



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



Embætti
landlæknis
Sóttvarnalæknir



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

STATUS REPORT

Date: 30.03.2020 Time: 17:30 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, to public bodies and to companies. All instructions can be found on the [Directorate of Health](#) website, the [National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police](#) website and the [covid.is](#) information website.

Advice regarding Covid-19

Ways to get advice from nurses:

Serious illness:

- Phone the 1700 number outside working hours
- Call your health-care centre during working hours

Lesser illness:

- Communication through My Pages on Heilsuvera.is
- Net chat on heilsuvera.is - 8:00–22:00h

The Medical Hotline (Læknavaktin) and Heilsuvera are under a great deal of strain. We urge everyone to read the information available on the above-mentioned websites.

The number of people in Iceland with confirmed infections is currently 1,086, with 927 in isolation. There are a total of 691 domestic infections and 105 with unknown origins. A total of 16,484 samples have been taken, including 121 over the weekend. Of the people diagnosed with COVID-19 in Iceland, two have passed away.

[According to the National University Hospital](#) there are currently 30 patients at the hospital with COVID-19, of which 10 are in intensive care and 7 on respirators. 936 are being monitored by the COVID-19 outpatient unit, including 72 children who are being monitored by the Children's Hospital. 157 individuals have recovered and 22 individuals have been discharged from the hospital.

The weekend press conferences

Press conference no. 28 on Saturday 28 March included guest speaker Regína Ásvaldsdóttir, Director of the Reykjavík City Welfare Department. Ms. Ásvaldsdóttir said that the welfare system had been revolutionised in a very short space of time. Social services include many very important and sensitive services, including issues concerning people with

disabilities, residential centres, sheltered work-places and in-home support services. Social services also include services for the elderly, residential care, operating of serviced apartments and day-care, as well as support for children with disabilities and services for children who are experiencing difficult circumstances at home. Some ten thousand people are receiving services at this time and welfare service staff often enter the scene at a difficult time. Ms. Ásvaldsdóttir said that she was especially worried about children who are experiencing difficult conditions at home, since schools and community centres are sanctuaries for them. She asked the Icelandic people and the neighbours of these children to keep an eye out for them.

Next, she discussed services for the elderly. A radical decision was taken already on 6 March when the emergency phase was announced. Community centres and social activities for the elderly were closed down and a ban on visits was imposed. There are however, many volunteers, including those offering call-in services. The friendship telephone line is one example. This is a program operated in cooperation with the Association of Senior Citizens. She urged family members to call their nearest relatives, as well as more distant relatives who do not have grown children. Staff members throughout the welfare system have shown a considerable initiative in finding ways and solutions, for example by offering interviews and consultations via teleconferencing.

Press conference no. 29 on Sunday 29 March included guest speakers Páll Matthíasson, Director of the National University Hospital, and Ragnheiður Ósk Erlendsdóttir, Managing Director for Nursing for the Reykjavik Area Health-Care Service.

Director of the National University Hospital Páll Matthíasson revealed that a new COVID-19 outpatient unit has been opened, which is currently monitoring 897 individuals, including 66 children. He also mentioned a special COVID website which includes information for patients and their families. Battle lines have been drawn at the National University Hospital and the staff manning the COVID outpatient unit are doing a marvellous job. The inpatient units and the hospital as a whole are preparing for cooperating with other hospitals, including the Reykjalandur rehabilitation centre and health-care institutions in Selfoss and Keflavík. The whole health-care system is one single service network.

The National University Hospital is a national hospital and has had to set aside various projects for the time being because of the situation. The understanding of patients and their families is therefore greatly appreciated. Visits have been curtailed considerably, but all family members who have received permissions to visit health-care institutions because of special circumstances are urged to look after their own health and not to come visit if they are not feeling well. The rules regarding the maternity ward have had to be tightened and spouses and partners of the mothers are not allowed to stay there, but are permitted to attend the births. Dr. Matthíasson wishes to thank the hospital's staff, not the least their families, who are under a great deal of stress. Hospital staff are recommended not to mingle with other people at this time, as it is important to protect everyone who has the specialist knowledge to take care of those who are ill.

