



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: 17/03/2020

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, public bodies and companies. All instructions can be found on the Directorate of Health website, the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police website and the information website covid.is

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 have been under a great deal of stress. We urge everyone to read the information available on the above-mentioned websites.

The number of infected persons is now 225, including 55 domestic infections.

A total of 2,278 samples have been taken, including 291 in the last 24 hours.

A foreign tourist who yesterday came to the Health Care Institution of North Iceland with a serious illness turned out to be infected with the virus that causes the COVID-19 illness. The man died shortly after he arrived at the institution. The cause of death is not known, but his symptoms were not typical for COVID-19. The cause of death is not yet known.

Press conference on 17 March 2020

Chief Superintendent for the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police Víðir Reynisson led the conference.

Chief Epidemiologist Þórólfur Guðnason and Director of Health Alma D. Möller gave the situation report. It is rewarding to see how many people are prepared to contribute to the effort to limit the spread of this virus. They especially praised the people doing cleaning jobs, people caring for others and health-care workers, as well as their families.

Sampling swabs may soon be in short supply and therefore samples are only taken from individuals who are showing signs of COVID-19, are seriously ill, have just arrived from risk zones or are connected to individuals who have already been diagnosed with COVID-19. The supply of medicines is also under consideration. Medicines must be available for everyone and therefore the public is urged to not hoard medicines and doctors and pharmacists are urged to keep the available supply of medicines in mind. 400 people have now registered for the health-care workers' reserve team.

Paediatrician and Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist Steingerður Sigurbjörnsdóttir gave good advice on how to ensure good mental health and well-being during these unusual times. Among other things, she mentioned that:

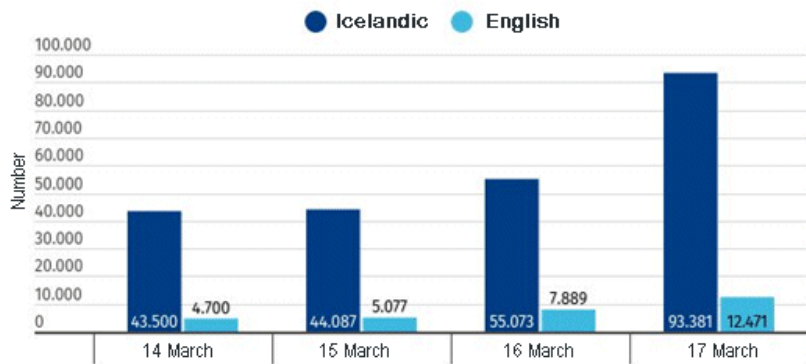
- Children take good notice of discussions and news and can worry about their family members. Children who have already been through trauma are often more sensitive and discussions in society can often exacerbate their worries. The reactions of children are often different depending on their age and situation. Adolescents and young people often become withdrawn and have less contact with their family members when they are feeling down or are worried. Initiative is needed to talk to adolescents and they must be given time to express themselves.
- Younger children are more likely to show irritation, have sleeping problems, reduced appetite and they often find it difficult to separate from their family members. Children often realise that they are experiencing anxiety or are indisposed. Family members must therefore watch out for changes in children's behaviour during times like these and should keep in mind that behavioural changes are not necessarily a sign of a conduct disorder. Effort should be made to keep up children's routines and urge them to exercise and eat healthy food. Schooling and routines can also continue at home. Predictability is very important for children and it is good to have a daily agenda for them and to tell them about it. In this way they can be encouraged to stay active and give them a sense of security. It is also important to encourage them to continue to be socially active, to meet with their friends and talk to their grandparents and relatives. This especially applies to adolescents and young people. Family members are first and foremost role models and therefore it is important to control one's own behaviour and show a good example and take care of one's own health. It is good to be honest with children and answer their questions, but to choose what information we give them and remember to point out the positive sides and remind them of the measures the authorities are taking to increase their safety and yours. It is important to be calm and not to take one's own anxiety and indisposition out on the children. It is also important to seek help from the health-care clinics if you are very worried and feeling bad.

Information sharing

The COVID.is website

The [COVID.is](https://www.covid.is) website has been very well received and the Icelandic page has been visited a total of 236,000 times in the last four days and the English page has been visited 30,137 times. The website contains information about the measures that have been taken in Iceland due to the COVID-19 illness. The website also contains various numerical information. The website is in constant development. The website is currently available in Icelandic and English. A translation into Polish is in the works.

