



RÍKISLÖGREGLUSTJÓRINN

ALMANNAVARNADEILD



Applies to: Media, Department of Civil Protection and Emergency, Management, administration and Chief Epidemiologist.

STATUS REPORT

Date: 24.02.2020

Time: 17:00

Location: Coordination center /Directorate of Health /Chief Epidemiologist

Uncertainty phase due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

Event description

At the end of December 2019, reports of severe lung infections came from the city of Wuhan, China. Subsequently, it was confirmed that an unknown coronary virus variant was the cause, now called COVID-19. It is now confirmed that the virus is transmitted between humans and can cause serious illness.

We will continue to work on uncertainty phase according to the Icelandic Pandemic for Influenza Preparedness Plan. If needed it is possible to activate the preparedness plan for ports and ships, and the plan for international airports alongside the pandemic plan.

No case of the COVID-19 has been reported in Iceland

Summary

- National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police / Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management
- Directorate of Health / Chief Epidemiologist. [Information page](#)
- Landspítali – department of infectious diseases
- Primary Health Care of the Capital Area
- Red Cross
- ICE-SAR
- Health care institutions
- Heilsuvera
- Laeknavaktin – doctors on call service
- International transport by air and ship through designated ports
- The Icelandic Road and Coastal Administration
- Confederation of Icelandic Enterprise
- Icelandic Medicines Agency
- Icelandic Coastal Guard
- Customs
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Status

Coronavirus – spread abroad

Today, on February 24th 2020 cases of the COVID-19 has been confirmed in 79,360 individuals and about 2,620 are deceased (3,3%). 25 deaths outside of China have been reported, eight in Iran, four in Japan (thereof two on an international conveyance), seven in South-Korea, two in Italy, one in Taiwan, one in the Philippines and one in France. According to [John Hopkins](#) 25,148 individuals have recovered from the illness.

[See worldwide situation update on ECDC's website](#). Latest update have indicated that there is increased likelihood that the virus will transmit to European countries from other countries than China. The situation is constantly evolving, including a great deal of uncertainty due to unpredictable factors.

The cases reported are from China (77,150), Hong Kong (79), Macao (10), Singapore (89), Thailand (35), South Korea (763), Japan (144), Taiwan (28), Malaysia (22), Vietnam (16), United Arab Emirates (13), India (3), Philippines (3), Cambodia (1), Nepal (1), Sri Lanka (1), Australia (22), USA (35), Canada (9), Germany (16), France (12), UK (13), Italy (132), Russia (2), Spain (2), Belgium (1), Finland (1), Sweden (1), Iran (43), and Egypt (1). International conveyance in Japan (691). New cases have been reported from Kuwait (3), Israel (2), Bahrain (1) and Lebanon (1). Vast majority (97%) of cases originate in China, or 77,253. A total of 178 cases have been diagnosed in Europe, whereof 129 have been infected in Italy, 14 in Germany, seven in France, and one in the UK.

[See ECDC's risk assessment](#)

Iceland

- The status is unchanged. No case has been reported in Iceland.
- Today, samples from 33 individuals have been analyzed with regards to the COVID-19, all of them turned out to be negative.
- European Disease for Communicable Disease (ECDC) issues a risk assessment and recommendations regarding the COVID-19, and the assessment for Iceland harmonizes with their assessment. The number of cases outside of China has increased in the past days. The number of cases in Italy went from three to 132. According to the risk assessment of ECDC there is an increased likelihood that the virus will transmit to European countries from other countries than China. The situation is constantly being reassessed.
- Laeknavaktin-on call doctors has received many questions regarding the virus, mostly related to travels abroad.
- Guidelines for travelers will be updated later today and published on the website of Directorate of Health <https://www.landlaeknir.is/koronaveira/english/>.
- Travelers that develop symptoms and have recently been in areas in Italy where cases have been diagnosed (Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia-Romagna, and Piedmont) should contact 1700 (+354 5444113 for foreign numbers) and report their travel history. See instructions for home-based [quarantine](#) and [isolation](#).
- The Chief Epidemiologist advises against unnecessary trips to the above-mentioned areas.
- The Chief Epidemiologist does not advise against trips to ski-resorts in northern Italy. They are outside the above-mentioned risk areas, with no reported cases.
- Next meeting with the district and regional epidemiologists and chief of police will be held February 25th
- We will continue to work on uncertainty phase according to the Icelandic Pandemic for Influenza Preparedness Plan.
- Next coordination meeting will be held Tuesday, February 25th at 08:00.

Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management

Coordinates responses in collaboration with the Directorate of Health / the Chief Epidemiologist.

The emergency response is unchanged: we continue working at uncertainty phase, according to the Icelandic Pandemic for Influenza Preparedness Plan.

The working group of the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police is still working on analyzing possible measures aimed at curbing the arrival of tourists from high-risk areas.

The Directorate of Health/ The Chief Epidemiologist

Coordination of actions and guidelines for the public, healthcare professionals, tourism and businesses. Instructions are updated when necessary. Information are updated and new guidelines revisited when needed. The risk assessment of

the Chief Epidemiologist for Iceland harmonizes with ECDC's risk assessment. According to the risk assessment there is an increased likelihood that the virus will transmit to European countries from other countries than China. The situation is constantly being reassessed. The chance of the virus being a public health threat in European countries that take measures such as quarantine and isolation is considered low. Although the infection can have serious effect on those that fall ill. Work is underway in updating the Icelandic Pandemic for Influenza Preparedness Plan and at the same time transforming it into a response plan that will benefit other pandemics. Draft will be ready this week.

Landspítali – The National University Hospital of Iceland

Attends daily coordination meetings. Today, samples from 33 individuals have been analyzed with regards to the COVID-19, all of them turned out to be negative.

Primary Health Care of the Capital Area

Regional and district epidemiologist of the capital area attends daily consultation meetings.

International airports, Keflavik, Akureyri, Egilsstaðir and Reykjavik and designated ports.

Information is disseminated to travelers and staff. The Coast Guard sends information to foreign arriving ships. The Customs and the Coast Guard review the crew and passenger lists, which contains health information. Text messages to all arriving passengers at Keflavik airport and passengers arriving with M/S Norröna to Seyðisfjörður.

The tourism industry

The Icelandic Tourist Board and the Icelandic Transport Authority disseminate information through their databases to the tourism industry. A meeting on response plans of international airports and ports was today, the 24th of February.

Healthcare facilities and the police in regional Iceland

The regions in Iceland are well prepared according the response plans. Next coordination meeting with the Chief Epidemiologist and Chiefs of Police is the 25th of February.

Laeknavaktin – doctors on call service

Shares information and ensures 24/7 response. Phone service 1700. For foreign numbers +354 544-4113. Laeknavaktin has received many inquiries regarding the virus, especially on travels abroad. Consults with the Primary Health Care of the Capital Area to ensure 24/7 on call doctor.

Red Cross

Assist with assessment of isolation facilities for tourists in each region of Iceland, in coordination with Landspítali. The Red Cross provides psychosocial support to families in quarantine. A consultation group has been activated for crisis counselling.

ICE-SAR

Disseminates information to tourists at www.safetravel.is Works on registering new members into the SAR-EYE.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Daily consultation with the Nordic civil services.

The Icelandic Embassy in Beijing is in contact with Icelanders in China, including those that have registered at help@mfa.is. Due to recent update on COVID-19 in Italy, more questions regarding travels abroad are expected. We will continue to emphasize the recommendations of the Chief Epidemiologist and WHO and people will be invited to register with the Iceland civil service.

Icelandic Medicines Agency

Is in contact with pharmaceutical companies and monitors supplies of essential medicines. There is yet no evidence of drug shortage due the COVID-19 in Iceland.