

Very cold start, very warm finish

Overall, Spring 2018 was characterised by a very cold and snowy start, average in the middle and a dry, warm and settled finish. March started with high pressure over Scandinavia that brought an extremely cold Siberian air mass over Ireland from the east. Storm Emma pushed up from the south into the cold air giving widespread disruptive snow and ice for the first few days of March. It gradually got milder over the following few days but areas of low pressure hung around and gave generally unsettled conditions through much of March apart from the third week where an area of high pressure gave a cold settled spell. The month of April had above average rainfall and temperatures generally with low pressure in charge and a series of slow moving fronts moving northwards across the country interspersed with some fine dry days. Winds were southerly or south-easterly in direction but south-westerly or westerly in the last week. May was warm overall with above average sunshine. The first half of the month saw low pressure nearby and mostly weak fronts crossing the country from the west. The second half of the month was dominated by blocking high pressure to the north and a warm continental airflow over Ireland with a few thundery troughs.

Rainfall: Wettest Spring at Valentia Observatory since 1964

Percentage of Long-Term Average (LTA) rainfall values were variable across the country. April had above average totals at most stations, while March and May had below average totals at most stations. Percentage of seasonal rainfall values ranged from 68% (seasonal rainfall total of 180.7 mm) at Mace Head, Co Galway to 180% (seasonal rainfall total of 360.8 mm) at Roche's Point, Co Cork. Seasonal rainfall totals ranged from 162.1 mm (at its LTA) at Casement Aerodrome, Co Dublin to 443.0 mm (percentage of LTA 141%) at Valentia Observatory, Co Kerry (its wettest Spring since 1964). The highest daily rainfall total was 53.2 mm at Dunsany, Co Meath on the 2nd March (its wettest Spring day since 2009). The number of rain days ranged from 47 days at Malin Head, Co Donegal to 69 days at Cork Airport. The number of wet days¹ ranged from 32 days at Mace Head, Co Galway to 54 days at Valentia Observatory, Co Kerry. The number of very wet days³ ranged from zero days at Mullingar, Co Westmeath to 15 days at Cork Airport. Widespread heavy falls of drifting snow occurred on 1st, 2nd and 3rd of March (during Storm Emma), heaviest in the East and Southeast, with accumulations of up to 69 cm in the Wicklow mountains. Fairly widespread snow also occurred on the 18th March.

Temperature: Very cold March

The majority of mean air temperatures across the country were below their Long-Term Average (LTA) for the season. This is attributed to a very cold March. Differences from the normal of the mean air temperature for the season ranged from -0.8 °C (9.0 °C mean temperature) at Sherkin Island, Co Cork to 0.2 °C (8.7 °C mean temperature) at Dublin (Phoenix Park). Mean temperatures for the season ranged from 7.8 °C (0.1 °C above its LTA) at Knock Airport, Co Mayo to 9.3 °C (0.4 °C below its LTA) at Shannon Airport, Co Clare. The season's highest temperature was reported at Shannon Airport, Co Clare on the 29th May with a temperature of 26.3 °C. The season's lowest air minimum was recorded on the 1st March at Cork Airport with -7.0 °C (its lowest Spring min temp since 1962). The lowest grass minimum was -13.2 °C reported at Markree, Co Sligo on the 20th March. All stations reported air and ground frost during the season. The number of days with ground frost ranged from 14 days at Newport, Co Mayo to 48 days at Mount Dillon, Co Roscommon. The number of days with air frost ranged from 3 days at Malin Head, Co Donegal to 24 days at Mount Dillon, Co Roscommon.

Sunshine: May was the sunniest month of the season

Percentage of Long-Term Average (LTA) sunshine values were variable (where available) across the country. May was the sunniest month as March and April had below normal sunshine totals. Percentage of seasonal sunshine values ranged from 87% (seasonal sunshine total of 397.2 hours) at Cork Airport to 108% (seasonal sunshine total of 468.3 hours) at Shannon Airport, Co Clare. Seasonal sunshine totals ranged from 383.6 hours (No LTA comparison*) at Gurteen*, Co Tipperary to 495.9 hours (No LTA comparison*) at Malin Head*, Co Donegal. The highest number of daily sunshine hours recorded this season was 16.0 hours at Malin Head*, Co Donegal on the 29th May. The number of dull days² ranged from 16 days at Shannon Airport, Co Clare to 28 days at Cork Airport.

