

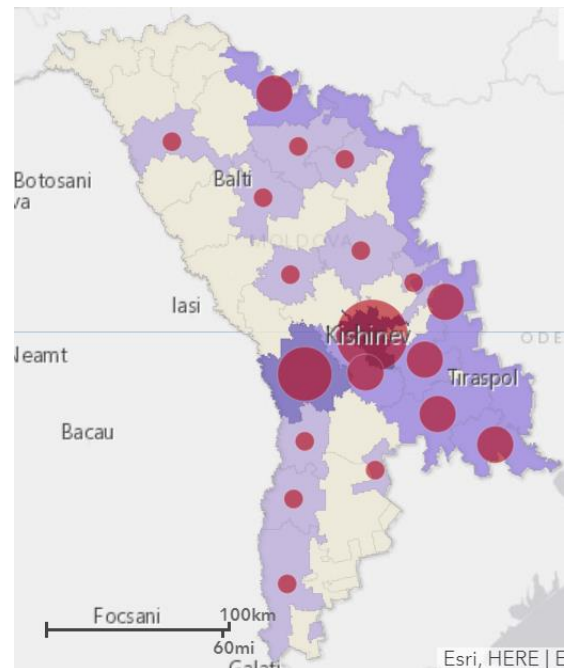


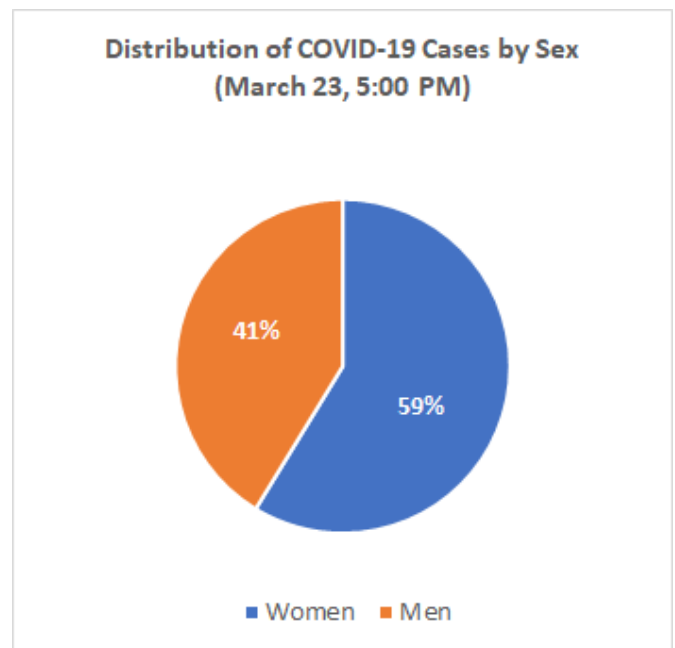
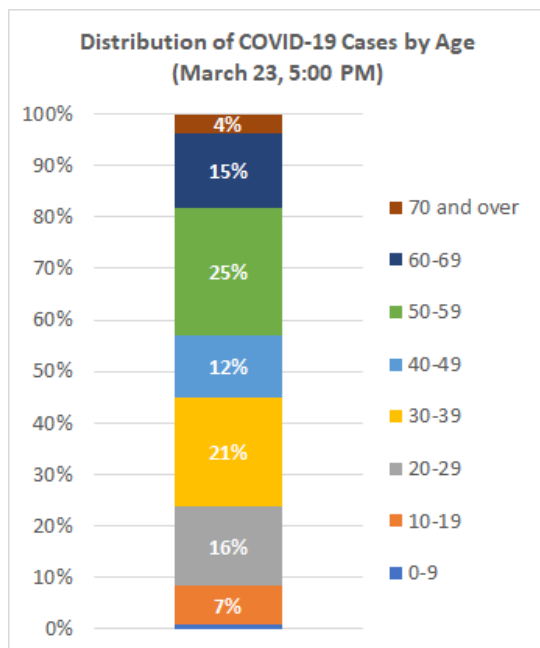
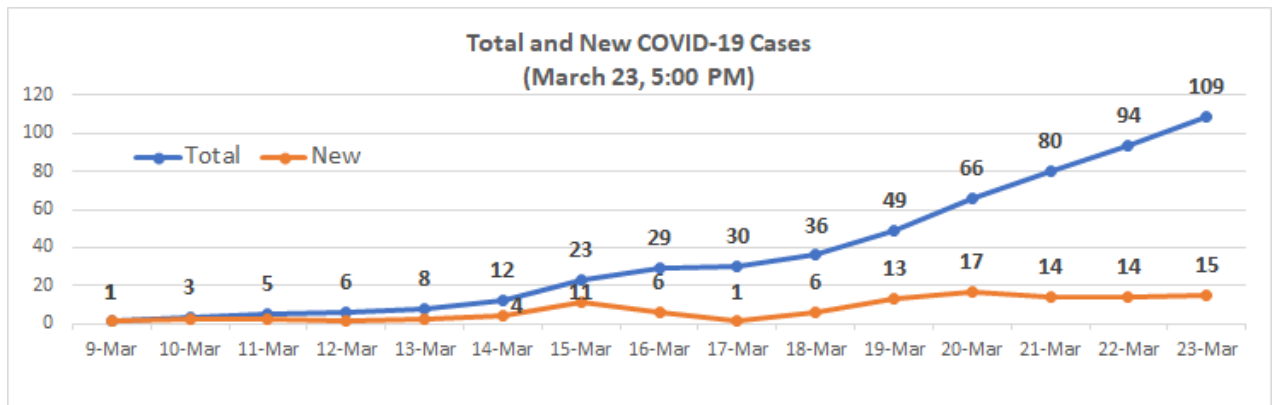
This report is produced by UN Moldova in collaboration with Government and development/humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 17 – 20 March 2020. The next report will be issued on or around 27 March 2020.

