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## **IE Domain Registry records huge growth in H1 as Covid-19 hit Ireland**

### **Over 40 per cent of new registrations occurred in May and June, as businesses reacted to the Government's closure orders.**

New .ie registrations in Ireland surged by 56 per cent (pc) year-on-year in quarter two of 2020 as businesses move online in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

A total of 33,286 new .ie domains were registered in the first half of 2020, according to figures published today by IE Domain Registry, indicating an increase of 26pc compared to the same period last year.

Over 40pc 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.

“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,” said David Curtin, chief executive of IE Domain Registry.

“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.”

#### **Government online**

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

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

In total, there were 295,794 .ie domains in the .ie database at the end of the first half of 2020, an increase of more than 8pc on 2019's figure and almost 44pc on the same period five years ago.

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