Wind: Normal for the season

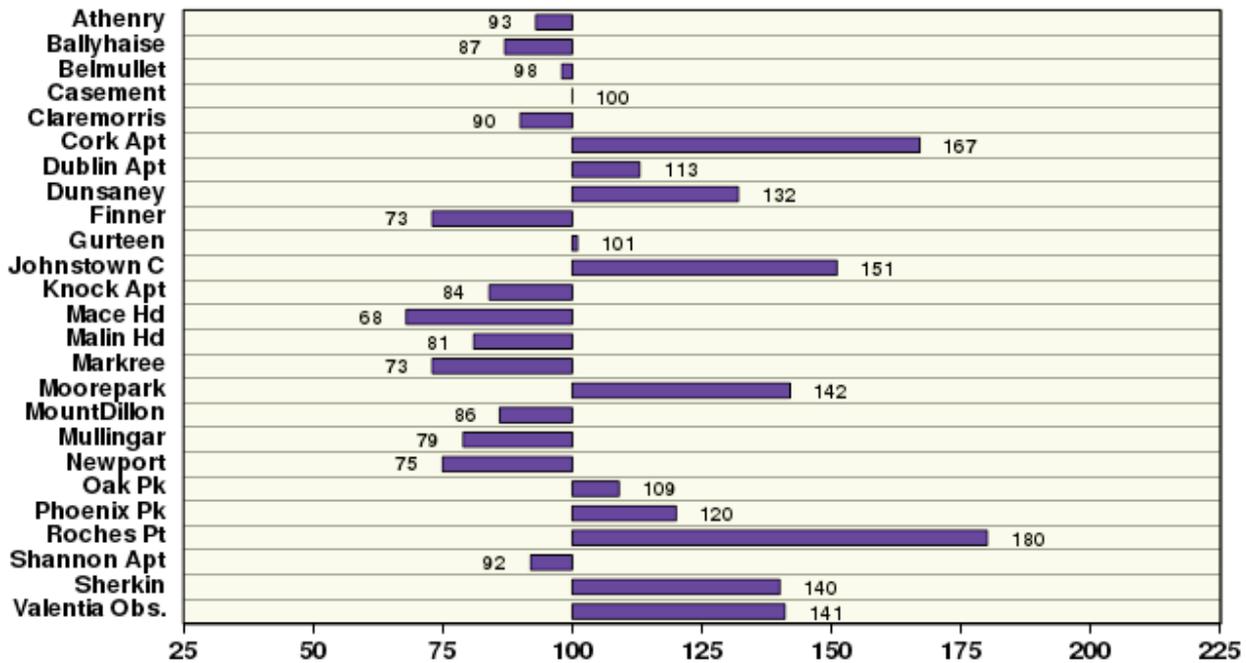
Seasonal mean wind speeds ranged from 6.4 knots (11.9 km/h) at Moore Park, Co Cork to 14.6 knots (27.0 km/h) at Malin Head, Co Donegal. Gales were reported on numerous days with up to strong gales reported on the 1st March, 2nd March and 17th April. The number of days with gales ranged from zero days at most stations to 12 days at Malin Head, Co Donegal. The number of days with strong gales ranged from zero days at most stations to 2 days at Malin Head, Co Donegal. The season's highest gust was reported at Belmullet, Co Mayo on the 17th April with 58 knots (107 km/h). The season's highest 10-minute mean wind speed was 45 knots (83 km/h) at Malin Head, Co Donegal on the 1st March.