Clicks on Covid.is statistical sites



236.000

have viewed
the Icelandic site



30.137

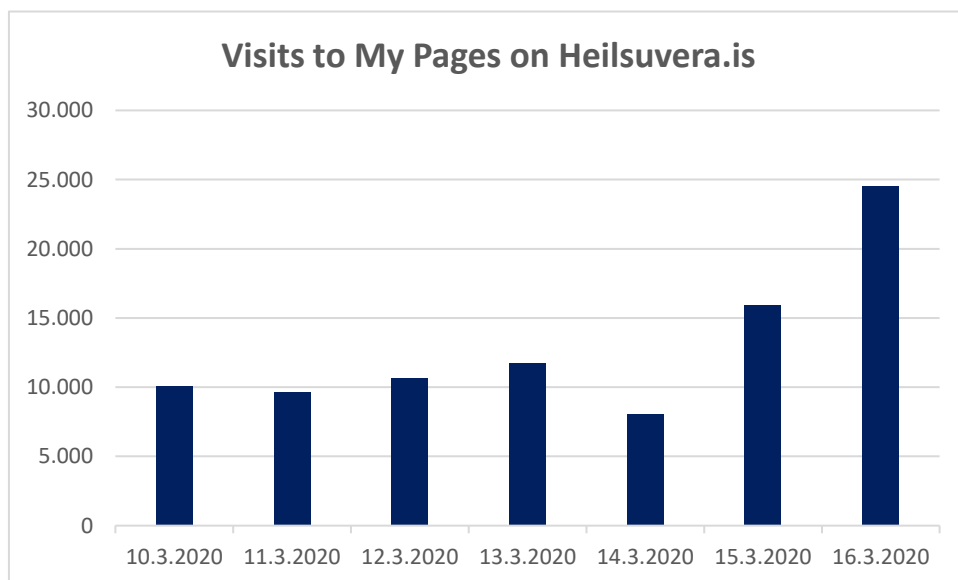
have viewed
the English site

Upcoming:

- Press conferences will be held every day at 14:03h.
- The next COVID-19 coordination meeting will be held on Wednesday 18 March at 9:00h.

Consultation process and various information, including

- The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has issued [Lykilskilaboð og forvarnaraðgerðir vegna COVID-19 í skólum](#), which is an Icelandic translation of the World Health Organization, Unicef and Red Cross' Key Messages and Actions for COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools.
- Yesterday a teleconference was held with the participation of the Coordination Centre, the Red Cross, the Multicultural Information Centre and the City of Reykjavík to discuss ways and means to spread information to people of foreign origins in Iceland.
- Shops and supermarkets have announced special opening hours for senior citizens and vulnerable groups. Some shops have announced their own measures.
- 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 1100 inquiries through its net chat in the last 24 hours.

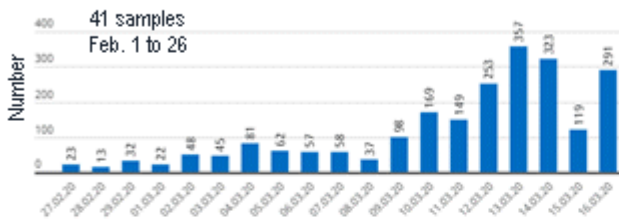




COVID-19 in Iceland - Statistics

Updated 17 March at 15:15h

Number of samples by day



Total

225
confirmed infections

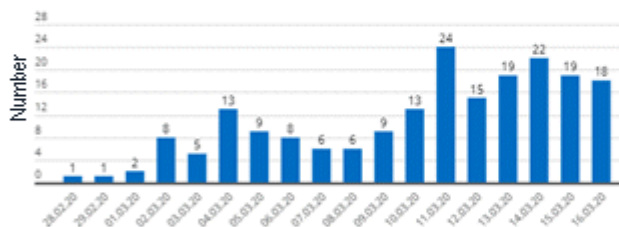
2.192
quarantined

225
in isolation

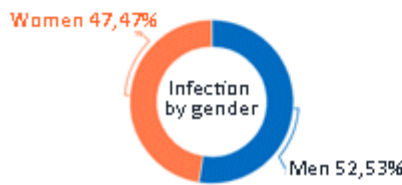
2.278
samples

3
in hospital

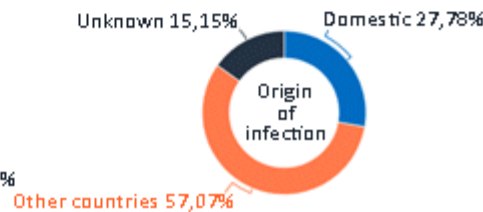
Number of infected individuals by day



Number of infected individuals by day



Origin of infection

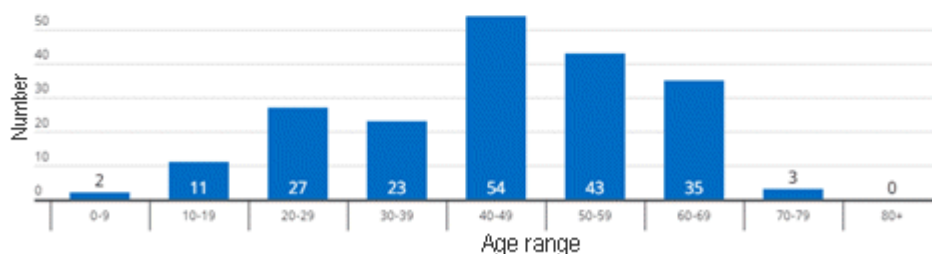


Infections / quarantine by district



District	Infections	Quarantine
Austurland	0	4
Höfuðborgarsvæðið	201	1566
Norðurland eystra	1	93
Norðurland vestra	0	2
Suðurland	16	371
Suðurnes	4	94
Vestfirðir	0	13
Vesturland	0	23
Óstaðsett	3	22
Útlönd	0	4

Number of infected individuals by age



Since numbers for pictograms are updated individually it is normal for them not to add up perfectly. Nevertheless the figures should provide a good general idea of the development.

Coronavirus – Global spread

According to Johns Hopkins, 185,067 individual cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed today and 7,330 individuals have died (3.8%). 80,237 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.

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

- Of the 9 thousand individuals who have registered in the Consular Service's database since it was opened, a little under 7 thousand are still abroad. Just under 1000 individuals have booked flights home in the next three days.
- The Consular Service answers inquiries through Facebook messages, via email at hjalp@utn.is and over the telephone number 545-0-112. It is also possible to contact them through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Facebook page.