

No new virus deaths in Ireland for first time 10 weeks

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Ireland recorded no new deaths from the coronavirus on Monday for the first time since March 11, when the first fatalities were announced.

Prime Minister Leo Varadkar called it a "[significant milestone](#)", adding on Twitter: "This is a day of hope. We will prevail."

The announcement came one week after Ireland, which has suffered 1,606 deaths from 24,698 infections, began to ease lockdown measures that had been in place for nearly two months.

Ireland entered lockdown in late March, recording a peak of 77 deaths on a single day on April 20.

"In the last 24 hours we didn't have any deaths notified to us," chief medical officer Tony Holohan said at a daily press briefing.

He warned that the zero figure could be a result of a lag in reporting of deaths over the weekend, but he added: "It's part of the continued trend that we've seen in (the) reduction in the total number of deaths."

Ireland has announced a five-step plan to reopen the nation by August and took the first steps last Monday—allowing outdoor employees to return to work, some shops to reopen and the resumption of activities such as golf and tennis.

While the news of no fresh deaths was greeted as progress, officials remain concerned there will be a "second wave" if [lockdown](#) is loosened.

"The number of new cases and reported deaths over the past week indicates that we have suppressed COVID-19 as a country," Holohan added in a statement.

"It will take another week to see any effect on disease incidence that might arise from the easing of measures."

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