Managing Director for Nursing for the Reykjavik Area Health-Care Service Ragnheiður Ósk Erlendsdóttir discussed the health-care services' information service, which is very extensive right now. Procedures have been changed and priorities defined in order to make it work. The health-care service and the 1700 hotline are estimated to receive around 7,000 phone calls per day, in addition to 500–1,000 net chats through heilsuvera.is. She urged the public to search for information on the covid.is website before making contact. The net chat is first and foremost intended as an information source about the health-care system and has, for example, given guidance to companies regarding disease prevention and on issues regarding people who are under quarantine. People can send in notifications that they are in quarantine and receive a quarantine certificate through the Heilsuvera website, but in order to do so they need an electronic certificate. The public is urged to use this option rather than make a phone call. There are many inquiries regarding sampling and it must be re-emphasised that samples are only taken from people who are showing symptoms, which are evaluated individually. Sampling schedules are in place for the next few days. Individuals who come in for sampling should stay in isolation until the result of the examination of the sample are available. The health-care services' activities are important for the community and efforts must be made to keep it going. Procedures have had to be altered radically, for example with regard to vulnerable groups, including post-natal care for infants and mothers. Currently, only one parent is allowed to accompany an infant on these visits and mothers are coming in alone. If the slightest suspicion of infection arises during such visits, it is important to contact the health-care service by telephone.

Chief Superintendent of Police Víðir Reynisson discussed the situation regarding the ban on public gatherings and expressed some disappointment over the number of reports of breaches of the ban. Much can be improved in this regard. Penalties have not yet been levied, but preparations for this are under way. Many companies are doing a good job of disease prevention, posing signs and following up, but some people seem to lose their concentration as soon as they are no longer being watched by staff. The public is the weak link in this chain and we must remember that there are large numbers of people who are affected by our behaviour, such as front-line staff, people with underlying illnesses and people who can not attend to their work. This is a matter of keeping a distance of 2 metres, which should not be a challenge for ordinary people. We must do this, each person for themselves and all together.

Press conference no. 30 on 30 March included Director of the National University Hospital Páll Matthíasson and Director of the Icelandic Red Cross Kristín S. Hjálmtýsdóttir in addition to Chief Epidemiologist Þórólfur Guðnason, Director of Health Alma D. Möller and Chief Superintendent of Police Víðir Reynisson.

Chief Epidemiologist Þórólfur Guðnason said that a total of 1,086 infections have now been diagnosed in Iceland, including 66 new infections yesterday. A total of 16,500 samples have been taken. Other numbers can be found on the www.Covid.is website. Dr. Guðnason said the epidemic was showing a slow linear increase but was not increasing exponentially. It is following the most optimistic prediction according to the mathematical model, whereas admittances to the intensive care unit are more in keeping with a worst-case scenario prediction. The epidemic will in all likelihood peak at the beginning of April. When asked, he said that he was happy with the numbers and that the curve had been held back. Dr. Guðnason said that there were not many social infections and they were not increasing much. He believes that the biggest challenge now is when to lift the preventive measures. He said that measures would continue to be in place and we would have to be very careful in lifting the ban on social gatherings and restrictions on numbers, or else there was a risk that the epidemic would be revitalised. When asked, Dr. Guðnason said that no further restrictive measures were being considered, that the epidemic was not increasing to the extent that further restrictions were justified. He added that the outcome of last week's tighter restrictions on social gatherings would be revealed better later in the week.

Director of Health Alma D. Möller said that she could easily use the whole meting to give thanks where they were due, but that she wanted to use this opportunity to thank all those who are making a united effort to develop distance health-care services and electronic solutions. Dr. Möller said the whole world is cooperating to gather information about the disease, adding that on the weekend she had attended an eight-hour international teleconference of intensive care doctors. Everyone is faced with the same challenges, first and foremost a shortage of staff, but also lack of tools and equipment. She said the pattern in Italy was similar to that in China, with 5 % seriously ill, 15 % less ill and 80 % showing only mild symptoms. More young people under the age of forty seem to be falling ill in the Nordic countries but this is yet to be confirmed. Action must still be taken, orders must be obeyed and everyone must do what they can to help. Dr. Möller said that she hoped that by stretching out the epidemic, we would buy time to develop a treatment. Many drugs are being researched and hundreds of research projects are being carried out all over the world. Dr. Möller said that there is no indication that the virus is having a worse effect on pregnant women than on others. Measures have been taken in the maternity ward, where pregnant women need to be protected, as well as the people working there. When asked, she confirmed that pregnant women were being urged to enter a self-imposed quarantine after the 36th week of pregnancy. Dr. Möller said that there are currently 900 individuals on the health-care reserve team. Midwives and dentists are being added to the team, which now includes 13 different professions, as well as trainees.

