

Consular cases for Irish abroad soar as child abductions remain 'a challenge'

Rise in number of people missing in foreign countries

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There has been a 50pc increase in the number of consular cases dealt with by the Department of Foreign Affairs in the past three years, with child abduction cases remaining a particular "challenge".

A total of 1,872 new cases were dealt with by consulates last year, marking the third consecutive year where there was an increase in new cases recorded.

Irish consulates dealt with a total of 31 child abduction cases between 2022

and 2024 – six last year, down from 10 in 2023 and 15 in 2022.

There was an increase in the number of Irish people missing abroad last year as consulates dealt with 100 cases, figures in a briefing document prepared for Foreign Affairs Minister Simon Harris, revealed.

The department expects the number of new cases to continue to increase into this year.

It said that Irish citizens continue to travel to, and work in, a large variety of locations internationally, "adding to the complexity of consular assistance provision".

The briefing document outlined that the department "continues to deal with a number of complex categories of consular cases" and those of parental

child abduction to non-Hague Convention countries "remain a challenge".

More than 100 countries have signed up to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

The convention ensures a child who is taken to any of the countries on the list is returned to their home as soon as possible.

There is also a "steady demand" for assistance from Irish citizens who are suffering from mental health issues in foreign countries, the department said.

"Arrest and welfare" cases have risen by 26pc and "welfare and mental health" cases jumped by 17pc.

Other complex cases that the department have faced include issues relating to travel bans, as well as citizens travelling to countries where Ireland

has no diplomatic relationships. The latter "severely [restricts] our ability to provide consular assistance", the department said.

Alongside fresh cases, the department said that it is continuing to assist Irish citizens "in a number of long-running cases, some of which date back to 2009".

"These cases include murder cases, parental child abductions, detentions and missing persons, many of which continue to generate significant media attention," the document said.

It also warned of the "significant strain on the visa service" and that delays in processing applications are "potentially undermining efforts to attract talent and investment to Ireland".

With a projected 209,813 visa applications for 2024, the department

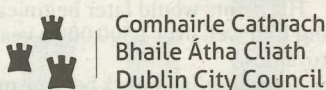
says this will represent an increase of 33pc between 2023 and last year.

Visa applications are handled by both immigration service delivery in the Department of Justice and mission network of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Turnaround times for applications can take "several months", in comparison with a normal turnaround time of 15 days for a Schengen application.

"Such delays are having a negative impact on Ireland's reputation abroad as well as on attracting business, educational and tourism visitors to Ireland," the department said.

Without major work to digitise and modernise the visa application service, the department said these "operational and reputational challenges and risks will remain".



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

AN TACHT UM PLEANÁIL AGUS FORBAIRT, 2000 (ARNA LEASÚ) NA RIALACHÁIN UM PLEANÁIL AGUS FORBAIRT 2001 (ARNA LEASÚ) – CUID 8

Iarratasóir: Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath, An Roinn Comhshaoil agus Iompair, Oifigí na Cathrach, An Ché Adhmaid, Baile Átha Cliath 8, D08 RF3F.

Suíomh: Sráid Chathail Brugha agus Plás Findlater, Baile Átha Cliath 1.

Togra: De bhua na gceanglas thuas, tugtar fógra leis seo maidir le hoibreacha feabhais beartaithe ar an ríocht phoiblí ag Sráid Chathail Brugha agus Plás Findlater, Baile Átha Cliath 1.

Beidh an méid seo a leanas i gceist leis na hoibreacha:

- Na dromchlaí atá ar an mbóthar agus ar an gcosán faoi láthair a bhaint, carrbhealaí atá ann cheana féin a athdromchlú le biotmhac agus leaca eibhir más gá.
- Táthar chun colbha, pábháil agus ábhair eibhir stairiúla le coinneáil agus le hathúsáid sna hoibreacha.
- Stráicí den charrbhealach cúnaithe ar Shráid Chathail Brugha agus ar Phlás Findlater chun deis a thabhairt cosáin a leathnú agus a shíneadh.
- Athchumrú na n-úsáidí ar cholbha an chosáin lena n-áirítear athlonnú an stáisiúin Rothair Bhaile Átha Cliath atá ann cheana féin chuig imeall an charrbhealaigh.
- Crainn atá ann cheana féin a choinneáil agus tírdhreachú bog agus crua nua a thabhairt isteach lena n-áirítear plandú nua ag leibhéal íseal.
- An troscán sráide atá ann faoi láthair a bhaint agus troscán sráide nua a chur ina áit lena n-áirítear cuailí lampaí, scairdeán uisce agus suíocháin.
- Soilsíú poiblí nua, mar aon leis na hoibreacha láithreáin riachtanacha seirbhísi, fónais agus gaolmhara.

Tá na sráideanna ábhartha agus na foirgnimh thadhlaacha suite i 'Limistéar Caomhantais Ailtireachta Shráid Uí Chonaill' agus taobh le 'Ceantar Rialaithe Pleanála Speisialta Shráid Uí Chonaill agus a Purláin'. Tá na hoibreacha beartaithe gar do Dhéanamhais Chosanta ar Shráid Uí Chonaill agus ag Plás Findlater.

Rinneadh Measúnacht Chúil ar an togra i gcomhréir le hAirteagal 6(3) den Treoir um Ghnáthóga (92/43/CEE) agus scagadh le haghaidh Measúnacht Tionchair Timpeallachta faoi Threoir MTT 2011/92/AE, arna leasú le Treoir 2014/52/AE.

