



***Open for business: When Optima Seaways departed Rosslare Europort for Dunkerque on Saturday 2 January, it officially launched DFDS' new Ireland-France freight ferry route. The route enables exporters and forwarders to keep their transport within the EU and avoid the customs formalities that apply to transport passing via the UK land bridge.***

At 14:00, on 2 January, the freight ferry Optima Seaways departed the Irish port of Rosslare for Dunkerque with more than 120 lorries and unaccompanied trailers, and drivers on board. This marked the official launch of DFDS' new route between Rosslare in Ireland and Dunkerque in France. As pictured above, Optima Seaways successfully arrived in Dunkerque at 15:00 on Sunday 3 January.

The route offers exporters and transport companies direct and paperless lorry transport between Ireland and other EU countries, reduced costs and less waiting time and the opportunity to avoid the customs procedures that now apply to transport via the UK land

bridge.

The route will be serviced by three efficient freight ferries able to hold up to 120 trucks and trailers. Drivers will be comfortably accommodated in their own COVID-19-safe cabins during the crossing. The two chartered ships Visby and Kerry, and DFDS' own Optima Seaways, will sail on a fixed schedule of six weekly departures from each port. The sailing time will be just under 24 hours.

“As well as offering a vital alternative to the UK land bridge for Irish industry, Dunkerque represents a key strategic location, with easy access to the Paris region, and close to the French-Belgian border and onward access to the Netherlands and Germany,” says Aidan Coffey, Route Director.

“We are extremely pleased with the great interest we are experiencing from customers on both sides of the route. This means that the departures are already fully booked. I also want to express a big thank you to Rosslare Europort and the Port of Dunkerque for their great cooperation and support that has helped us get ready for operation in a very short time.”

#### Further Information

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