

## **From 1 January 2021, you may be wondering how Brexit may affect travel plans for your clients to the island of Ireland.**

After the transition period ends on 31st December 2020, there will be changes which are likely to affect how your clients plan their trip. There may be extra steps visitors will need to take to ensure their visit is enjoyable, smooth and hassle-free including arranging adequate travel insurance, driving documentation, 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>.

Regardless of the type of UK-EU agreement that is finalised, the Common Travel Area will be maintained for British citizens. Established in 1923, this arrangement allows citizens of Great Britain and Ireland to travel between the two islands without a passport or visa restrictions\*.

\* some air and sea carriers may require passports as photo ID

### **How will the following be affected from 1 January 2021 and what will visitors need to do?**

#### **Latest Covid-19 restrictions?**

Please check for the latest official updates for the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

**Republic of Ireland:** The latest information and guidance on COVID-19 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>.

**Northern Ireland:** The most up-to-date information and guidance on COVID-19 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>.

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

For visitors from Great Britain, the Common Travel Area agreement will continue after the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020 regardless of the type of UK-EU arrangement that is finalised. 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.

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

Check that you have appropriate travel insurance with healthcare cover including for pre-existing medical conditions. If you have 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 please see: [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) and [EHIC](#) for information.

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

Check you have the correct driving licensing and insurance documentation requirements to drive in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland, especially if you plan to travel between both. Drivers with a valid UK Driving licence will not need an International Driving Permit. However, you will need to carry a Green Card (as proof of motor insurance) for all vehicles, such as if you are towing a caravan or trailer. This will also be required for any cross-border journeys.

If renting a car always check in advance for any additional requirements from the car rental company, especially if traveling between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland or if wishing to drop off/pick up your car rental in different locations.

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)

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

Visitors can no longer use a pet passport issued in Great Britain to travel to Ireland or Northern Ireland. Visitors can still use a pet passport issued in an EU country or Northern Ireland. 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 requirements for an Animal Health Certificate (AHC) and changes to which will apply to both. Visitors will need at least a month to arrange the relevant vaccinations and requirements with their vet in advance of travel - and don't forget pets will need a new AHC for each trip.

Details can be found at: [Taking your pet abroad - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-your-pet-abroad) and [gov.ie - Brexit - Movement of Pets \(www.gov.ie\)](https://www.gov.ie/guide/brexit-movement-of-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.

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