

SEM Chart of the Week

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Tootsie slide: Demand drop

Since both governments on the island of Ireland moved to restrict movement in the light of COVID-19, we have observed changes to working patterns resulting in a reduction and shift in demand profile for the island of Ireland. This weeks chart looks at how much this has reduced since restrictions have been in place.

Either way, we 'bout to slide

In the past few weeks, both Northern Ireland (NI) and Ireland (IE) have announced extensions to restrictions on movement after their initial announcements back in March. These restrictions, introduced to slow the spread of COVID-19 have resulted in a drop in daily demand as almost all sectors of the economy have been forced to close, scale back operations or work from home if possible.

Can't stop

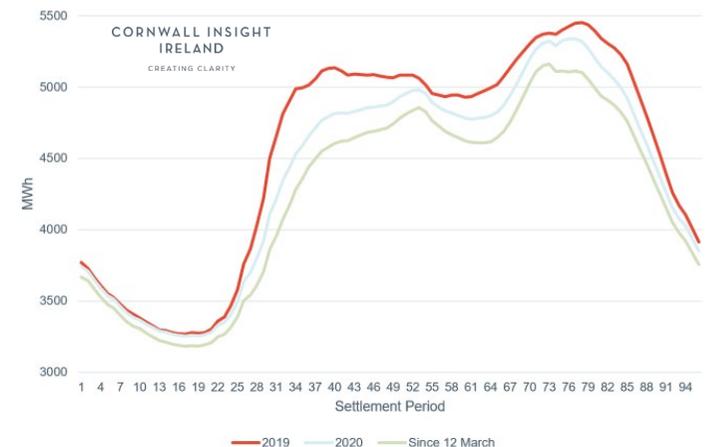
Since the Irish government announced restrictions on 12 March, and the Northern Irish government first introduced restrictions shortly after, daily average demand across the island of Ireland has fallen by 20% (23.4GWh).

With demand levels averaging 254MW lower across the day than the same period last year, there has been a significant drop in peak demands. Peak power levels are down by 4% year on year owing to COVID-19's arrival, averaging 240MW lower.

We can see in Figure 1, there has also been a noticeable drop in the morning peak with the profile of the demand curve flattening, as a large number of the population are out of work or working from home. The time of that morning peak shifted forward by nearly

two hours, indicating that people are benefitting from a shorter commute to the spare room.

Figure 1: Average demand profiles in SEM



Source: Cornwall Insight Ireland

Basically, I'm sayin' either way, we 'bout to slide

With the current restrictions in Ireland set to run through the 5th of May we can expect it to take some time for demand to return to normal levels. The return to 'normal' working patterns will be a phased removal of restrictions, slowly bringing demand close to historical levels. With a number of business looking at how they can work more remotely post Covid-19, it begs the question will demand ever fully recover.