Director of the National University Hospital Páll Matthíasson covered four subjects in his talk. Dr. Matthíasson said that there were currently 30 COVID-19 patients in the hospital and a third of those were women. 10 are in intensive care, including 7 who are on respirators. 268 National University Hospital staff are in quarantine and 38 are in isolation. 936 are being monitored by the COVID-19 outpatient unit, including 72 children. 157 people have recovered and have been discharged by the COVID-19 outpatient unit.

Dr. Matthíasson said that the National University Hospital serves the whole country and all patients. He added that people who are seriously ill should not hesitate to make contact. In case of emergency, people should come to the

intensive care unit, in which case they should notify the unit that they are showing typical COVID-19 symptoms.

Dr. Matthíasson confirmed that six patients in the National University Hospital's geriatric ward, Landakot, have COVID-19. He said it was impossible to ascertain whether or not the infection was contracted from a member of staff. The hospital has been working hard to trace the infection in cooperation with the contact tracing team.

Finally, Dr. Matthíasson thanked all the hospital's well-wishers. The hospital has been receiving many gifts and many people have sent in ideas and good suggestions. He urged people to use the email address stondummed@landspitali.is to send in such ideas and suggestions.

Director of the Icelandic Red Cross Kristín S. Hjálmtýsdóttir said the organisation has an important role to play in times of distress, that it is an important link in the civil protection chain. Volunteers are invaluable and do many jobs. The Icelandic Red Cross has sent a request for temporary volunteers and has received a tremendous response. Ms. Hjálmtýsdóttir said that the Icelandic Red Cross has a representative at situation centres all over the country, as well as within the civil protection authorities' Coordination Centre. They are in charge of the epidemic nursing unit in Rauðarárstígur and are participating in such activities all over the country. They have altered the procedures for various projects, increased educational activities for marginalised groups, such as those served by Mrs. Ragnheiður, and Miss Ragnheiður in Akureyri, Konukot and Vin, as well as changing and strengthening and talking to refugees. They are also trying to focus on the most vulnerable groups, including the homeless. They have been assisting prisoners and those who have recently been released from prison - a group that often has a weak support network and needs support. The same applies to people who live alone. They are being cared for through phone calls and other means. Ms. Hjálmtýsdóttir discussed the 1717 telephone helpline, which has been handling the overflow from the 1700 hotline. The calls have multiplied. Under normal circumstances they receive around 40 calls per day, but are now receiving between 500 and 700. She added that the Icelandic Red Cross has made an agreement with the Ministry of Social Affairs for the 1717 number to receive calls meant for other services. Those who call 1717 would receive guidance and attempts would be made to solve their problems. Ms. Hjálmtýsdóttir said that people were feeling more anxious and isolated than before. She added that no-one needs a specific reason to call the number and that there are well-trained people on the other end, who know how to listen. No problem is too small for them. Finally, she wished to praise and express thanks to the Icelandic Red Cross volunteers and contributors. Together we will overcome this.

Chief Superintendent of Police Víðir Reynisson closed the meeting by asking people to take care over the Easter holidays and stay at home as much as possible and to avoid local travel. It is also important to do the shopping in time for the holidays and to use each shopping trip well and make fewer trips.

Information sharing and projects

The civil protection authorities' Coordination Centre coordinates all action and disseminates information regarding COVID-19 all over the country. **The website www.covid.is/english**

Statistical information about the disease is updated once a day and published just before noon on the covid.is website. The website contains information about the measures that have been taken in Iceland due to the COVID-19 disease. The website also contains various numerical information. The website is in constant development and is regularly updated. It is currently available in Icelandic, English and Polish. Specific important information is also available in Arabic, Spanish, Kurdish, Lithuanian, Persian and Thai. It is now possible to view and print various posters that have been published.

