



**NATIONAL
COMMISSIONER OF THE
ICELANDIC POLICE**

DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL
PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT



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

STATUS REPORT

Date: 19.03.2020 **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, 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 infected persons is now 330, including 86 domestic infections. A total of 7,833 samples have been taken, including 420 in the last 24 hours.

19th. press briefing on 19 March 2020

Chief Superintendent for the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police Víðir Reynisson opened the press briefing by talking about communication. People have become tired and impatient. More rumours have been spreading, for example that a curfew or some version thereof is being planned. This is incorrect. Let's be honest and treat each other well.

Chief Epidemiologist Þórólfur Guðnason explained how information is laid out on www.covid.is. He said that a decision has been made to publish numerical information later than before. Information about new transmissions has been published on the website at 11:00h, but the publishing time will be pushed back to 13:00 – 13:30h. The number of infected persons has increased. The total number of infected persons has reached 330, which is 80 more than yesterday. He said that the number of positive samples taken by deCODE Genetics did not seem to have increased much. Þórólfur Guðnason said that infections have been diagnosed in individuals in 6 regions of the country. There are currently 7

persons being treated at the National University Hospital, including one who is in intensive care. He is not on a respirator. Þórólfur Guðnason said he was seeing the first indications that we are beginning to climb the slope of the curve that was drawn. Careful monitoring is needed to detect where the infections are occurring. He said the approach was the same as before: Early diagnosis, isolation for the individuals who are sick and quarantine for those who are infected. This is what science tells us is the best solution. Dr. Guðnason said this work will continue and that it is especially important in order to slow the spread as much as possible.

Finally, Dr. Guðnason said that all countries outside Iceland have been declared risk zones. This means that all Icelanders and foreigners living here must be quarantined.

Director of Health Alma D. Möller began her address by discussing the death of a tourist in Húsavík earlier in the week. An autopsy was carried out last night but the final report is not ready. Alma Möller stated that the autopsy revealed that the man was suffering from pneumonia. It is highly likely that the man died from COVID-19. The symptoms were atypical. Alma Möller said that everyone's thoughts were with the man's family and expressed thanks to everyone who has shown them support in the last few days.

Alma Möller also stated that the reserve team was still growing. There are now a total of 471 individuals on the list. This morning, Alma Möller and some other doctors attended a teleconference with the Chinese health authorities and a number of representatives of other European countries. The subject matter of the conference was epidemiology and disease prevention. Their measures were similar to the ones taken here in Iceland. Alma Möller complimented the intensive care doctors, who have been very active in gathering information. Alma Möller's fourth point was about a predictive model that predicts the possible strain on the health-care system. The prediction uses the numbers from the preceding days and might possibly have to be updated with yesterday's numbers. The average prediction suggested that the peak will occur on 7 April. At that time, 40 people might be hospitalised. A more severe prediction assumes that 110 people would be in hospital. Looking specifically at intensive care patients, there might be a total of 7 hospitalisations on 14 April according to the average prediction, but 30 according to the severe prediction. This would put the peak on 16 April. These predictions are provisional, however, and must be constantly updated and recalculated. She stated that the National University Hospital was under a great deal of strain. A 30 person team of doctors and nurses at the hospital is currently monitoring 318 COVID-19 patients. Finally, Alma Möller complimented front-line service staff everywhere, as well as companies that have shown creativity in making society function. She seconded Víðir Reynisson's statement that we will all have to continue to stay calm and keep our communications on a positive note. Those who are infected and infecting others should not be scolded for it. This is not something anyone can help. Alma Möller said that we must not let the virus divide us.

Superintendent for the Reykjavík Metropolitan Police and head of the Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management's epidemiological tracing team Ævar Pálmi Pálmason described the team's work. He said that no-one could have foreseen the scale and magnitude of the project. It is important to unite the efforts of police and health-care workers. The team consists of 16 health-care workers and 22 police and more are expected to join.

