



**Chambers
Ireland**
Advancing business together

Legislative Monthly Newsletter

November 2020

Irish Political Developments



See [here](#) for more
Government
information on new
Covid-19 guidelines

New Covid Guidelines announced for December

1 December

- The entire country will move to Level 3 in the Covid-19 plan, with some modifications
- People are told to continue to stay within their county, other than for work, education or other essential purposes
- Where possible, people should continue to work from home
- Households should not mix with other households outside their bubble until Christmas week
- People should now wear face masks outdoors on busy streets, inside crowded workplaces and in places of worship
- Non-essential retail and services will be allowed to resume
- Places of worship will reopen, as will museums, galleries, cinemas, gyms and swimming pools
- Public transport capacity will be limited to 50%.

4 December

- Restaurants, hotels and gastropubs (with their own kitchen and meals prepared on site) can reopen for indoor dining with additional restrictions
- 'Wet pubs' will not reopen (**Additional seasonal support through CRSS will be provided to qualifying businesses that will remain closed*).

18 December

- From this date until 6 January, travel outside of your county will be permitted, which will allow people to go home for Christmas
- In addition, up to 3 households will be allowed to meet indoors
- The measures relating to cross-border travel between

Oireachtas Business

Recently discussed / considered Bills

- [Regulation of Lobbying \(Amendment\) Bill 2020](#) (Dáil)
- [Withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union \(Consequential Provisions\) Bill 2020](#) (Dáil)
- [Finance \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Bill 2020](#) (Seanad)
- [Planning and Development Bill 2020](#) (Seanad)

In other news

- The Parliamentary Budget Office published an updated version of its **Vacant Site Levy and broader market context**
- Temporary and part-time workers in Ireland **most affected** by Covid-19

Consultations

Chambers Ireland past submissions

- EU Trade and Investment Policy Review (click [here](#))
- Deposit Return Scheme - Consultation on Potential Models for Ireland (click [here](#))
- The Night Time Economy (click [here](#))

Upcoming submissions for November

- State of intellectual property in third countries (click [here](#))
- EU Consultation on Sustainable Corporate Governance (click [here](#))
- Implementation of the UNECE Aarhus Convention and PRTR Protocol in Ireland (click [here](#))



Commission proposes to provide €2.5 billion to Ireland under [SURE instrument](#)



Commission published the [EU Strategy on Offshore Renewable Energy](#)

Brexit

EU-UK Brexit Negotiations moving into final phase

Negotiations restarted in Brussels on 16 Nov. Talks are seen, by both sides, to be approaching the 'make or break' point, with significant differences remaining to be resolved – there remain three unresolved questions: the 'level playing field' guaranteeing 'non-regression' by the UK on rules and regulations; fishing quotas and legal mechanisms for dispute resolution.

Over the two weeks of negotiation (beginning on 9 Nov), progress was made on drafting necessary legal texts across the complex 13-point talks agenda but Michel Barnier stated that the UK side had not reciprocated EU offers of compromise. It was suggested that the UK was looking to national political leaders to take over the process in an effort to break the deadlock but that the EU does not see this offering a way forward because of the complexity of the subject.

Tony Connolly, RTÉ quoted an EU official: "The work has been extremely detailed and precise and technical. It involves going through the text, cleaning the text, slow, excruciating process. There's been a lot of progress and a lot of clearing the weeds. But on the main issues there's been very little movement."

Technical Issues

Both EU and UK authorities are discussing the possibility of introducing a 'grace period' to allow retailers in Northern Ireland time to adapt to the wide ranging changes that will come about on 1 January under the terms of the Northern Ireland Protocol. A temporary arrangement would mean that consignments of food products moving from Great Britain to Northern Ireland would not be subject to extra paperwork

Trade

Commission launches new complaints system to fight trade barriers and violations of sustainable trade commitments

The Commission has launched a new complaints system for reporting market access barriers and breaches of Trade and Sustainable Development commitments in the EU's trade agreements and under the Generalised Scheme of Preferences.

The new complaints system reflects the Commission's increased efforts to strengthen the enforcement and implementation of trade agreements. It follows the Commission's appointment in July of its first Chief Trade Enforcement Officer to oversee its tougher action on enforcing trade policy, as well as the Commission's 15-point Trade and Sustainable Development Action Plan of 2018.

In other news

- The Commission presented its [European Semester Autumn Package](#), including the Opinions on euro area Draft Budgetary Plans for 2021 and policy recommendations for the euro area
- **Coronavirus:** Ireland moves into orange zone on ECDC map (Countries are marked orange if the 14-day notification rate for Covid-19 is lower than 50 cases per 100,000)
- State aid & Covid-19
 - Commission approves **€10 million** Irish scheme to support companies operating in coach tourism sector
 - Commission approves **€7 million** Irish scheme to