



NATIONAL COMMISSIONER OF THE
ICELANDIC POLICE
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL
PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY



Applies to: The media, almannavarnir.is, Administration and Chief Epidemiologist's contacts.

STATUS REPORT

Date: 11.03.2020

Time: 17:00

Location: Coordination Centre / Directorate of Health /Chief Epidemiologist

Emergency / Distress Phase: COVID-19

Event description

Every effort is being made to distribute information and advice to the public, public bodies and companies. All instructions can be found on the [Directorate of Health](#) website and [National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police](#) website.

In the last 24 hours, 15 new infections have been diagnosed, including 4 domestic infections, one of which can be traced to ski regions in the Alps. The number of infected persons is now 85, including 20 domestic infections. The origins of all the infections can be traced to northern Italy and to ski resorts in the Alps. Efforts are being made to make diagnoses as early as possible and to quarantine the individuals as soon as possible, when appropriate, and to isolate any infected individuals. A total of 856 samples have been taken, including 59 today.

An agreement is being finalised between the Department of Clinical Microbiology – National University Hospital and deCODE genetics in order to begin screening for COVID-19 in Icelandic society. The plan is to begin screening as soon as possible.

- The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has published [information on its website](#) on the effects of the announced emergency phase on school activities in Iceland.
- The Directory of Health has also published [Instructions regarding COVID-19 and public gatherings](#). These state that there is no ban on public gatherings, but it is important for the organisers to ensure adequate biosecurity measures at public gatherings.

Press conference on 11th

Chief Superintendent of Police Vidir Reynisson discussed the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak on public transport, schools and workplaces. A ban on public gatherings can be expected to be put in place within delimited areas at some point in time. The public bus company, Straeto, will issue instructions regarding public transport. C.S. Reynisson urged the public to stick as much as possible to their daily routine, including exercise, and to practice general good hygiene, hand-washing and using hand disinfectant.

Chief Epidemiologist Thorolfur Gudnason gave an overview of the COVID-19 situation, including the number of confirmed cases in Iceland. One person has been hospitalised (the third individual so far). However, most cases show little or no symptoms. He stressed the importance of early diagnosis, as well as quarantining in order to slow the spread as much as possible and to distribute the burden on the health-care system. The main aim is to protect

vulnerable senior citizens and individuals with underlying illnesses. The Landspítali Bacteriology- and Virology Department has received a new shipment of sampling swabs.

Director of Health Alma Möller introduced the health-care services' reserve staff call up plan. The Health-care service has requested the assistance of health-care workers, doctors, nurses and nursing auxiliaries, to form a health-care services reserve. Professionals are being asked to temporarily join the health-care service on short notice, either full-time, part-time or on an hourly basis. [The sign-up form](#) can be accessed on the website of the Ministry of Health. Dr. Möller added a reminder that in addition to the 1700 phone number, COVID-19 advice is available through health clinics and on the www.heilsuvera.is net chat, every day until 22:00 hrs.

The Head Master of Hamrahlid College Steinn Jóhannsson discussed the situation after a student was confirmed as being infected, explaining how the school will function. Around 50 students are currently in quarantine and this has affected the school work considerably. The school has been working closely with the Chief Epidemiologist and the Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management epidemiological tracing team. A good flow of information between the school and student's homes is very important. Alternative methods of teaching being looked into, including using distance teaching.

Status

Iceland – today's status

The origins of the infections can be traced both locally and abroad. The origins of the infections are as follows:

Origin of infection	Number of cases
Iceland	20
Other countries	65
Total	85

Number of individuals that have been isolated or quarantined:

Resources	Number of cases
Isolation	85
Quarantine	720
Total	805

The epidemiological tracing team has contacted those in quarantine with the help of health-care staff from the Reykjavik area.

Individuals in quarantine by regions:

Quarantine	Number of cases
Greater Reykjavik Area	616
South-western Iceland	21
Western Iceland and West fjords	20

Northern Iceland	20
Eastern Iceland	4
Southern Iceland	19
Information is being gathered	20
Total	720

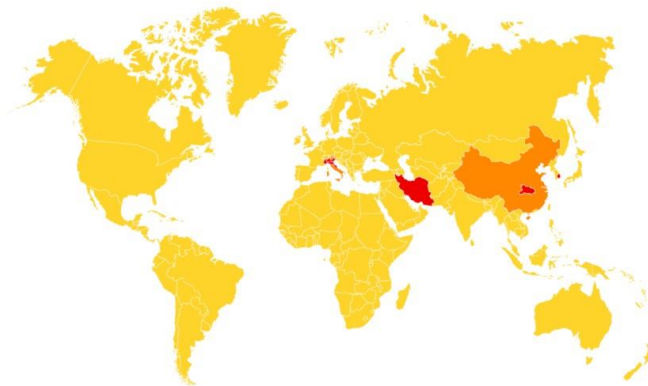
Coronavirus – Global spread

Today, 121 250 individual cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed and 4 369 individuals have died (3.6 %). According to [Johns Hopkins University](#) , 66 216 individuals have already recovered from the illness. There has been an explosion in the distribution of the virus in Europe, especially in Italy, Spain and Germany. The ECDC has raised its risk assessment to a risk of a moderate to high threat to public health. Cf. the [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control](#) (ECDC) website for information on the development in each country. [Cf. the ECDC risk assessment.](#)

Measures in Denmark

Denmark has issued a yellow travel warning (exercise caution) for all states, including Iceland.

The Danish authorities have divided the world into 3 COVID-19 risk areas: red, orange and yellow. **Red areas:** Travel is not advised and the Danish Health Authority recommends at-home quarantining for two weeks after travelling in these areas after 2 March. Today, these areas include Hubei Province in China, 6 Regions in Italy, Iran, Daegu and Gyeongbuk Provinces in South Korea and Ischgl in Austria. **Orange areas:** Extra caution is advised and unnecessary travel is not recommended. Orange areas include the rest of China (minus Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, which are yellow areas), the rest of Italy and the rest of the State of Tyrol in Austria. **Yellow areas:** Caution is recommended. Applies to all countries, including Iceland.



Information sharing

Upcoming:

- The next press conference is planned for Thursday, 12 March at 14:00h.
- The next coordination meeting will be held at the Department of Civil Protection and Emergency's Coordination Centre on Thursday 12 March at 9:00h.

- A letter will be sent to the education authorities and parents regarding the COVID status.
- Revised [Instructions for frontline service staff. Coronavirus 2019 /COVID-19](#);
- Revised sampling instructions from the Chief Epidemiologist to health-care workers and a suggestion for sampling and definition of what constitutes a COVID-19 case.

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