EXTREME VALUES FOR WINTER AT SYNOPTIC STATIONS

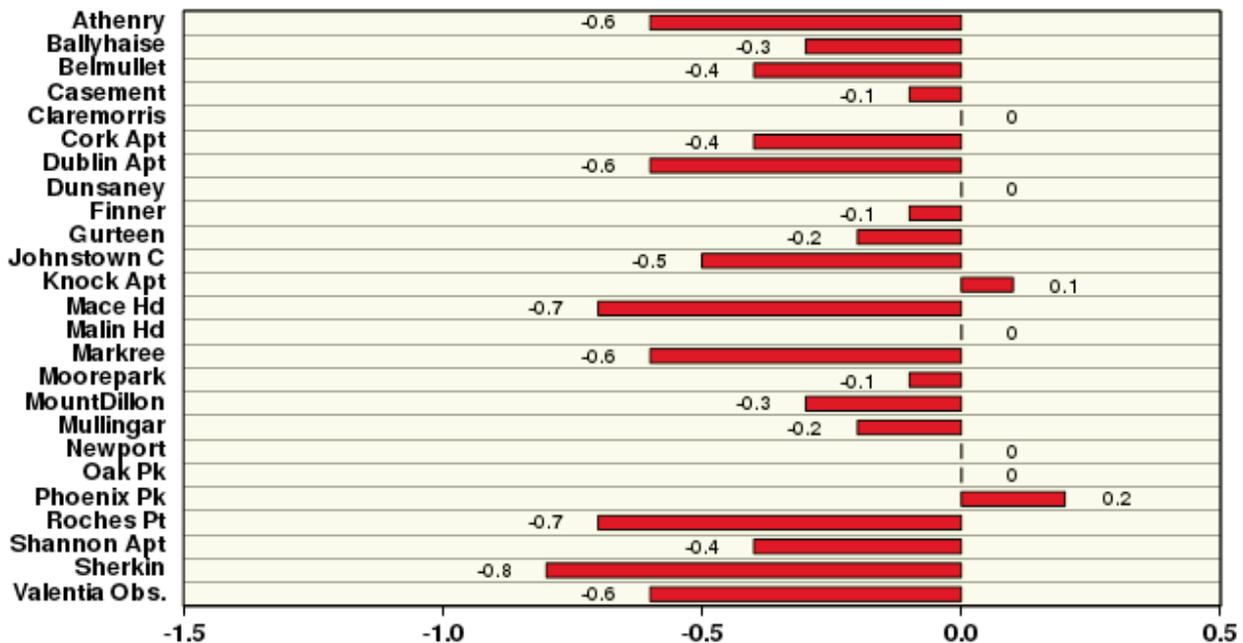
Rainfall	Highest seasonal total: 443.0 mm (141% of LTA) at Valentia Observatory, Co Kerry (<i>its wettest Spring since 1964</i>) Lowest seasonal total: 162.1 mm (at its LTA) at Casement Aerodrome, Co Dublin Highest daily rainfall: 53.2 mm at Dunsany, Co Meath on Mar 2nd (<i>its wettest Spring day since 2009</i>)
Temperature	Highest seasonal mean temperature: 9.2°C (0.1°C below LTA) at Newport, Co Mayo Lowest seasonal mean temp: 7.8°C (0.1°C above LTA) at Knock Airport, Co Mayo (<i>its coldest Winter since 2011</i>) Highest air temperature: 26.3°C at Shannon Airport, Co Clare on May 29th (<i>its highest Spring max temp since 2012</i>) Lowest air temperature: -7.0°C at Cork Airport Mar 1st (<i>its lowest Spring min temp since 1962</i>) Lowest grass minimum temperature: -13.2°C at Markree, Co Sligo on Mar 20th
Sunshine	Highest seasonal total: 495.9 hrs (daily mean 5.4 hrs/day) at Malin Head*, Co Donegal Lowest seasonal total: 397.2 hrs (daily mean 4.3 hrs/day) at Cork Airport (<i>its dullest Spring since 1996</i>) Highest daily sunshine: 16.0 hrs at Malin Head*, Co Donegal on May 29th.

SPRING 2018

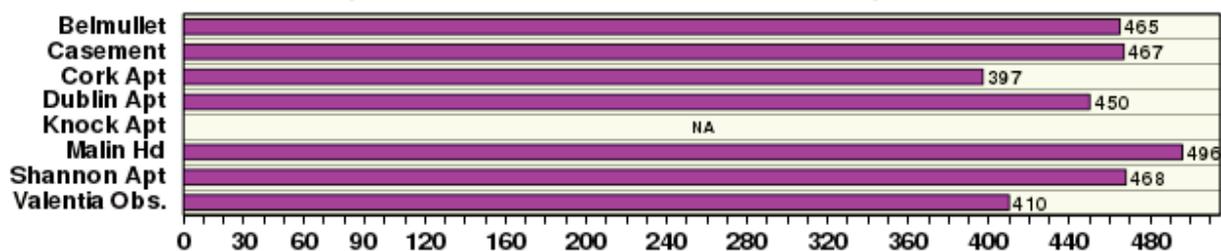
Rainfall (% of average for period 1981-2010) on whole season basis



Temperature (°C) (difference from average for period 1981-2010)



Sunshine (Number of seasonal sunshine hours)



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This report is based on available preliminary data from 25 principal weather stations operated by Met Éireann.

Long-Term Averages (LTAs) and "average" refer to the period 1981-2010. Synoptic station data is midnight to midnight UTC.

*Sunshine data is from the Autosol Network. LTAs for these sites are currently not used for comparison purposes.

¹ A wet day is a day with 1.0 mm or more of rainfall. ² A dull day is a day with less than 0.5 hours of sunshine.

³ A very wet day is a day with 10.0 mm or more of rainfall.

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