

Ireland - OVERVIEW

Updated: March 17, 2014



Country Name Long Form: None

Government Type: Republic, Parliamentary Democracy

Languages Spoken: English, Irish

National Flag



Ireland is a Tier III Country. Significant security measures are necessary.

	Overall Assessment	Political Violence	Crime	Terrorism	Travel Safety
Ireland					
Key: (L) Low – (M) Medium – (H) High – (C)Critical					

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Political Violence is rated at LOW

A small but vocal and active percentage of Irish citizens oppose the U.S. activity in Afghanistan, the U.S. military use of Shannon Airport, and the U.S.'s perceived support for Israel. Issue-specific protests, such as against government budget cuts and Middle East issues, occur periodically. Protests can be well organized and attended. Irish police presence is generally adequate, although Americans are encouraged to avoid areas where protests are taking place. Protests not directly targeting the U.S. Embassy do not involve U.S. interests.

TERRORISM

Terrorism is assessed as LOW

Ireland's government ministers recognize the security problem created by "criminal terrorists," whose criminal activities have a weak ideological underpinning and tend to involve a cross-border element.

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RULE OF LAW / CORRUPTION

The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2013 gave Ireland a score of 72, indicating that the country has low level of corruption. The CPI rates countries by the perceived levels of corruption in their public sector, with the least corrupt country receiving a maximum score of 100.

CRIME

Crime is assessed as MEDIUM

There was a slight increase in theft and related offences but there has been a decrease in almost all other criminal related offences. The largest increase in crime was reported as “theft from the person,” which actually increased over 33% since the second quarter reporting.

Demographically, the county with the highest crime rates is Dublin. This is no surprise as it is also the most densely populated county, with 789 offences per 10,000 people compared to the national average of 532. It has the highest rates for robberies, theft, fraud and drug offences.

The final category of criminal activity in Ireland, often reported under political violence, is legacy republican dissident activity, which has not targeted or involved U.S. interests but is increasingly linked with organized crime.

KIDNAPPING

Kidnappings are rare in Ireland.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual Assaults occur less frequently.

NATURAL DISASTERS

There are no major hazards in the Republic of Ireland. However, storms from the Atlantic may be severe, particular during the months of December to March. Localized flooding can occur, causing travel disruptions.

STANDING TRAVEL ADVICE

- When meeting an Irish woman, a man should wait for her to extend her hand before initiating a handshake.
- Public toilets in Ireland are often identified by the sign ‘Fir’ for men and ‘Mna’ for women.
- Stay in groups, travel in a caravan consisting of two or more vehicles, and stay on the main roads.
- Ensure that someone not traveling with you is aware of your itinerary.
- Avoid hotels that do not have adequate security.
- Intercity travel after dark anywhere in should be avoided.

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- It is preferable to stay in the main tourist destinations.
- Pay close attention to your surroundings, especially when walking.
- Official taxis are a suitable means of travel in daylight hours in urban areas. It is highly recommended that taxis be arranged through your hotel, or program office. Negotiate the price in advance.
- Women should be especially careful when traveling alone and avoid staying out late without a trusted male escort.
- Make sensible security precautions to mitigate the risk of petty crime, particularly pick pocketing and bag snatching.
- Carry a photocopy of your passport when traveling to avoid losing it in a robbery.
- Do not resist if you are being robbed and avoid eye contact and to not make any sudden movements. Victims have been killed when they resisted attack or refused to give up their money or other valuables.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times and keep a low profile.
- Never leave your food, drinks or belongings unattended.
- Carry bags close to your body and make sure the fasteners are secure.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash or wearing expensive jewelry or valuables.
- Leave all important documents in a safe or safe deposit box at your hotel and only carry certified copies.
- Trust your instincts. If someone or something makes you uneasy, avoid the situation.

Important Contact Details

International Dialing Code: +353

Victims of crime should contact the following phone numbers for assistance

POLICE: The local equivalent to the “911” emergency line is: 999

FIRE DEPARTMENT: 999

AMBULANCE: 999

GENERAL EUROPEAN EMERGENCY NUMBER: 112

Note: Police, ambulance or fire department response may be unreliable in some parts of the country.

TRAVEL & ROAD SAFETY

- Ireland has modern infrastructure.

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- Ireland has good transportation, reliable power, and safe water.
- Public transportation is available throughout the country.
- Roads in general are in good condition, but in rural areas roadways may be narrow and poorly lit at night.
- The internet is widely available and mobile phone coverage is good.

RECOMMENDED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

- No ATM use after dark.
- No traveling alone after dark.
- The peace sign, or 'V' made by extending the index and middle finger with the palm facing either out or in, is an obscene gesture in Ireland and should be avoided.
- Avoid making anti-British statements or pro-Irish Republican comments. Anglo-Irish relations, and the status of Northern Ireland, remain contentious.
- It is not recommended discussing the situation in Northern Ireland. Sectarian comments are to be avoided.
- No rural travel after dark.

HEALTH

Medical facilities and care are generally of a high standard countrywide. Emergency treatment will be given without upfront payment, but doctors and hospitals may expect immediate payment for other medical services. Pharmacies are available in all cities and towns, and all basic medical supplies are readily available.

- Tap water is safe to drink throughout Ireland.
- Unpasteurized dairy products should be avoided if possible; unpasteurized milk should be boiled before consumption, or powdered or tinned milk should be used as an alternative.

The following vaccinations are recommended or required if traveling to Ireland:

- Hepatitis B (recommended)

It is also important to ensure that routine vaccinations are up to date for diseases including influenza, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus.

SIGNIFICANT DISEASE –

Measles – A contagious illness caused by a virus. A resurgence of measles has been observed across the country since 2000. The outbreaks appear to be related to insufficient vaccination coverage.

HOSPITALS –

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Beacon Hospital

Bracken Road
Sandyford
Dublin D18
Tel: +353 1 293 6600
Website: <http://www.beaconhospital.ie/>

Beaumont Hospital

P.O. Box 1297
Beaumont Road
Dublin D9
Tel: +353 1 809 3000
Fax: +353 1 837 6982
Website: <http://beaumont.ie/>

US EMBASSY – CONSULATE LOCATIONS

UNITED STATES EMBASSY DUBLIN

42 Elgin Road
Ballsbridge
Dublin 4
Tel: +353 1 668 8777
Fax: +353 1 668 9946
Email: ACSDublin@state.gov

USF INTERNATIONAL HOTLINE

USF 24/7 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE LINE: 813-317-5815

AXA Assistance 24/7 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE LINE: 1-877-577-9504 / +1-203-399-5130 (Call collect from abroad)

ASSIST ID #: GLMN 04983932. <http://www.culturalinsurance.com/resources/>

* Information derived from CIA World Fact Book, US Department of State, OSAC, and Travel Guard. This travel overview summarizes some of the most important concerns; however, it does not negate the need for detailed trip planning.