

## Visiting the island of Ireland and Brexit.

**For visitors from Great Britain, travelling to the island of Ireland will not change thanks to the Common Travel Area. This is an agreement which has been in place since 1923 that allows British and Irish citizens to travel between the two islands without a passport and without visa restrictions (some air and sea carriers may require passports as photo ID).**

However, there are extra steps your clients will need to take to ensure their visit is enjoyable, smooth and hassle-free following the new changes that came into effect following the UK-EU exit. These include arranging adequate travel insurance, driving documentation for hired or owned cars, pet travel and using their mobile phone while overseas.

**You should also check how the latest coronavirus advice may affect travel plans for your clients.**

The latest information and guidance on COVID-19 in the **Republic of Ireland** is available on the [Health Executive's website](#). For the latest travel advice, please visit the website of the [Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade](#) and <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/Ireland>.

The most up-to-date information and guidance on COVID-19 in **Northern Ireland** is available on the official [Public Health Agency Northern Ireland's website](#). For the latest travel advice, please visit the following website <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-advice>.

### **What will visitors need to do?**

#### **Visa and passport requirements?**

For visitors from Great Britain, the Common Travel Area agreement will continue. This is an agreement which has been in place since 1923 that allows British and Irish citizens to travel between the two islands without a passport and without visa restrictions. However, some carriers may still require a passport as valid photo-ID so visitors should always check with their travel provider.

#### **Cross-border travel?**

Visitors will continue to enjoy travel between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in either direction and delays are not anticipated. Cross border bus and rail transport services will continue to be available. However, please check any other requirements that may apply such as Green Card insurance requirements for cross border driving (and any restrictions due to Covid-19).

### **Travel/Health insurance?**

Visitors to the island of Ireland should check that they have appropriate travel insurance with healthcare cover including for pre-existing medical conditions. For visitors with a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) this will remain valid until it's expiry date. This scheme will be replaced by new UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). For more information see: [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) and [GHIC](https://www.ghic.gov.uk) for information.

### **Car insurance, driving documentation and car rental?**

Visitors, and drivers on escorted tours must check that they have the correct driving licensing and insurance documentation requirements to drive in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland, especially if they plan to travel between both jurisdictions. If renting a car, visitors should always check in advance for any additional requirements from the car rental company. For more information see: <https://www.gov.uk/driving-abroad> and [Information on Renting a Car in Ireland \(carrentalcouncil.ie\)](https://www.carrentalcouncil.ie)

### **Coach & Escorted Tours?**

Visitors travelling on coach or escorted tours will not have to change coaches crossing the border between Northern Ireland (NI) and the Republic of Ireland (ROI) in either direction.

Drivers accompanying coach/escorted tours must check that they have the correct driving licensing and insurance documentation requirements to drive in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland, especially if the tour is visiting both jurisdictions.

For more information please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/driving-in-the-eu-from-1-january-2021-bus-and-coach-drivers> and [Run international bus or coach services and tours from 1 January 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/run-international-bus-or-coach-services-and-tours-from-1-january-2021)

### **Public Transport?**

**Rail:** Arrangements are in place to ensure that rail passenger services on the Dublin – Belfast line will continue and run as usual.

**Bus:** The EU-UK Trade and Co-operation Agreement provides for the continuation of cross-border buses on the island of Ireland. Further information is available on the [NTA's website](https://www.nta.ie), or for more information please visit: [gov.ie - Brexit and Transport - what you need to know \(http://www.gov.ie\)](https://www.gov.ie/gov/ie/en/publications/2020-12-29-brexit-and-transport-what-you-need-to-know)

### **Travelling with pet(s)?**

Visitors from Great Britain wishing to travel with a pet to Northern Ireland or to the Republic of Ireland from 1 January 2021 should refer to the new Animal Health Certificate and the requirements and changes which will apply to both. Details can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pet-travel-to-europe-from-1-january-2021>, <https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/pets/> and for the latest information on pet travel to Northern Ireland see: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/travelling-pets>.

### **Mobile roaming?**

Visitors should check with their mobile phone provider to find out what charges or roaming offers may apply.

### **Travelling with equipment (e.g. musical instruments, sports equipment)?**

Current customs and immigration practices will continue to apply for those travelling with equipment via air/sea to Northern Ireland, and for travel from the Republic of Ireland to Northern Ireland (and back to the Republic of Ireland). Visitors should check requirements for travelling with equipment with their air/sea carrier before travelling.

### **Duty Free and tax-free shopping?**

Duty free shopping is back between GB and Ireland and there are new & increased duty-free alcohol and tobacco allowances for travel from the Republic of Ireland to Great Britain. There are also changes to tax-free sales and the VAT retail export scheme.

**Official information at:** [Gov.uk Duty Free Travellers Partner info - GOV.UK](#) , [Duty-free allowances \(revenue.ie\)](#) , [Retail export scheme \(revenue.ie\)](#) and [Revenue.ie](#)

**For the most up-to-date information on visiting the island of Ireland from Great Britain after 1 January 2021, go to the [official UK website](#) and official [Irish government website](#)**