland Travel Advice Page for full details.

#### British Nationals

- There are approximately 200,000 BNs in Ireland.
- Still very few enquiries to Malaga on the COVID-19 situation in Ireland.
- No consular cases have been registered from BNs seeking to return home, or seeking assistance with treatment.

#### Post Operations

- Embassy is now on crisis watch with majority of staff working remotely, and a shift pattern to ensure a limited physical presence in the building. Remote working is functioning well.
- Coronavirus Taskforce established to cover policy and corporate aspects of Post response.

#### Cross-Whitehall / External Partners

- SOSFA spoke to Tánaiste on 20 March. They agreed on the importance of the CTA and the need for coordination on travel advice; discussed EU border closures; and discussed different national approaches to COVID-19.
- SOSNI spoke to Tánaiste on 20 March.
- SOS for Transport spoke with Transport Minister Shane Ross on 20 March.
- The PM spoke with the Taoiseach on 19 March. They agreed to be in touch and to align actions as much as possible.
- Cabinet Secretary Mark Sedwill spoke with Sec-Gen Martin Fraser on 18 March. Both agreed on the need for close cooperation and named leads in both administrations who would take this forward.

#### Travel Advice / Press lines/Media

- UK and Ireland coordinated to update travel advice on Friday 20 March, advising that the availability of cross-Irish Sea travel may reduce, and that visitors to Ireland from GB and Irish visitors to GB should pay close attention to announcements from airlines and ferry companies.

#### Assistance Required

- No

#### Battle Rhythm

- Sitrep to be issued daily on weekdays. Staff will monitor over the weekend and report on any important developments.



**NR** First Secretary, Economic and Prosperity | British Embassy Dublin | Echo: **Irrelevant & Sensitive**  
**I&S** **Mobile** **Irrelevant & Sensitive:**  
**Email:** **NR** [@fco.gov.uk](mailto: @fco.gov.uk) : British Embassy in Ireland | [@BritembDublin](https://twitter.com/BritembDublin) | Like us on [f](#) | [e](#) Visit the  
FCO blogs at <http://blogs.fco.gov.uk>

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