The Red Cross Due to the strain on the Red Cross telephone helpline 1717 and the net chat at 1717.is, the **[Ministry of Social Affairs](#)** has decided to support the service. The support will boost up the helpline and net chat to aid people, such as families, children and young people, people with disabilities, the elderly and people of foreign origin during these unprecedented times. This will better enable the Icelandic Red Cross to fulfil its mission.

The Red Cross is involved in many different activities, e.g. the manning of the epidemic nursing units in Reykjavík,

Akureyri and Húsavík by RC volunteers. The Red Cross volunteers also render psychological support and aid in the distribution of food to people who are under quarantine or in isolation. More support to other groups is being looked into, such as to immigrants and refugees.

Health-care workers at the Coordination Centre are looking at housing that may be used as a reserve hospital, in cooperation with the National University Hospital. They are also putting together an overall plan for all health-care institutions on COVID-19 responses.

Upcoming:

- Press conferences will be held every day at 14:03h.
- The next coordination meeting will be held on Tuesday 31 March at 9:00h.

Consultation process and further information

- **All Icelandic residents** who have been abroad and are returning home on 19 March or later will have to go into quarantine for 14 days.
[Sjá upplýsingar á vef embættis landlæknis.](#)
- [Hlíum vel að okkur sjálfum og okkar nánustu](#) is the first of 10 tips posted by the Directorate of Health's Public Health department and based on the results from surveys on the things that are useful for taking care of our mental, physical and social well-being. Published on 30.03.2020
- [Heilræði á tínum kórónuveiru.](#) News item published on 27.03.2020
- [Sektir fyrir brot gegn sóttvarnalögum vegna COVID-19.](#) News item from the Government Offices website 27.03.2020.
- Press release from the Minister of Health: [Hertar takmarkanir á samkomum – mörkin sett við 20 manns](#)
- [Rafræn útgáfa vottorða til staðfestingar á sóttkví.](#) All those who are currently in quarantine can now enter their information at the heilsuvera.is website and receive a certificate attesting thereto. The certificates are free of charge. Please note that in order to register information at heilsuvera.is, you need to have an electronic certificate. Those without an electronic certificate will have to notify their health-care centre that they are under quarantine. Those needing medical or quarantine certificates but do not have an electronic certificate can send an email to C:\Users\stjornun\Downloads\mottaka@landlaeknir.is mottaka@landlaeknir.is
- [Góð ráð vegna COVID-19 til beirra sem eiga langveik börn og ungmenni.](#)
- [Leiðbeiningar til veitinga og gististaða vegna hámarksfjölda í hópum og hverju rými](#). As we know, the stipulations of the ban on social gatherings have been tightened and the maximum number of people allowed in groups and in the same space is now 20. The Icelandic Tourist Board has drawn up instructions in cooperation with the Directorate of Health and the Ministry of Health. Let us also remember the 2 metre rule.
- [The Administration of Occupational Safety and Health is permitted to close down any workplace that is not respecting the new ban on social gatherings](#) The Administration of Occupational Safety and Health urges all workplaces to respect the tightened rules on social gatherings. Otherwise they will be considered a threat to the safety and health of their employees.
- [The Icelandic Transport Authority, in cooperation with the Directorate of Health](#), has issued instructions for taxi drivers for transporting passengers, passengers under quarantine and/or with a possible COVID-19 infection. The purpose of the instructions is to protect taxi drivers and their passengers against infection.
- [Stjórnvöld koma til móts við vinnumarkaðinn.](#) The government passed a Bill on the right to unemployment compensation benefits to make up for reduced working hours due to a temporary slowing down of companies' economic activities.

