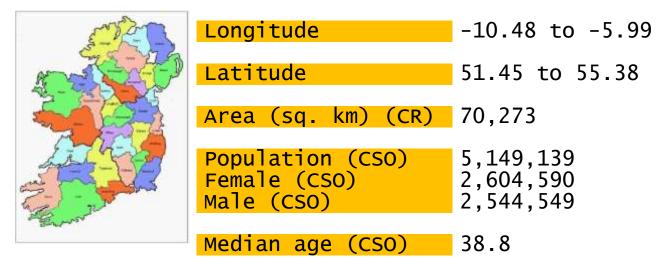
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND



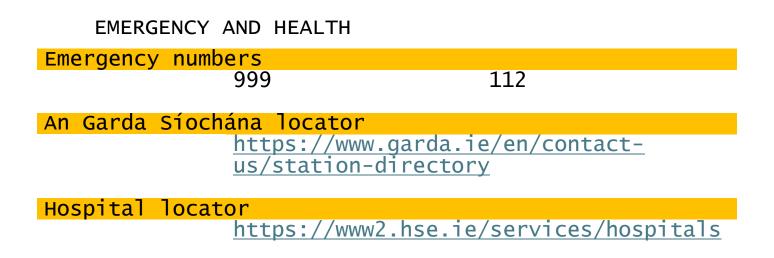
Ireland is situated in the Atlantic Ocean, to the north-west of the continent of Europe.

Although the island comprises 32 counties, there are **two countries** on the island – the Republic of Ireland (Éire in Irish) and Northern Ireland, part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

LANGUAGE

There are two official languages in Ireland – Irish or Gaeilge, and English or Bé**arla**.

All road signs and place names are identified in both languages, with the exception of a limited number of Irish-only regions, known as Gaeltachtaí or gaeltachts. Very few people speak irish fluently but everyone has the so-called "cúpla focal" or couple of words.



There are TWO emergency phone numbers which can always be called, free of charge:

999

112

These numbers are connected to all the emergency services – An Garda Síochána (The Guardians of the Peace, or the police). The ambulance service, the fire service, and the Coast Guard.

The police in Ireland are unarmed and are very much a community service.

<u>Health</u>

There are pharmacies located everywhere if medicines are required, and the hospital locator above will enable a local hospital to be found.

For EU citizens a valid E 111 card is usually sufficient to cover most medical care.

FINANCE

The currency of Ireland is the Euro (\in).

The vast majority of Irish businesses accept debit and credit card payments, with contactless (tap) payments common in all retail outlets.

Credit cards and charge cards

Almost all retailers accept credit cards (MasterCard, Visa) and debit cards (Revolut, etc...) but charge cards (Amex, Diners) are not widely accepted.

Banks The major high-street banks and opening hours are:

Allied Irish	Mon – Fri	10:00 - 17:00
Banks		
Locator	<u>https://aib.ie/ways-to-bank/branch-</u>	
	banking	

Bank of Ireland	Mon – Fri	10:00 - 17:00
Locator	<u>https://www.bankofireland.com/branch-</u> listing	
	<u>11301119</u>	
PTSB	Mon – Fri	10:00 - 17:00
Locator	https://www.pt	<u>tsb.ie/contact-us/find-a-</u>

<u>Post office</u>

There are post offices in most major communities they offer some restricted Bureau de Change facilities, and are usually also open on a Saturday, unlike the banks.

branch

Post Office	Mon – Fri	09:00 - 18:00
	Sat	09:00 - 13:00
Locator	<u>https://www.anpost</u>	.com/Store-Locator

ADMINISTRATION AND POLITICS The island of Ireland comprises 32 counties, divided into four provinces.

Provinces Connacht	Counties Galway Leitrim Mayo	Roscommon Sligo
Leinster	Carlow Dublin	Louth Meath

	Kildare Kilkenny Laois Longford	Offaly Wexford Westmeath Wicklow
Munster	Clare Cork Kerry	Limerick Tipperary Waterford
Ulster (RoI)	Cavan Donegal	Monaghan
Ulster (UK)	Down Armagh Derry	Down Fermanagh Tyrone

The Republic of Ireland is governed by An Oireachteas, the Government of Ireland.

An Oireachteas has two branches, An Dáil - the Parliament - and An Seanad - the Senate.

The head of state is An Aire – the President, who is elected by the people and serves for seven years.

The government is led by An Taoiseach – the Prime minister – and An Tánaiste – the Deputy. The Dáil comprises 174 members, who are elected by the people and referred to as Teachta Dála, or Member of Parliament.

There are 43 constituencies in Ireland, and the electoral system is the Single Transferable Vote (STV) method of Proportional Representation.

The Senate has 60 members who are elected, not by the general public, but by various administrative bodies, as well as the Universities; there are also some who are nominated by An Taoiseach.

Sources:

CR -Country Reports: https://www.countryreports.org/country/Ireland/geography.htm

CSO - Central Statistics Office:

https://www.cso.ie/en/census/