Focus on Restrictions and Assessment Status

Highlights – data as reported by national authorities*

- The number of COVID-19 cases has been steadily increasing over the past few days, with the total number of confirmed cases reaching 109 according to the latest data available.
- Since the beginning of the outbreak, 2 recoveries and 1 death have been reported. Hence, the total number of active cases stands at 106.
- Chisinau, over half of the country's districts and the Transnistrian region have been affected until now to various degrees, with Chisinau having the highest number of confirmed cases (40), followed by Hincesti (17).
- According to the information released this morning, the vast majority of patients are being treated at the Toma Ciorba Hospital, with 10 patients being in serious condition.
- The number of suspected cases stands at 97, and approximately 24,000 people are quarantined at home.
- Nearly 90% of confirmed cases are reported in those aged 20 to 69. One quarter of all confirmed cases are in the 50-59 age group, and approximately another one fifth are in the 30-39 age group. Children, adolescents and adults over 70 years of age taken together account for a little over 10% of all confirmed cases, being the least affected groups up to this point.
- The distribution of cases by sex shows that more women have been infected than men so far, 64 vs. 45 or 59% vs. 41%.





Overview of Key Decisions & Announcements

- The United Nations will host a Development Partners video-conference to discuss Covid-19 on Wednesday **March 25th at 1300hrs**. The invitation will be sent out on March 24th. MoH and MFA will join the session for any Q&A
- The United Nations in Moldova is continuing its operations with the vast majority of staff working remotely, apart from staff given clinical and technical support to the Ministry of Health Labour and Social Protection
- Scenario planning is ongoing. Scenario 3 in the national response has been costed and uploaded onto the WHO partnership platform. Given the trend analysis in the region the UN is finalising a larger response scenario with the MoH.
- On March 17, Parliament [declared a state of emergency for 60 days](#), until May 15, 2020.
- On 20, 22, and 23 March the Exceptional Situations Commission met and announced increasingly strict sets of [measures](#) aimed at slowing the transmission of the virus