- The government passed a Bill by the Minister of Social Affairs and Children on the right to unemployment compensation benefits to make up for reduced working hours due to a temporary slowing down of companies' economic activities. The Act entails that salaries paid during a period of reduced work will not decrease the right to unemployment benefits. [Vinnumálastofnun hefur umsjón með umsóknum um atvinnuleysisbætur vegna minnkaðs starfshlutfalls](#). It is important to maintain employment relationships in order not to lose knowledge. Instructions on the website are in Icelandic, English and Polish. Questions and answers can also be found on the website. General applications for unemployment benefits on the website have also been simplified. Answering services in Polish are available from 13:00 to 15:00h and there is a calculator on the website where you can calculate the reduced work percentage and get an estimate of income. Work is going on both through the internet and over the telephone. A certificate of reduced operating activities from Iceland Revenue and Customs must be turned in.
- [Bakvarðasveit heilbrigðisþjónustunnar](#) New health-care professions are being added to the health-care worker's reserve team, which continues to grow rapidly.
- [Bakvarðasveit félagsmálaráðuneytis](#) The Minister of Social Affairs and Children and the Association of Local Authorities are working together to establish a welfare service reserve team. They are seeking people who can render services to people with disabilities, the elderly, homeless, special needs children and child protection services, and give financial aid. An experience in welfare services is a plus, but is not required.
- [Bakvarðalista fyrir Dýralækna- til að sinna dýralækningum](#). [Bændur hafa einnig gert sinn eigin útkallslista](#). The Ministry of Industries and Innovation, along with MAST and the Icelandic Veterinary Association have set up a reserve team of veterinarians to render veterinary services.
- [Leiðbeinandi viðmið um íþrótt- og æskulýðsstarf í ljósi takmörkunar á skólastarfi og samkomum](#). Guiding criteria on how to interpret the advertisements regarding the limiting of public gatherings due to the epidemic and limitations of school activities with regard to sports and leisure activities for children, young people and adults.
- [Upplýsingar sendar til samtaka sveitarfélaga varðandi samkomubann og börn](#). Schools, preschools and sports clubs have made detailed plans for the next several days and weeks, in order to follow the Minister of Health's instructions on limiting school activities and gatherings. An English translation is under way.
- Leiðbeiningar v/ [Börn í sóttkví – leiðbeiningar og tillögur til forráðamanna](#) og [Börn með sérbarfir í sóttkví](#)
- [Skynsamleg notkun almennings á einnota hönskum og grínum](#)
- See [the Director of Health's orders to cease elective surgeries](#) in order to make it possible to care for COVID-19 patients as well as render all other necessary health-care services.
- Information regarding the outcome of sampling by deCODE Genetics can be accessed through the Heilsuvera website under the "Samskipti" menu. Sign-in is by electronic certificate.
- The University of Iceland's statistical predictions are published on the website www.covid.hi.is
- **Requests for exemption from the Ministry of Health have to be sent in from many locations via hrn@hrn.is**

The National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police's Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management holds regular meetings with the Nordic civil protection authorities regarding COVID-19. These institutions compare strategies regarding preparedness and action to be taken in response to many issues regarding COVID-19. Cooperation and consultation between these institutions is very important.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Consular Service provides Icelandic citizens with protection and assistance in the case of an emergency overseas and it is an essential part of the Foreign Service. The Service's staff work from the Ministry's offices in Reykjavík and in Icelandic diplomatic missions on three continents.

It is currently estimated that around 7,000 Icelandic residents have already returned to Iceland, while around

4,000 are still abroad. 890 of those are expected to return home in the next two months. Around 2,500 people have not given a specific return date and many of those are probably planning to continue their stay abroad.

[Consular Service database.](#)

[Deregistration for those who have returned home.](#)

The Consular Service is working closely with the other Nordic Consular Services to monitor the availability of flights to the Nordic countries so as to be able to render assistance to any residents of the Nordic countries who are at risk of being stranded, especially in more distant countries.

