

Ireland makes masks mandatory as lockdown eases further

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The Irish government on Thursday confirmed that churches, cinemas, theatres, cafes and restaurants will reopen next week as the coronavirus lockdown eases, but face coverings will become mandatory on public

transport.

Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar also said the 14-day mandatory quarantine for visitors would be eased for some countries from July 9, but said the "green list" of which ones was still being worked out.

The list of businesses and services reopening from June 29 also includes museums and galleries, hairdressers and pubs and hotel bars serving food.

Up to 50 people will also be able to gather indoors and up to 200 outdoors, but ministers urged people to maintain social distancing.

"To help keep infection levels low, face coverings will be mandatory on [public transport](#) and should also be worn in shops and other places where [social distancing](#) is difficult," the government said in a statement.

Further easing of the lockdown is expected on July 20, when pubs, bars and casinos may reopen if it is safe to do so.

Ireland has suffered 1,727 deaths from [coronavirus](#), an increase of one on the previous day, according to health ministry figures on Thursday.

"This has not been an easy time for any of us, but we have come through it as a country," Varadkar said.

"We must now try and repair the damage that has been done, across all parts of our lives, and show the same solidarity in doing so."

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