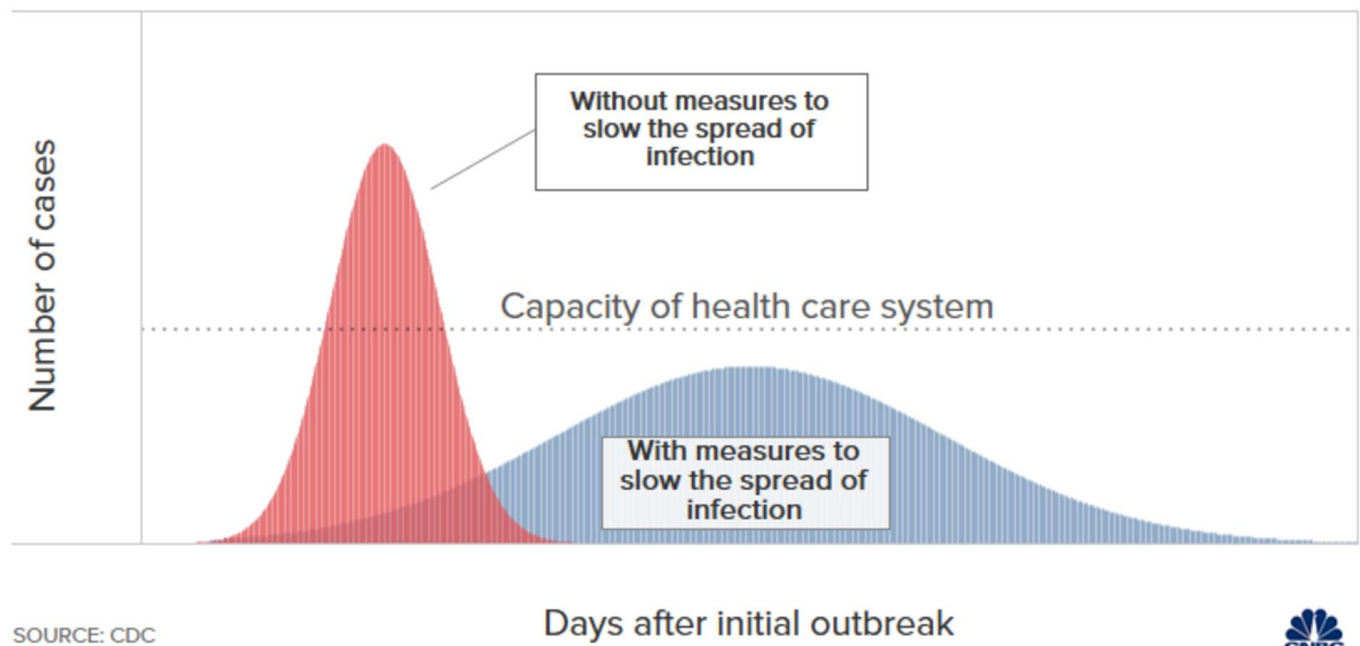
- The Resident Coordinator and WHO Representative hosted the Prime Minister at UN House for video-conference with the WHO Regional Director on March 20
- The UN Resident Coordinator and the WHO Representative held bilateral meetings with the Prime Minister on March 20 and March 23
- Development Partners supporting COVID-19 response are invited to share information about their bilateral support with the Resident Coordinators Office in order to map all supports and avoid duplication of efforts. Focal person in RCO: laura.fiorotto@un.org and christine.petre@one.un.org The MFA is also stepping up efforts to support the MoHLSP and the Ministry of Finance in this regards
- **WHO Partnership Platform** <https://covid-19-response.org/> has been launched. All partners are invited to participate. For more information send an email laura.fiorotto@un.org
- COVID-19 Task Teams have been set-up with the UN System in MOldova to support analysis and coordination on the economic and social impact, agriculture, migration, and education in order to assess needs in the medium and long term and prepare to support.

Update on Restrictions*

*these are subject to changes and amendment and should be viewed as an overview. Additional measures will be announced on 24 March

One of the most important criteria for minimising the impact of the Covid-19 on the entire health care system is to work to flatten the curve and keep the % increase in new patients per day as low as possible. Restrictions on movements and social distancing are two important ways to achieve this result. Below are the restrictions that government currently has in place.

Flattening the curve



All Restrictions issued between March 13 and March 20

On **March 13**, Moldova issued a Code Red Alert following an increase in cases.

- All educational institutions and many public venues, including gyms, museums, and theaters, bars and restaurants were closed.
- On March 17th, Moldova will suspend air traffic with all countries until April 1st. Trains between Moldova and Ukraine and between Moldova and Moscow will be suspended in order to prevent the spread the virus. Additionally, 70 out of 81 land border crossings with Romania and Ukraine were closed or are expected to be closed on March 17th.
- The Moldovan Government has asked people, who may have had contact with an infected person, to self-isolate at home. The government is also asking people to work from home as possible.
- On March 16th the President has asked the Prime Minister and Parliament to declare a state of emergency with possibly even stricter measures.

On **March 17**, the Parliament adopted the emergency situation for 60 days from March 17 to May 15. The initial official parliamentary decree was relatively vague but more detail continues to be added by decrees issued by the Commission for Exceptional Situations.

The initial provisions of the State of Emergency were:

- the establishment of a special regime of entry and exit from the country;
- the establishment of a special traffic regime on the territory of the country;
- introduction of the quarantine regime and taking other mandatory sanitary-epidemic measures;
- establishing a special working regime for all entities;
- Prohibition of meetings, public events and other mass events;
- the disposition, if necessary, of the rationalization of the consumption of foods and of other products of strict necessity;
- coordinating the activity of mass media regarding: a) informing the population about the causes and proportions of the exceptional situation, about the measures taken to prevent the danger, the liquidation of the consequences of this situation and the protection of the population; b) familiarizing the population with the rules of behavior during the exceptional situation;
- The Prime Minister has not excluded the cancelation of internal public transport at a later date.