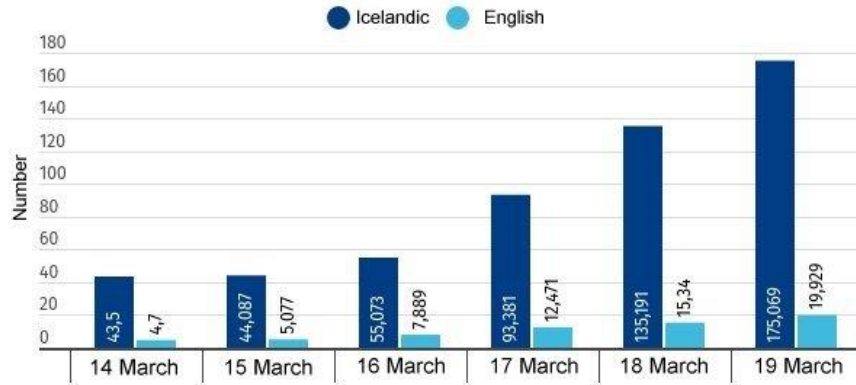
Information sharing

The COVID.is website

Statistical information about the disease are updated once a day and published just before noon at covid.is.

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. It is currently available in Icelandic and English. The Polish translation is about to go live. It is now possible to view and print various [posters that have been published](#).

Clicks on Covid.is statistical pages



546.000

have viewed
the Icelandic site



65.000

have viewed
the English site

Upcoming:

- Press conferences will be held every day at 14:03h.
- The next COVID-19 coordination meeting will be held on Friday 20 March at 9:00h.

Consultation process and various information, including

- **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.**
[See further information on the Directorate of Health website.](#)
- Communications with the Ministry of Social Affairs, the City of Reykjavík and the Multicultural Information Centre on translations and distribution of information to immigrants.
- [Instructions sent to local community libraries.](#)
- Communications with the Icelandic Disability Alliance, an umbrella organisation of 43 associations with a total of 30,000 members that will distribute information to around 10,000 individuals through social media and a website.
- More and more people have been contacting health-care workers through the heilsuvera.is website, where it is possible to sign in with electronic identification certificates and communicate with health-care workers. Heilsuvera received around 879 inquiries through its net chat in the last 24 hours.
- The Icelandic Tourist Board has published information about hospitality establishments that are prepared to receive guests in need of quarantining. [See their information website.](#)
- The Icelandic Confederation of Labour has published [COVID-19 questions and answers.](#)
- Information on the Icelandic Food and Veterinary Authority's website regarding [The Coronavirus and availability of feed and fertiliser](#)
- According to Isavia, the total number of passengers passing through Keflavik airport in the last 7 days has decreased considerably. For example, 2,960 passengers from the United States passed through the airport on 12 March, but only 525 Americans passed through the airport on 18 March. A total of 243 Belgians passed through the airport on 12 March, but none on 18 March.

Important information for those on the priority list who need to use this emergency measure for their children who are in the care of home day-care providers, in preschool, 1st and 2nd grade of primary school, as well as leisure time solutions for the same age groups.

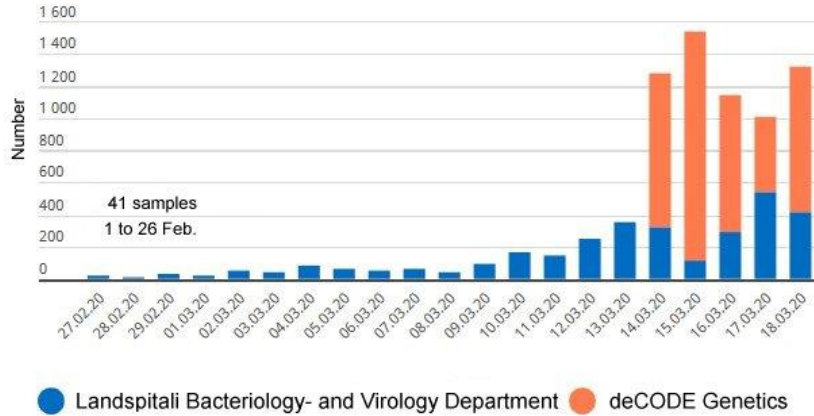
- Due to the circumstances, the schools cannot start operating according to the priority lists until Monday 23 March. Due to the nature of the problem, this is a very complicated project and must be done well.
- We therefore ask parents and other guardians to please show patience under these unprecedented circumstances, until Monday. We would also like to repeat that this is an emergency measure and we urge everyone to make use of, as much as possible, the measures already taken by the school.



