



UNDER EMBARGO until 07:00am, Thursday, 30 July 2020

New .ie registrations in Ireland surged by 56% in Q2 as businesses move online in response to Covid-19 pandemic

- **33,286 new .ie domains registered in first half of 2020, according to new IE Domain Registry report, up 26% year-on-year**
- **Over 40% of new registrations occurred in May and June, as businesses reacted to the Government's closure orders**
- **.ie now accounts for 50.7% of all of Ireland's hosted domains versus 32.6% for .com**
- **.ie Domain Profile Report also examines .ie usage among Oireachtas members and frequency of "green" keywords in .ie website addresses**
- **IE Domain Registry CEO: "Irish SMEs' ability to cater to consumer choice and comfort, by providing both an online experience *and* an in-store shopping experience, will be key to the country's economic recovery."**

New .ie registrations in Ireland surged by 56% year-on-year in Q2 2020 as businesses move online in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to figures published today by IE Domain Registry in its latest .ie Domain Profile Report, a total of 33,286 new .ie domains were registered in the first half (H1) of 2020 (1 January–30 June), an increase of 26% compared to the same period last year.

Over 40% of new registrations in Ireland occurred in the two months of May and June, as businesses reacted to the consequences of the Government's closure orders.

IE Domain Registry, which manages and administers Ireland's country domain name, .ie, said the increase suggests that more companies, self-employed business owners, and independent professionals have gone online since the lockdown to maintain their revenue streams, stay in contact with customers, and expand into new markets.

Commenting, David Curtin, Chief Executive of IE Domain Registry, said: "The Covid-19 pandemic has had a noticeable effect on new .ie registrations across virtually the entire country. Thirty-one of the island's thirty-two counties recorded an increase in the first six months of 2020.

"This significant digital expansion suggests that all business owners and entrepreneurs, in cities and in regional parts of the country, understand that having a trusted, uniquely Irish online presence is absolutely crucial in a time of lockdown, when nearly all physical premises are shut and footfall is extremely low or non-existent.



“Having an online presence means that these businesses can stay in contact with their customers, build on their relationships, and, most important of all, continue to sell to them through an online store, click-and-collect service, or voucher booking system.

“Irish SMEs’ ability to cater to consumer choice and comfort, by providing both an online experience *and* an in-store shopping experience, will be key to the country's economic recovery in 2020 and beyond.”

There was a total of **295,794 .ie domains in the .ie database at the end of H1 2020**, an increase of more than 8% on H1 2019 and almost 44% on the same period five years ago (H1 2015).

.ie domains now account for 50.7% of all hosted domains in Ireland, up 1.5 points year-on-year, followed by 32.6% for .com, the main competitor.

The new Government

With the Government newly elected, IE Domain Registry investigated the .ie domain ecosystem to record how many Oireachtas members (TDs and Senators) have a uniquely Irish .ie website.

Just over half (51%) of Oireachtas members have a .ie website. Among the three parties of Government, 52% of Fianna Fáil members have a .ie website, 57% of Fine Gael, and 56% of the Green Party.

A little over a quarter (26%) of Sinn Féin Oireachtas members have a .ie website. The corresponding figure for the Social Democrats is 100%.

The green movement

With increased public awareness of and demand for climate action, IE Domain Registry analysed the .ie database for changes in green-related keywords in .ie web addresses, such as "clean" and "sustainable".

There was an overall increase of 33% for all green-related keywords in new .ie web addresses in H1 2020 versus the same period last year. Use of specific green keywords also increased, including "clean" (up 65%), "solar" (up 45.5%), and "wind" (up 3%).

Other key .ie stats

- 59% of all new .ie registrations in H1 2020 were by companies or the self-employed.
- New .ie registrations by individuals increased by more than 35% YoY in H1 2020.
- County Tyrone recorded the largest increase in new .ie domains (105%) in H1 2020 (albeit from a low base), followed by Monaghan (83%) and Carlow (75%).
- Dublin and Cork recorded the highest (12,504) and second highest (2,734) numbers of new .ie domain registrations in H1 2020.
- Great Britain accounts for the majority of internationally registered .ie domains. New registrations in H1 2020 increased by 13% year-on-year (from 635 to 718).
- New .ie domain registrations that include a fada increased by 13% (39 in H1 2019 vs 44 in H1 2020).
- 41% of .ie websites now have a security certificate.



IE Domain Registry

“The increase in new .ie domain registrations has been helped by IE Domain Registry’s liberalisation policy, which was implemented in 2018, making it easier and faster to get a .ie,” said David Curtin.

“While applicants still must prove their connection to Ireland, which is then manually verified by IE Domain Registry, they no longer need to prove their claim to a particular .ie domain. Business owners and people in Ireland have clearly indicated that their online identity of choice is a .ie website address and a .ie email extension.”

ENDS

For further analysis, [read the .ie Domain Profile Report H1 2020 report in full.](#)

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About IE Domain Registry

IE Domain Registry is the national registry for .ie domain names and is responsible for the management and administration of Ireland’s official internet domain, .ie, in the interest of the Irish and global internet communities. It operates the domain name system (DNS) for the .ie namespace, facilitates an independent dispute resolution service, and operates a public WHOIS lookup service for .ie domains.

The company’s mission is to grow and strengthen .ie as the digital identity of choice for people and businesses with a connection to Ireland. In cooperation with our Registrars, technical partners, and stakeholders, we help shape the development of the internet landscape and ecosystem. Policy development for the .ie namespace follows a bottom-up, consensus-driven approach through a multi-stakeholder Policy Advisory Committee.

IE Domain Registry is committed to digital advocacy for the SME community. Through stakeholder engagement initiatives such as the OPTIMISE programme and Digital Town, the company works with and supports SMEs organisations to improve their members’ online presence and e-commerce capabilities.

IE Domain Registry produces fact-based research for the business community and policymakers, such as the SME Digital Health Index, which provides key insights into the digital health of Irish SMEs.

The company is focused on providing excellence in customer service through its ongoing customer experience (CX) innovation and improvement programmes. Since March 2018, it is easier and faster to register a .ie domain.

Based in Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin, IE Domain Registry employs 22 people.