Status

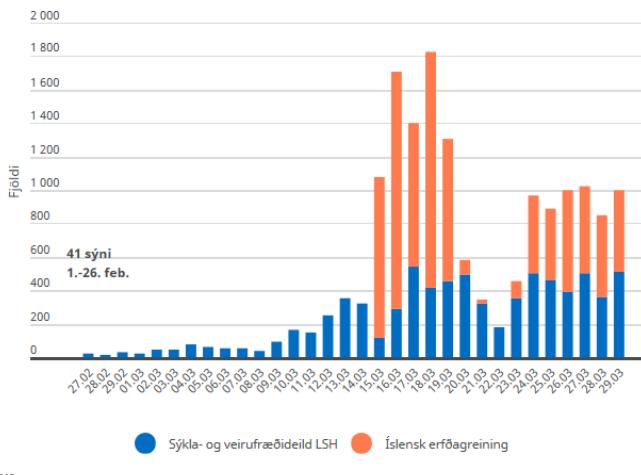
Iceland – today's status



COVID-19 á Íslandi - Tölfræði

- Upplýsingar á síðunni eru sóttar úr gagnagrunni á miðnætti.

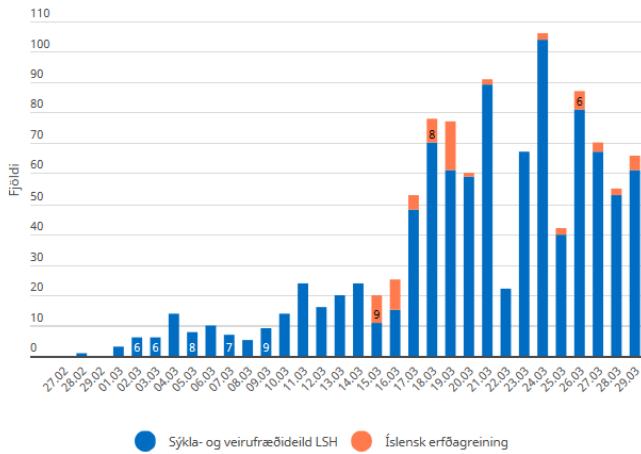
Fjöldi sýna eftir dögum



Heildartölur



Fjöldi smitaðra eftir dögum



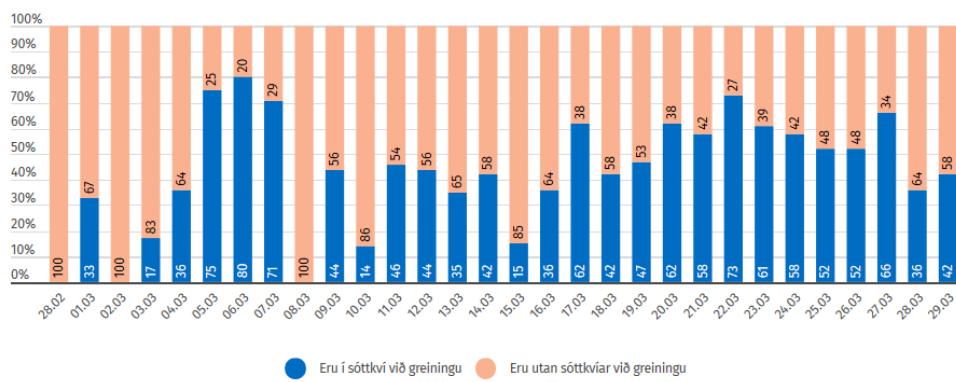
Af þeim sem greinst hafa með COVID-19 á Íslandi eru tvö látin.

Hlutfall smitaðra sem greinast í sóttkví



51%

þeirra sem hafa greinst voru í sóttkví

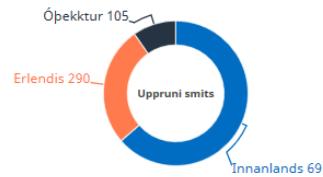


Fjöldi smitaðra eftir kyni



[Download data](#)

Uppruni smits



[Download data](#)

Smit / sóttkví eftir landshlutum



	Smit	Sóttkví
Höfuðborgarsvæði	822	4623
Suðurnes	47	408
Suðurland	110	813
Austurland	5	200
Norðurland eystra	31	402
Norðurland vestra	22	396
Vestfirðir	4	200
Vesturland	19	321
Óstaðsett	26	1873
Útlönd	0	0

[Download data](#)

Coronavirus – Global spread

According to Johns Hopkins, **741.030 individual cases** of COVID-19 have been confirmed today and **35,114 individuals** have died. **156.838 individuals** have already recovered from the illness. There has been a surge in the distribution of the virus throughout Europe. 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.