Additional Quarantine measures were announced on March 19

- Holidays in schools and universities extended until March 31. The Ministry of Education is now organizing on-line distance learning for students and pupils.
- The courts suspended the consideration of almost all criminal and administrative cases. The exception is requests for searches and arrests, as well as cases of violation of the state of emergency. Prisons banned visits for prisoners.
- From March 23, specialized household and agricultural stores, selling essentials for personal hygiene, as well as household chemical stores and car services, will resume work in Moldova.
- Moldova will also allow foreigners transit through the country non-stop escorted through all territory by police. We are talking about citizens returning home, and employees of embassies and consulates.

Following a meeting of the Commission for Exceptional Situations on **March 20**, the Prime Minister issued updated measures for the state of emergency. The key points are below:

- Government employees as well as employees of state enterprises will work from 7.30 a.m. until 4 p.m. to ease traffic in the morning and allow officials to use public transportation at a time when it is not used by the majority of the population.
- Resumption and continuation of wholesale trade of all products; funeral services and trade activities for products related to funeral services; e-commerce; urgent notarial services of, at the request of commercial banks; and registration of securities guarantees and authentication of mortgage agreements.

- All medical care related to COVID 19 will be free, whether or not the person has existing medical insurance.
- Hospitals and medical clinics will put on hold any repairs or capital renovation for the time being, except absolutely essential repairs.
- Medical equipment, protective wear and other materials to be used to fight the COVID 19 will be purchased through available means.
- Charter flights, carrying Moldovan citizens from abroad will be allowed to land at the Chisinau airport.
- Any Moldovan citizen entering from abroad will need to quarantine for 14 days. Other citizens that are specifically transiting through Moldova not showing any signs of the virus do not have to follow this self-isolation.
- In follow up to a request from the Transnistrian Region de facto structures, medicine and medical supplies for the region will be allowed to pass duty free through the Palanca-Maiki-Udobnoe and Tudora-Starokazacie border points.

Chisinau Transportation Restrictions

- From March 23, buses and trolleybuses in Chisinau will only be in use from 5.30 to 10.00 and from 16.00 to 20.00. This was reported on Facebook by the mayor of the capital, Ion Cheban. The rest of the time, public transport will not operate. The mayor has also requested that minivans, which are all privately operated, also follow the same schedule.

Transnistrian Region

The de facto leader of the Transnistrian Region also declared a state of emergency that went into effect on March 16. The initial conditions are below:

- To prohibit the entry of “foreign” citizens and stateless persons into the region, with the exception of people holding a residence permit (“citizenship”) or registration on the territory of the region diplomatic representatives, members of delegations of international organizations, as well as persons accompanying them and persons carrying out freight transportation (food, basic necessities, etc.);
- Establish that people from the Transnistrian Region seeking to travel outside the region must have prior permission to leave the region;
- Establish that people from the region returning back to the region, are subject to self-isolation and continuous medical supervision for fourteen days.

On March 18, the de facto tightened the conditions to the following:

- It will be possible for Transnistrian “citizens” to leave the region only in three cases: 1. to access emergency medical aid in medical institutions outside of the region (strictly by referral of a doctor); 2. to participate in the funeral ceremony of a close relative; 3. Issues related to “state” business (by prior agreement with the de facto authorities).

Deputy Prime Minister Lesnic announced that the sides had agreed on measures, which would facilitate crossing of checkpoints for several specific groups of individuals (including doctors and staff of medical institutions located in the Security Zone and medical staff, who travel the left bank to take COVID-19 tests) to their places of work on the left bank.

As an illustration of the effectiveness of border controls put in the place in the Republic of Moldova and neighboring countries. The below represents a 98.5% reduction in traffic from one year ago (25 March 2019 had 57,100 crossing).