I gcomhréir le hAirteagal 81 de na Rialacháin um Pleanáil agus Forbairt 2001, arna leasú, tá cinneadh déanta ag an Udarás Pleanála agus ba é a chonclúid:

- (a) Ní dócha go mbeidh tionchar suntasach ag an bhforbairt beartaithe, ina haonar nó i gcomhcheangal le pleananna agus tionscadail eile, ar aon láithreán/láithreáin Eorpach(a) agus mar sin ní gá le Measúnacht Chúil Céim 2.
- (b) Níl aon dóchúlacht dháiríre ann go mbeidh éifeachtaí suntasacha ar an gcomhshaoil ag eascairt as an bhforbairt beartaithe agus ní d'aicme den chineál a leagtar amach faoi Sceideal 5 de na Rialacháin um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2001, arna leasú, i an fhorbairt beartaithe, agus mar sin ní gá le Tuarascáil ar Mheasúnacht Tionchair Timpeallachta (TMTT).

Is féidir le duine ar bith, laistigh de 4 seachtaine ó dháta foilsithe an fhógra seo, iarratas a dhéanamh chuig an mBord Pleanála ar chinneadh scagthástála maidir le cé acu ar dhócha go mbeadh tionchar suntasach ag an bhforbairt ar an gcomhshaoil.

Féadfar Pleananna agus Sonraí na forbartha beartaithe a iniúchadh nó a cheannach ar tháille nach mó ná an costas réasúnach a bhaineann le cóip a dhéanamh ar feadh tréimhse de 4 seachtaine ón 04/03/2025 le linn uaireanta oscailte poiblí ag oifigí Chomhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath, Cuntar Poiblí, An Roinn Pleanála agus Forbartha Maoine, Bloc 4, An Bunurlár, Oifigí na Cathrach, An Ché Adhmaid, Baile Átha Cliath 8, Dé Luain - Dé hAoine, 9.00am go 4.30pm. Tá na pleananna agus na sonraí ar fáil freisin lena n-iniúchadh ar líne: <https://engage.dublincity.ie> ar shuíomh gréasáin na Comhairle Cathrach www.dublincity.ie

Féadfar aighneacht nó tuairim maidir leis an bhforbairt beartaithe, ina bpléitear le pleanáil chúil agus forbairt inbhuanaithe an limistéir ina mbeadh an fhorbairt suite, a chur in iúl, i scríbhinn, chuig An Bainisteoir Feidhmiúcháin, An Rannóg Pleanála agus Forbartha Réadmhaoine, Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath, Oifigí na Cathrach, An Ché Adhmaid, Baile Átha Cliath 8, roimh 4.30pm ar an 15/04/2025.

Féadfar aighneachtaí nó tuairimí a chur in iúl ar líne freisin ar <https://engage.dublincity.ie> shuíomh gréasáin na Comhairle Cathrach www.dublincity.ie roimh 23.59 ar an 15/04/2025.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED) PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 (AS AMENDED) – PART 8

Applicant: Dublin City Council, Environment & Transportation Department, Civic Offices, Wood Quay, Dublin 8, D08 RF3F.

Location: Cathal Brugha Street and Findlater Place, Dublin 1.

Proposal: Pursuant to the requirements of the above, notice is hereby given of proposed public realm improvement works at Cathal Brugha Street and Findlater Place, Dublin 1.

The works will consist of the following:

- The removal of the existing road and footpath surfaces, the re-surfacing of existing carriageways with bitmac and footpaths with new granite flags where necessary.
- Historic granite kerbing, paving and materials are to be retained and reused throughout.
- Sections of narrowed carriageway on Cathal Brugha Street and Findlater Place allowing for increased footpath widths and build outs.
- Reconfiguration of the kerbside uses including the relocation of the existing dublinbikes station to the carriageway edge.
- The retention of the existing trees and the introduction of new soft and hard landscaping including new low level planting.
- Removal of the existing street furniture and their replacement with new street furniture including lamp standards, water drinking fountain and seating.
- New public lighting, as well as all necessary services, utility and associated site works.

The subject streets and the adjoining buildings are located in the 'O'Connell Street Architectural Conservation Area' and adjacent to 'O'Connell Street and Environs Area of Special Planning Control'. The proposed works are adjacent to Protected Structures on both Cathal Brugha Street and Findlater Place.

The proposal has undergone Appropriate Assessment Screening in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and screening for Environmental Impact Assessment under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU.

In accordance with Article 81 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended, the Planning Authority has made a determination and concluded that:

- (a) The proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on any European site(s) and therefore a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.
- (b) There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that the proposed development is not of a class set out under Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and therefore does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

Any person may, within 4 weeks from the date of publication of this notice, apply to An Bord Pleanála for a screening determination as to whether the development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Plans and Particulars of the proposed development may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy for a period of 4 weeks from 04/03/2025 during public opening hours at the offices of Dublin City Council, Public Counter, Planning and Property Development Department, Block 4, Ground Floor, Civic Offices, Wood Quay, Dublin 8, Monday - Friday 9.00am to 4.30pm. The plans and particulars are also available for inspection online: <https://engage.dublincity.ie> on the City Council's website www.dublincity.ie

A submission or observation in relation to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the development would be situated, may be made, in writing, to the Executive Manager, Planning and Property Development Department, Dublin City Council, Civic Offices, Wood Quay, Dublin 8, before 4.30pm on 15/04/2025.

Submissions or observations may also be made online <https://engage.dublincity.ie> on the City Council's website www.dublincity.ie before 23.59hrs on 15/04/2025.