

Statement from Minister Martin at government press conference on COVID-19 measures

From [Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media](#)

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Dia daoibh go léir.

For so many months, we have had to take tough decisions based on increasing transmission levels, pressure on our health system and new variants.

However, due to the extraordinary commitment of everyone across the country, we have seen virus transmission levels stabilise and the rates of hospitalisation and deaths from COVID-19 drop.

Due to your continued efforts, we are now in a position where we can look forward to the summer period.

As Minister with responsibility for tourism, sport, culture and the arts, I am particularly delighted to see that these sectors, some of the worst hit by the pandemic, will benefit from today's Government decision.

Today's decision gives us great hope for individual and group sporting and cultural events.

From 10 May it will be possible for small organised cultural events to take place outdoors. This will provide much needed cultural experiences for both audiences and practitioners, subject to a maximum of 15 people, and will go hand in hand with the upgrading of outdoor facilities recently announced by my department.

This is in addition to outdoor adult sports training for pods of 15 people. As we move through the month, we also intend to provide for a return to outdoor sports matches, without spectators, from 7 June.

On that date, we are also hoping to open gyms, swimming pools, and leisure centres for individual training. Due to the nature of these activities, it is critical that we all work together to ensure the highest level of compliance with public health measures, for example the wearing of face coverings.

From 10 May, we will be able to once again enjoy a broad range of cultural and tourism experiences around the country.

From this date, galleries, museums and other cultural attractions may reopen, and as the restrictions on inter-county travel are also lifted, we will once again be able to travel to and experience the wealth of cultural and heritage attractions around the country.

As we move further into the summer, we will see this welcomed reopening expanding into other areas of the tourism and hospitality sector.

From 2 June, we will once again be able to avail of hotels, B&B's, self-catering, and hostels. Although, services will be limited only to residents from these dates, if we continue to work together to keep this virus under control, we can look forward to further resumption of services into the future.

From 7 June, we will be able to enjoy pub and restaurant services outdoors, without any substantial meal restriction. It is critical that we begin with outdoor services only for this reopening phase, as we have seen the evidence these past months that outdoor activities are much safer.

My colleagues in Fáilte Ireland will be working with the sector to ensure the highest level of compliance and will have a strong communications campaign for businesses and consumers alike.

Across Government we will also continue to work at national and EU level on the safe return of international travel which remains critical for our tourism sector.

These are just the first steps in our plan for reopening. If we continue to work together, doing the right things, in the right way, we will be in a position to reopen many more services and venues into the future.

I am delighted to confirm that we are looking at the safe reopening of cinemas and theatres in June.

Furthermore, Cabinet today also agreed that my Department, along with the Department of Health and the Department of Taoiseach, will prepare proposals on the holding of a limited number of pilot large events for sport and music, including both indoor and outdoor.

European countries have taken interesting approaches. Details will be firmed up in the weeks ahead but I am delighted this gives our live events and sport a signal. We are a nation that loves arts, sport and entertainment and I will do my best to help them.

I also informed colleagues today that my Department is working on proposals for a phased approach to reopening small music venues (seated only), subject to health advice. I recently established the Return to Live Entertainment Working Group who will submit their guidelines for the Live Entertainment sector next week.

Tá tréimhse thar a bheith deacair curtha dínn againn mar thír le breis is bliain anuas, ach tá an chuid is measa di ag teacht chun deiridh, agus muid ag súil go dóchasach anois le samhradh sona.

Dá Fhad an Oíche, Tagann an Lá

Go raibh maith agaibh