

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND



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|--------------------|-----------------|
| Longitude | -10.48 to -5.99 |
| Latitude | 51.45 to 55.38 |
| Area (sq. km) (CR) | 70,273 |
| Population (CSO) | 5,149,139 |
| Female (CSO) | 2,604,590 |
| Male (CSO) | 2,544,549 |
| Median age (CSO) | 38.8 |

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 Béarla.

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.

EMERGENCY AND HEALTH

Emergency numbers

999

112

An Garda Síochána Locator

<https://www.garda.ie/en/contact-us/station-directory>

Hospital locator

<https://www2.hse.ie/services/hospitals>

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.

Health

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 (€).

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
Banks
Locator

Mon - Fri

10:00 – 17:00

<https://aib.ie/ways-to-bank/branch-banking>

Bank of
Ireland
Locator

Mon - Fri

10:00 - 17:00

<https://www.bankofireland.com/branch-listing>

PTSB
Locator

Mon - Fri

10:00 - 17:00

<https://www.ptsb.ie/contact-us/find-a-branch>

Post office

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.

Post Office

Mon - Fri

09:00 - 18:00

Sat

09:00 - 13:00

Locator

<https://www.anpost.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 Oireachtas, the Government of Ireland.

An Oireachtas 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/>