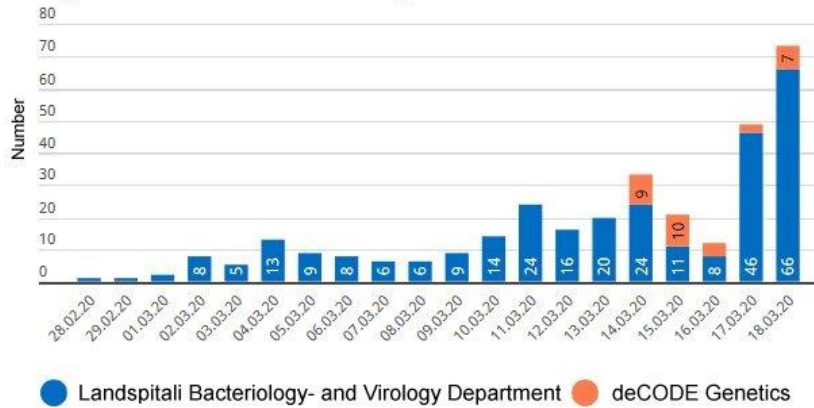
COVID-19 in Iceland - Statistics

Updated daily at 11:00 hrs

Number of samples per day



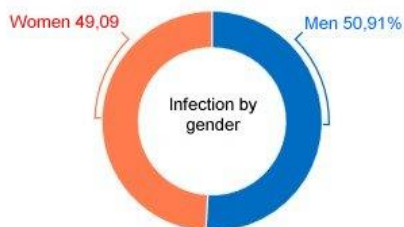
Fjöldi smitaðra eftir dögum



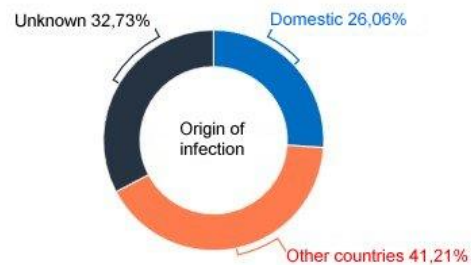
Total

-  **330** confirmed infections
-  **3.718** quarantined
-  **330** in isolation
-  **532** have finished quarantine
-  **7.833** samples
-  **3** in hospital

Number of infected by gender



Origin of infection

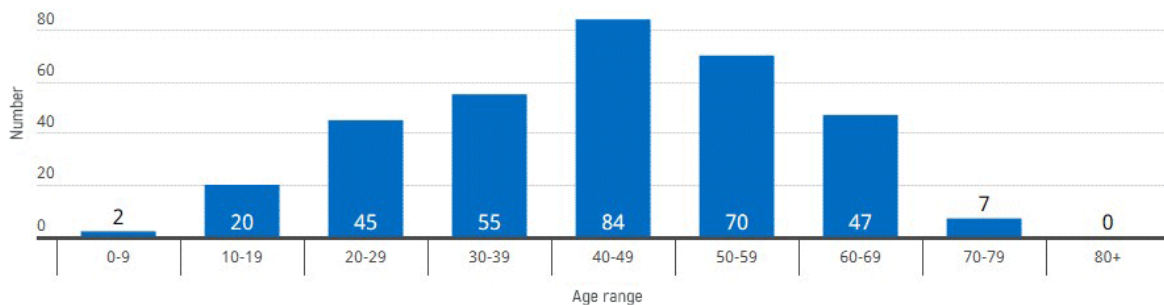


Infections / quarantine by district



	Infections	Quarantine
Austurland	0	22
Höfuðborgarsvæðið	287	2595
Norðurland eystra	2	177
Norðurland vestra	1	238
Suðurland	24	462
Suðurnes	12	142
Vestfirðir	0	17
Vesturland	0	49
Óstaðsett	4	19
Útlönd	0	4

Number of infected individuals by age



Coronavirus – Global spread

According to Johns Hopkins, 222,642 individual cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed today and 9,115 individuals have died. 84,506 individuals have already recovered from the illness. There has been a boom in the virus' distribution 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.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Consular Service

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Consular Service has expanded its telephone-answering service and response to written inquiries.

Icelanders who are travelling abroad are urged to register through the Consular Service's database at the Government's website www.utn.is It is also possible to contact them through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Facebook page.

- There are currently 6400 individuals registered through the Consular Service's Facebook page, who are returning home today or later. The Consular Service has replied to well over 2000 inquiries since 14 March. [See the travel advisory information on the Ministry's website. Ráðleggingar til Íslendinga erlendis frá 16. mars.](#) The Consular Service answers inquiries through Facebook messages, via email at hjalp@utn.is and over the telephone number 545-0-112.