Needs Assessments

- A comprehensive list of requirements to support the government to deliver the Scenario 3 requirement of 2,000 patients was completed last week (\$12m required) and has been uploaded on the WHO Partnership Platform
- A Scenario 4 requirement for 20,000 patients has just been concluded (\$38m required):
- Additional needs assessments to be carried out in different sectors, such as, agriculture, social and economic impact, and education.
- Most difficult is the lack of the majority of required commodities in the local market. The UN and the MoHLSPP has been discussing with local suppliers and producers, but there remains major shortage. International suppliers have been contacted and solutions are being sought
- The UNDP is convening the first meeting of the social and economic impact taskforce on Wednesday, 25 March, with the participation of 18 UN agencies and International Financial Institutions. The purpose of the taskforce is to establish a platform for a coordinated programmatic approach for addressing the impacts of the Covid-19 while drawing on the expertise, resources and partnerships of all involved institutions.
- UNICEF has convened an Educational sector working groups to understand better the challenges in the education sector and on-line and off-line learning
- UNDP is in advanced stages of discussion with several private sector partners to explore the use of Big Data (mobility, electricity consumption among others) for rapid assessments and analytics to improve awareness around the COVID-19 situation and to support policy makers /Government entities to respond to the crisis through preventive and actual measures.
- The online Hackathon held between 20-22 March by the Moldovan IT community with the support of USAID, Embassy of Sweden, UNDP, UNICEF, and Tekwill and many partners in private sector to identify tools or solutions in the fight against COVID-19 resulted in several interesting ideas such as disease control to assisting the most vulnerable, online teaching, support to businesses among others. The ideas can be viewed on this [link](#). UNDP is considering pursuing the implementation of 1-2 ideas (support to businesses and assisting the most vulnerable) aligned with the ongoing UNDP programmatic work.

Risk Communications

The other major component to supporting flattening of the transmission curve is effective communication across all portions of society and reach out to at risk and hard to reach groups. Snapshot of some this communication work includes:

- To date, more than 2+ million pamphlets and communication material printed and has been handed out across the country and used at border entry points etc
- Translation conducted of the main leaflet and poster on coronavirus and protection measures in Russian, Romanian, Ukrainian, Gagauz and Romani.
- Audio messages with stay at home and prevention measures to be aired by police cars at community levels have been recorded in Romanian and Russian. By Wednesday, 25 March, the audio should be recorded in Ukrainian, Gagauzian and Romani languages.
- Printing of floor stickers (15,000 pcs) on social distance for postal offices and local small groceries is underway
- The Government has filmed two video spots with famous personalities and doctors to be placed on TV and social media.
- The UN communication team is looking into producing infographics for journalists to curb the growing stigma surrounding the Covid-19.

- ~~Mayors, local leaders have started to communicate widely in their communities about prevention measures and stay at home rules~~
- Ongoing translation and dissemination on UN Women Moldova website and to mass media of the article “Paying attention to women’s needs and leadership will strengthen COVID-19 response”; COVID-19 social media package was developed by UN Women and is being adapted to Romanian and Russian languages; once ready, they will be uploaded and disseminated through UN Women Moldova social media channels on social media. The RO and RU versions of COVID-19 messages to support women from the Republic of Moldova will be shared today with the RCO and WHO for coordination.
- UNFPA issues a technical brief on COVID19: [gender lens](#), the social media package materials with messages for pregnant women is in development for the Moldova context.
- UNFPA continues in active dissemination of the **#StayHome** campaign among the Network of Youth Centres, to support the Government's efforts in reaching out to vulnerable groups, including elderly, continues.
- Mayors, presidents of raions and local leaders started today to disseminate the information on COVID-19 to persons having the highest risk of getting infected: elder persons, persons with disabilities and persons with chronic diseases based on the instructions/guidance offered yesterday. Given the context it has to be done as quickly as possible. MoHLSP will make a follow up on how the info is spread in communities.
- Internet providers (including internet TV) have been reached by the MoHLSP to serve as information channels as well. They were asked to put banners/text messages on the screen of TV/laptop as a pop-up every several hours or based on another algorithm. The biggest agreed to help. Hopefully, they launch this initiative in a few days. Starnet, one of the biggest internet providers, started yesterday with pop-up messages/recommendations on TV in prime time. Others to follow.
- WHO and MoHLSP want to put all initiatives of the civil society on one platform so that it is easy to find and track them. Also this platform will allow to avoid any overlapping.
- Further steps in communication: gathering ideas from UNCG, discussing next messages for the population, entering phase II of the COVID19 massive information and raising awareness campaign. WHO will agree on the proposal with the MoHLSP and will come with information on what is needed in terms of support including financial.
- UNICEF has shared two polls on the corona virus, including provision with links on online learning for pupils. One interactive intellectual game on the same topic is awaiting launching at the end of the week.
- UNICEF is supporting jointly with WHO the production of four video testimonials to support #StaiAcasa (Vali Boghean, Mihai Ciobanu, and two doctors).

Challenges

- International procurement is going to be a major challenge for a large number of required items
- Additional pipeline of PCR kits needs to be maintained
- Ensuring communications are varied but consistent - and are able to reach all the rural areas and be followed
- #StayAtHome has a lot of currency and spread, but clearly citizens are not staying at home and the amount of traffic on the roads is increasing daily

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